ST. AIDAN'S MISSION
1883 — 1983
CENTENARY BROCHURE

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ST. AIDAN'S PARISH

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                    Peter Somasundram
LAY MINISTERS: Herby Govinden
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               Edmund Chetty
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Front Cover: the stained glass window depicting St. Aidan at the entrance to St. Aidan's Parish church, Centenary Road, Durban. St. Aidan's Feast Day is 31 August. (See Bishop's Foreword).
FOREWORD

When my wife and I were in England in 1978 for the Lambeth Conference of Anglican Bishops, we went on a short pilgrimage to certain holy places. One of the places we visited was the island of Lindesfarne off the English north coast. It made an indelible impression upon us.

It was on Lindesfarne that St. Aidan set up his headquarters after he had been consecrated as a bishop in the year 635 and sent as a missionary to the northern English from another famous island, Iona, off the west coast of Scotland. From Lindesfarne he made frequent missionary journeys to the mainland and laid the foundations of the Church among the pagan English. He was an inspiring preacher, a man who combined great self-discipline with gentleness; he was a lover of the poor and at the same time he ministered to Kings. He preferred to travel on foot rather than on horseback. The Venerable Bede says of him that “the highest recommendation of his teaching to all was that he and his followers lived as they taught.”

So much from so little: that is the lesson of St. Aidan and his tiny island home of Lindesfarne.

That must be our reflection as we think of our own St. Aidan’s Parish as it rejoices to keep its centenary. From small beginnings a hundred years ago, see what exists today! I am pleased to be able to commend this brochure which tells the story. Long may St. Aidan’s continue to bring a ministry of preaching, teaching and healing to the life of this city.

The Rt. Revd. MICHAEL NUTTALL
BISHOP OF NATAL
LANCELOT PARKER BOOTH
(1850 — 1925)

THE FOUNDER OF THE ST. AIDAN'S INDIAN MISSION

Lancelot Parker Booth was a man of frail, modest disposition who throughout his life strove for great moral and spiritual devotion to all those in physical and spiritual need. He combined the spirituality of a Franciscan monk with the enquiring mind and the scientific outlook of a Roger Bacon.

Born ca. 1850 at Bishop Auckland, Durham, England, he studied medicine at Edinburgh. In 1873 for health reasons, he interrupted his studies and visited South Africa where he soon recovered. He returned to complete his studies, graduating L.R.C.P. and L.R.C.S. in 1876. In the same year he left for Durban and joined the Natal Indian Immigration Department as District Surgeon at Umzinto.

Booth had arrived in Natal at a period when thousands of indentured Indian labourers were imported to work on the sugar plantations. When their term of indenture expired, many settled in Durban. He was appalled at the conditions of the Indian labouring classes, particularly at the poverty, the illiteracy, the low standard of living, the lack of medical facilities and he felt the urgent need for their spiritual upliftment.

To achieve his great vision to alleviate human suffering, he needed the support of a large Christian organisation. Consequently he qualified as an Anglican Deacon in 1883 and established himself at 49 Cross Street, Durban.

Despite his academic background, Booth desired a higher sense of achievement wherein he could serve both God and man. In 1884 he returned briefly to England to continue his theological studies and was ordained to the priesthood in 1885. He subsequently also became an M.D. of Durham and Toronto Universities.

In 1885 Canon Booth is described as "Assistant to the Bishop for the Indian Mission" in the Annual Report of the Diocese. The immense task of establishing the first Anglican Mission for Indians in Natal fell on his shoulders.

History certainly produced the right man at the right time and the indomitable spirit and vision of this intrepid pioneer blazed forth. His immediate objectives were the foundations of EVANGELISM, EDUCATION and SOCIAL SERVICES for the Indian community.

In 1886 Booth's "Mission Schools" were established in Durban where subsequently thousands of the poorer Indian children, whether Christian or non-Christian, could receive the rudiments of education. In the following year the St. Aidan's Church in Alice Street was completed. Even in those pioneering days the only obstacle to progress was the lack of finance. He undertook three visits to India to recruit missionaries and staff. In 1890 the Revs. Samuel Vedaken and Simon Peter Vedamuttu arrived from India and in 1892 were joined by Joseph Nullathamby. Despite the lack of church buildings, evangelistic activity radiated from Durban and Pietermaritzburg.

Booth, as Diocesan Superintendent of Indian Missions in Natal, desired to reach out to the greater Indian population. He perceived that the greatest need lay in medical services for the underprivileged classes. Consequently, in the back-yard of the Mission House, he opened a dispensary where he could attend to the medical needs of thousands of the poorest citizens of Durban.
The first ST. AIDAN'S CHURCH in Alice Street was completed by the Rev. Dr. L.P. Booth in 1897 and remained in use until 1966.
When Booth left Durban in June 1900, he was presented with a unique document, a special Memorial in appreciation of his services to the poor, signed by 837 Indians. In all probability, M.K. Gandhi, in his capacity as "Secretary", drew up this rather unusual vote of thanks. (See page 6)

Prior to this Gandhi and Booth had become staunch friends. When the Boer War broke out, Booth trained an Indian Volunteer Stretcher-Bearer Corps which performed valiantly at the battle of Ladysmith. These were the first Indian male nurses in South Africa.

The Rev. Dr. Booth's subsequent career remained one of superhuman endeavour in new environments. After Durban he became Dean of Umtata where he became aware of the immense problems of the African peasants in the Transkei. In 1912 he settled in Cape Town. For a short time he was sub-Dean of St. George's Cathedral. In 1913 he became Rector of St. Barnabas, Kloof Road, Cape Town, a position which he held until a month before his death.

The same indomitable spirit to alleviate suffering which he displayed during his early career in Durban, caused him at the age of 64, to enlist for active service in France during World War I, where as he put it, he was "doctor on weekdays and priest on Sundays". A severe attack of pneumonia saw him recuperating in England, where he soon carried on duties at the base hospital in Richmond attending to the needs of wounded soldiers.

In 1919 he returned to South Africa to spend some comparatively quiet years at St. Barnabas' with his wife, their only son being killed in action in World War I.

Like a great friar of the Middle Ages, his selfless devotion to the needy and the outcast, earned him the respect and admiration of all until God called him to rest on 27 March 1925.

MISSION HOUSE (The Rectory) built in 1889 at 49 Cross Street also functioned as Dr. Booth’s dispensary up to 1900 and between 1924 - 1935 as the SECOND ST. AIDAN'S HOSPITAL.
(SPECIAL TRIBUTE)

TO:

"THE REVEREND LANCELOT PARKER BOOTH, M.D."

Dear Sir,

We the undersigned Indian subscribers place on record, on the eve of your withdrawal from Indian work in this Colony, the sense of deep gratitude the Indian community owes you for your many acts of charity and kindness. To the poor among us you have been a friend and a benefactor, irrespective of creed or caste. Many of us know, from personal experience, how we could rely upon your free medical assistance at all times. Your gentleness and kind sympathy have often succeeded where medicine alone would fail. The Indian Hospital, which was the direct result of your 17 years labours in alleviating human suffering, is a standing testimony to your work in that direction.

Your services in connection with the Indian Ambulance Corps, the training you were good enough to give the Ambulance Class also much sacrifice of time, the willingness with which you offered to accompany the Corps in spite of pressing duties in Durban, your medical aid to the bearers at the front, and your counsel to the leaders, can hardly be overvalued by the Indian community.

We may say without exaggeration, that you have presented to us a pattern of an upright Englishman and a good, gentle Christian who knows no distinction between Jew and Gentile.

The fact that half the number of Indian Schools owe their existence to your energy is an indication of your efforts on behalf of the masses.

It is hard for us to tender you, unmixed with sorrow, our congratulations on your preferment. Umtata's gain is our loss. You leave behind you a gap it will be difficult to fill. The Congregation of your Church may find an equally eloquent preacher and as safe a guide; but where shall your Congregation find so faithful, sympathetic, and tried a friend whom they have learnt to know and love for close upon two decades. As a slight token of our esteem for you, we beg of you to accept this Address and the accompanying Purse for the benefit of your Indian Hospital.

We wish you and Mrs Booth a happy time in your new sphere, and pray that the Almighty may long spare you and your wife to continue your work of love.

We are, Dear Sir,
Yours in Gratitude

(signed by 837 Indians including M.K. Gandhi in his capacity as Secretary.)

Durban
29 June 1900
EVANGELISM

If the 20th century can be referred to as the "Atomic Age", then with all justification, the 19th century can be described as the "Period of Evangelism". This was particularly true of the British Empire with its millions of subjects in Africa and Asia. The London Missionary Society, the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel and many other societies sent its willing and enthusiastic servants to all corners of the globe to put into practice the words from St. Matthew, 25 v 19:

"Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit".

The early indentured Indian labourers who were employed in the sugar plantations of Natal in the period 1860 - 1911 were a mixed assembly of Hindus, Muslims and Christians. Although the Indian labourer made an immense contribution to the economy of Natal, the pages of history are remarkably void when we search for references of spiritual, intellectual, educational, and moral upliftment of the indentured labourer in the period before 1900. With each decade more and more "free" Indians from the rural areas converged on Durban. The majority of them were poor, there was unemployment, the Colonials adopted an anti-Indian attitude, slum areas were common and in the process of westernisation, the vices of the West were easily imitated. There was, in fact, an urgent need for evangelism among the indentured and free Indians in Natal.

The earliest date of evangelistic activities among the Indian population is uncertain. However, in 1877, the Bishop ordered a Commission to investigate the matter and to report to Synod. In 1878 the Rev. H.F. Wittington, Vicar of St. Cyprian's, Durban, held Tamil services for six Indian families. Up till the establishment of the St. Aidan's Mission in 1883, the Anglican Church in Natal had no fixed policy regarding evangelistic work among the Indian population.

In this situation the Rev. Booth was quick to perceive the possibilities and seized the golden opportunity to win souls for Christ's kingdom. Being the pioneer, his progress was limited by the funds at his disposal. In 1887 he built the St. Aidan's Church which served also as a Day School. In 1889 Mission House, the Day School and the Girls' Home were built through the generosity of Miss Usherwood and Miss Saunders. In 1892, work commenced at Sydenham where a School Mission room was built and simultaneously, a similar building was erected at South Coast Junction.

Fortunately, Booth was able to obtain funds and staff from England through the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, the Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge, and also from Missions in India. Between 1890-92 he brought out three missionaries from India (the Revs. S. Vedaken, J. Nullathamby and S.P. Vedamutu). For close on seventy years the number of clergymen seldom exceeded four. On Sundays the priests cheerfully worked overtime in order to minister to their small but scattered congregations, meeting usually in temporary makeshift premises. For example, in 1908 the Rev. Arthur French (who spoke Hindi fluently) visited four congregations (which included the gaol) on a Sunday morning in the Durban area, using a bicycle as his only means of transport.

Lack of funds not only limited the missionary staff, but also restricted the evangelical sphere of activity to Durban and Pietermaritzburg. In 1894 St. Paul's Mission was opened at Pietermaritzburg where the Rev. Joseph Nullathamby served for twenty six years. By 1915 his "parish" became rather demanding — it included Richmond, Howick, Greytown, Estcourt, Ladysmith, Dundee, Glencoe, Dannhauser and Newcastle. Here the good shepherd could only gather his scattered flock once per month. In the early years the clergymen were certainly overworked, but they were dedicated to the task of strengthening Christ's army in the battle to fight the stronghold of heathenism and unbelief.
St. AIDAN’S CHOIR c 1910

Standing, 1st Row, 1 to r: 4. Bernard (later Rev.) and 6. Michael Sigamoney

INDIAN AMBULANCE CORPS – 1900

The first Indian male nurses in South Africa were trained by Dr. Booth for service in the Anglo-Boer War (1899 - 1902). In the centre row, M.K. Gandhi is seated on the left of Dr. Booth.
Unlike the African Missions where progress was relatively rapid, success was not so easily achieved with the Indian population, the majority of whom were Hindus. Yet the missionaries never lost their faith. During the pre-World War I years, it was a regular sight to see outdoor services held by the priest accompanied by the choir-boys (dressed in their robes) on Saturday and Sunday afternoons throughout the Durban area and often in the shadow of the Grey Street Mosque!

A major problem which faced the pioneer missionaries was the diversity within the unity of the church. The church clearly stated its policy that "the Gospel is for all nations, and those who believe, of whatever race they are, are to be gathered in one fold". (Bishop Baines' Report 1920). Alas, the problem in Natal was that there were several races living side by side. This meant that services had to be conducted in English, Zulu, Tamil, Telugu and Hindi if evangelism was to succeed. The missionaries, too, commented that by 1910 the standard of the Indian vernacular languages had seriously deteriorated. The shortage of Indian evangelists, who could preach in vernacular languages, severely hindered progress. Low stipends paid to the clergy did little to encourage the youth to train for the ministry. Consequently, during the first fifty years, the majority of the mission staff were recruited from either England or India.

There were, of course, other factors which had a discouraging effect on the pioneering days. Sad to relate, but among the Europeans there existed a strong anti-Indian feeling, and initially, the locals withheld their support for the mission. Canon Smith (Booth's successor) was rather outspoken in his criticism of the prevailing European attitude. He referred to the Indian as "The White Man's burden" in that he could not be discarded as one would do to an old shoe. He reasoned that as the White man had brought the Indian to South Africa, the time had now arrived to develop him. In 1902 Smith wrote, "Europeans barely give them a chance to taste even the crumbs which fall from our spiritual tables". Clearly, Smith had outlined the policy which the church would adopt in future — the physical, moral, social, educational and spiritual upliftment of the Indian community.

Fortunately, Smith's visionary concept of the 20th century development of the Mission did materialise. His aims were clear. "We believe in religion as the foundation of character, and so of all true education". His foundations rested on three pillars — Evangelism, Education and Welfare. For this purpose six acres of land were purchased in Sydenham in the present area of St. Aidan's Road, Clayton Road and College Road in 1904. Although Canon Smith's "Sydenham project" was fundamentally religious and secular education, it included the establishment of a new church. For seven years Sunday services were held in the new Training College Hall. However, on Ascension Day 1911, the corner stone of Christ Church was laid. The "new" building was actually the old building of St. Augustine's-on-the-Berea (Musgrave Road), re-erected in College Road.

Theoretically, Canon Smith's programme of expansion did strain the financial resources of the Mission. Further, the number of converts remained disappointing. In 1918 Bishop F.S. Baines summed up the position: "If the primary purpose of the Indian Mission is to evangelise the non-Christian Indians in Natal, of whom there are so many, then we have come to a point where we are perilously near failing to fulfil this purpose". By 1920 the Diocese reviewed the position and prescribed the appropriate medicine for the ailing patient: reduce secular (educational) activities and henceforth to devote more attention and funds on to purely ecclesiastical development.

During the past fifty years, the aim of the St. Aidan's Mission has been one of consolidation with regard to evangelical work. Progress has centered around a few specific churches. The early pioneering work brought in a rich harvest. Whilst the number of converts increased slowly, the number of locally trained ministers has risen steadily and a gradual programme of economic, cultural and spiritual upliftment has resulted in a more affluent community who are able to support the mission from within.

By 1950 the majority of Anglican Indians in Natal were members of St. Aidan's, Christ Church, St. Michael's and St. Paul's (PMB) which initially, constituted the St. Aidan's Mission. Briefly the history of the three Durban churches may be summarised as follows:
CHRIST CHURCH — the original building was erected in College Road, Sydenham in 1911

ST. MICHAEL’S AND ALL ANGELS, built in 1924 at “South Coast Junction”
ST. AIDAN’S CHURCH: Built by Rev. Dr Booth in 1887 in Alice Street. The original building served the mission for 79 years. On 10th July 1966 the foundation stone of a new church was laid by Lawrence Wood (M.P.) This new church was erected next to the St. Aidan’s Hospital in Centenary Road. On 2 March 1980 the foundation stone of the adjoining church hall was laid.

CHRIST CHURCH: Services commenced in 1904 and the first church was erected in 1911. The Rev. W.H. Satchell initiated the construction of a second building. On 22 August 1935, the Kunwarani Lady Maharaj Singh laid the foundation stone of a new Sanctuary.

On 30 October 1954 the foundation stone of the present church was laid by Charles E. James and thereafter, the nave erected “over” the old building, was consecrated on 6 November 1960. On 2 July 1972 Vernon Inman, Bishop of Natal, laid the foundation stone of an adjoining church hall.

ST. MICHAEL’S AND ALL ANGELS, MEREBANK: Services commenced from 1892 at “South Coast Junction”, where in 1924 a church was built which was consecrated by Bishop Baines on 20 May 1926. As a result of the Lawrence Commission’s recommendations, the church property was sold to Everite Ltd for R30 000 in 1963 and in the same year, the foundation stone of the present church in Merebank was laid by the Rev. Isaac Anthony.

The LAWRENCE COMMISSION which met for the first time on 5 December 1962 and concluded its investigations and recommendations in 1964, recommended the future administration of the “Missions”, made inter alia one important recommendation: that in future the “Missions” were to be called “Parishes”. Henceforth St. Aidan’s (which included St. Luke’s Chapel at the Hospital) and Christ Church (which included St. Barnabas’ Chapel) were decreed independent parishes, while the “Parish of Mobeni” was to included St. Michael’s (Merebank), St. James’ (Isipingo), St. Gabriel’s (Wentworth) and Epiphany (Chatsworth).

Thanks be to God for his great mercies and for a memorable century of evangelical achievement!

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Parish acknowledges the dedication of the following:

ORGANISTS / CHOIRMASTERS:
- Joseph Royeppen: ca 1899 - 1902
- William Joseph: 1902 - 1953
- Marcus Royeppen: ca 1948 - 1953
- Winfred Nundoo: ca 1953 - 1964
- Muriel Johnson: ca 1964 - 1970
  (nee Sigamoney)
- James Royeppen: ca 1970 - 1975
- Ben Royeppen: 1975 - present

SUB-DEACONS:
- S. Thammiah: 1962 - 1978
- H.V.L. Somasundrum: 1965 - 1975

MISSIONARIES:
- Miss Frost: ca 1930 - 1940
- Miss M.P. Jameson: ca 1950 - 1977

OTHER CHURCH ACTIVITIES
- Sunday School Servers’ Guild
- Mothers’ Union Young People’s Group
- Anglican Women’s Fellowship Bible Study Groups (House church groups)
The present Christ Church

The Rev. W.T. Simon with the St. Aidan's congregation, ca. 1929

The present St. Michael's and All Angels, Merebank, 1963
Above: The present St. Aidan’s Parish church (1966)

Right: The present St. Aidan’s Parish hall (1980)

Holy Communion is held for the hospital staff at 7.30 a.m. every Friday morning.
The Rev. John Pender-Smith with members of the St. Aidan's congregation on 31 July 1983

PARISH COUNCIL

Seated: 1 to r: Mrs. W. Rose, E. Mark, Rev. John Pender-Smith, P. Somasundram, Mrs. R. Gabriel.
LAY-MINISTERS

1 to r: Edmund Chetty, Paul Nareen, Rev. J. Pender-Smith, Herby Govinden, Ben Royeppen.
(Absent: Leonard Anthony)
**EDUCATION**

The providing of educational facilities for poor Indian children in Durban in the early years became one of the cornerstones of the St. Aidan's Mission. In 1869 the Rev. Ralph Stott commenced a boys' day school and evening school for 34 and 20 scholars respectively. In 1878 the Anglicans had a small school in Field Street. In 1879 the Indian Immigration School Board was established, but initially it remained rather ineffective.

At first neither the planters nor the State accepted the responsibility of providing education for the children of indentured and "free" Indian labourers. In the meantime, the mass of illiteracy increased; so too did the poverty and the misery of the under-privileged in the Durban slums.

This was the scene which confronted the Rev. Dr L.P. Booth in 1883. Three years later, with the assistance of a small subsidy, coupled with his amazing ingenuity and vigour, he established a chain of "Booth's Schools". There is unfortunately little information available on these small schools or on the quality of education provided. The majority of the children attended classes only up to Std 2. Amongst the poorer families, all the able-bodied had to contribute to the family income, hence only a lucky minority received education up to Std 4 level. School fees were probably a tickey (2 and half cents) for indentured children and 6 pence (5 cents) per month for "free" children. "Booth's Schools" (as they are referred to in the Diocesan Annual Reports) included the following 16 names in 1886:

Avoca, Blackburn, Durban Boys and Durban Girls (St. Aidan's)
Ikwifa, Isipingo, Montpellier, Pietermaritzburg, Pinetown,
Prospect Hill, Salisbury Island, Sydenham, Verulam, Umbilo,
Umzinto and Wentworth.

Some of these schools were short-lived. Except for John Thomas (later Rev) and Henry Nundoo there is no information on the early teachers.

Under Canon Arthur Smith (Supt. 1901 - 1911) a dynamic and ambitious educational programme was introduced. In this way the Church believed that it would reach out to the masses and that it had a moral obligation to provide the rudiments of education to the under-privileged, whether Christian or non-Christian.

Smith's "SYDENHAM PROJECT" was launched in December 1903 when Mrs Randles laid the foundation stone of the Training College and Boys' School at Sydenham. These two institutions opened on 11 April 1904.

The ST. AIDAN'S DIOCESAN TRAINING COLLEGE (re-named in February 1909 as the "ST. AIDAN'S PROVINCIAL TRAINING COLLEGE") was a revolutionary concept for its day as regards Indian education.

The College was divided into three sections:

(a) A **BOYS' SCHOOL** which provided "Higher Education" (Stds V to VII); average attendance 25 pupils p.a. In addition, in 1913 a separate **Girls' School** was instituted.

(b) A **TEACHERS' TRAINING COLLEGE** for boys with an extra-mural Saturday Continuation Class for teachers in service. Two courses were offered: A "Junior" Teachers' and a "Senior" Teachers' Certificate. The duration of the course was one year. In 1909 the "Junior Teachers' Certificate" was the compulsory minimum requirement for an Indian teacher in a Government Indian School. Although by present-day requirements, the educational standard of the teacher was not very high, the course did alleviate the acute shortage of Indian teachers. St. Aidan's Mission was the first private organisation to institute a Teacher-Training College for Indians in Natal (Average attendance was 30 students p.a.) (Circa 1900 - 1910 there was a State-run "Durban Training College").

(c) A **TRAINING SCHOOL FOR INDIAN CATECHISTS**, Evangelists and Ministers, completed the educational picture. A special boarding house was built (actually it was the first floor of the main building) to accommodate Christian boys only.
St. Aidan’s Provincial Training College
1904 — 1920

Henry Nundoo and family c 1890
(One of the earliest Indian teachers)

STAFF : ST. AIDAN’S BOYS’ SCHOOL ca. c 1950

5. K.R. Nair, 6. G. Thumbadoo, 7. Chetty, 8. F. Thandroyen,

While the latter was purely a church venture, the former two received a State grant. Tuition fees varied from 25c to 35c per month, while boarding fees were approx. R8.50 p.a. Between 1904 - 1918 the College produced 75 certificated teachers.

In addition to living quarters for the minister and the teaching staff, there was also a cemetery. Another feature was a special GIRLS' HOME for approx. 10 to 28 orphaned or less fortunate children which commenced in 1889. The original home was on the corner of Prince Edward and Bond Streets. When these premises were destroyed by fire, the Home moved to Sydenham on 11 March 1904 where it shared temporary quarters until a new building was completed in 1913. The Home provided a Christian foundation for future mothers who in addition received the benefits of education and industrial training.

The respective matrons were: Miss Saunders (c. 1889 - 1904), Miss Hilda Adams (1904 - 1917) and Mrs M. Ellis (1917 - 1929). In 1929 the Home was transferred to Pietermaritzburg.

In the meantime, between 1901 - 1920 ANGLICAN MISSION SCHOOLS mushroomed all over Natal irrespective of the fact whether any Indian church existed in the particular area. The following statistics are subject to correction:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>NO. OF SCHOOLS</th>
<th>NO. OF PUPILS</th>
<th>NO. OF TEACHERS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1902</td>
<td>12 (11 boys’</td>
<td>1 251 boys</td>
<td>+ - 20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 girls’)</td>
<td>62 girls</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1914</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>1 886</td>
<td>+ - 59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1916</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>2 264</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1917</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>1 685</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1923</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1 500</td>
<td>+ - 40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1963</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5 327</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

At the same time the great educational contribution of the St. Aidan’s Mission (in addition to missions of other denominations) can best be evaluated from the following statistics which are subject to correction:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>TOTAL NO. OF SCHOOLS</th>
<th>NO. OF STATE SCHOOLS</th>
<th>NO. OF PUPILS AT SCHOOL</th>
<th>CHILDREN POPULATION (APPROX.)</th>
<th>INDIAN POPULATION (NATAL)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1875</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>8 449</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1880</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>196</td>
<td>1 000</td>
<td>15 568</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1909</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3 284</td>
<td>12 000</td>
<td>100 000 (1891 census)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1915</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5 189</td>
<td>18 000</td>
<td>133 437 (1911 census)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1926</td>
<td>+ - 56</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9 150</td>
<td>32 000</td>
<td>141 649 (1921 census)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

While the educational statistics reveal, indirectly, the small state contribution in proportion to that of the Missions, St. Aidan's was compelled to take stock of the position by 1918. By 1916 all teachers were Christians. Unfortunately, the number of Christian pupils varied from one to ten percent, depending on the area. The Church questioned the wisdom of the project. The State did subsidise teachers' salaries, but the mission funds were now strained to near bursting point. Matters came to a head when, in 1920, the State withdrew its subsidy on the Training College, and this worthy institution was compelled to close its doors.
STAFF: ST. AIDAN’S BOYS’ AND GIRLS’ SCHOOLS ca. 1925

Back row, l to r: P. Pahliney, Miss Berndt, Isaac Anthony (later Rev.), Gladstar Harris, Miss E. Duncan, Lawrence Henry, Sophie Joseph.
Seated, l to r: Robert Christopher, Mrs M. Ellis, Miss Wilson, (Prin.), Bernard Sigamoney (later Rev.), Miss Jones, Francis Thandroyen.
Front, l to r: Agnes Barnabas, Mercy Josiah, Bella Thandroyen.

STAFF: ST. AIDAN’S BOYS’ SCHOOL c 1940

Back row, l to r: V. Nair, Chetty, — —, K.P. Bagwandin, Chengiah.
By 1920 the following nine Mission schools were closed: Dundee, Estcourt, Greytown, Lidgetton, New Germany, Pinetown, St. Ives, Richmond, and Stanger, while five were sold to the Methodist Mission: Cross Street, Cato Manor, Springfield, Mt. Edgecombe, and Port Shepstone. In the same year the State compelled the Mission to close its school in Cross Street on account of the dilapidated state of the building. However, the Church decided to retain eight schools: of these, Newcastle, Sutherland, Pietermaritzburg (St. Pauls' and Railway Schools), Umzinto and Lidgetton were transferred to their respective parishes, while two schools were retained by the Mission — the St. Aidan's Boys' and Girls' Schools, respectively.

These measures brought considerable financial relief and henceforth, funds were more profitably allocated to ecclesiastical development. St. Aidan's School has a proud record and is one of the few Indian Schools which can boast of an Old Boys' Club (The St. Aidan's Club) which was established in 1921 by Miss Eleanor Duncan. As the decades passed, St. Aidan's School became the Alma Mater of thousands of boys and girls.

The LAWRENCE COMMISSION (1962 - 4) made far-reaching recommendations as regards the future of mission education. Briefly, it recommended that with immediate effect, all Mission Schools were to close, where possible the properties were to be sold and where appropriate, these schools were to be taken over by the State. The schools affected were: St. Aidan's (Boys and Girls), St. Michael’s, St. Paul’s, Esther Payne-Smith, Sutherlands, Howick and Lidgetton. By 1971 the last Mission School closed its doors. High finances coupled with the paucity of converts had discouraged the Missions from continuing their support.

However, for almost a century, the Anglican Missions had valiantly upheld the principle of providing education for the less-privileged and we salute the valiant band of men and women who gave their services in the pursuit of high Christian ideals.
The St. Aidan's Club for young men (Est. 1921) with the Rev. E. Lawson and Miss Eleanor Duncan (Founder of the Club) ca 1925

The Foundation Stone of the St. Aidan's Hospital was laid by the Kunwarani Lady Maharaj Singh, wife of the Agent-General for the Government of India on 16 January 1935.
THE HOSPITAL

Dr. BOOTH AND AFTER: 1883 - 1900 - 1915

When the Rev. Dr. Booth left Durban in June 1900, 837 local Indians presented him with a “Special Tribute”. This unique document is reproduced in this publication so that readers are able to judge for themselves the sterling and perhaps saintly qualities of the Founder of the St. Aidan’s Mission. Although the signatories refer to Booth’s “Hospital”, ironically Booth did not establish a hospital. Instead, at his dispensary at 49 Cross Street, he treated thousands of out-patients because to-date, neither the State nor the Municipality had made any effort to provide hospital facilities for the Indian population.

By modern standards medical science was still in its infancy by 1900. In the sub-tropical climate of Natal, disease was prevalent but the position was aggravated by slum conditions, overcrowding, unhygienic living, poverty, ignorance and superstition. Medical missionaries throughout the world were convinced that Western medicine was the strongest means at their disposal to bring Christianity nearer to the masses.

Dr. Booth was also a pioneer in introducing nursing and first aid to Indian men. The Indian Stretcher-Bearer Corps, which he trained for service in the Anglo-Boer War, is a unique contribution to South African medical history. Perhaps he was stimulated by M.K. Gandhi in this venture. However, Booth’s influence caused Sergeant-Major Gandhi to form another volunteer group for service in the 1906 Zulu Rebellion. There is also speculation that St. Aidan’s provided a Red-Cross group during World War I, but this is subject to further research.

With the departure of Dr. Booth, many local doctors such as Drs. Robinson, his wife Lilian Robinson, Stanley Copley, Francois and Mundy attended to the medical needs of the poor in the period 1900 - 1907. Meanwhile the S.P.G. also made its contribution. Between 1904 - 6 Nurse Richnell arrived to be followed by Dr Ethel Pryce (1907 - 9). There must have been a need for medical services because the number of dispensaries increased. Although the Cross Street dispensary was closed in 1906, new ones were established at Sydenham and Springfield and in 1916, at Overport.

1st HOSPITAL 1916 - 1923

In October 1914 THE Rev. C.M.C. Bone arrived in Durban. Fresh from his experiences in India, he urged the immediate establishment of a Mission hospital for the local Indian population. Fortunately he found a willing ally in Miss Olive Cole, a qualified nurse who had trained at Addington Hospital and overseas. Miss Cole being a lady of independent means, made a dynamic entry on the scene with financial assistance which was adequate to establish the proposed hospital immediately. These were: to pay a year’s rent for a hired house (opposite Mission House) which could be converted into a 9 - 16 bed hospital; she gave R120 to cover initial expenses; she furnished the rooms and above all, offered her services free!

Thus commenced a great private venture which was officially opened in June 1916 by Lord Buxton, the Governor-General. Initially the hospital was for women and children patients only. With World War I in progress, the founders of the hospital made a determined effort to augment their funds. The Durban Medical Council meanwhile insisted that Dr McCord of the American Board Mission Hospital should visit the hospital on the basis of a R200 honorarium p.a. Typical of the pioneering missionary spirit, Dr McCord distributed his honorarium equally between his own hospital and the St. Aidan’s Hospital.

In the meantime, the burden of running the hospital fell on the fragile and tired shoulders of Miss Cole who often worked day and night shifts in order to cope with the situation. In 1923 she was succeeded by Miss Wells, but when this lady fell ill, the hospital in fact temporarily closed its doors. Worse still, in September 1923 the hospital lease expired and new premises were urgently required.

The original building of the present (3rd) St. Aidan’s Hospital in Centenary Road, 1935.
2nd HOSPITAL 1924 - 1935
In this hour of darkness, the S.P.G. sent out Sister Laura Pratt in 1924. She was soon thereafter assisted by Miss Betty Hart. In this year, it was decided to occupy Dr. Booth’s old Mission House at 49 Cross Street. By enclosing the verandah, accommodation was extended to 21 beds and 4 cots. With the assistance of 3 Indian female assistants and a female cook, the staff continued God’s great gift of healing the sick. Fortunately, too, the Durban public gave the institution their support and contributed generously to the annual street collection. The S.P.G. paid the salaries of the nursing staff, the Municipality gave an annual grant and coupled with donations, the finances improved considerably.

By the 1930’s the Indian population of Natal had increased to about 141 000 and obviously this small hospital could no longer cope with the increasing demand. By this time the need for a new modern building became a matter of urgency and fortunately, the occasion brought together three men - Bishop Ferguson-Davie, the Rev. W.H. Satchell and Dr K.M. Seedat who devoted all their energies towards this new goal. In 1932 a Hospital Building Committee was established and from the Durban Corporation a piece of land just over an acre in extent in Centenary Road was purchased.

3rd HOSPITAL 1935 - 1983
On 16 January 1935 the foundation stone of the present hospital was laid by the Kunwarani Lady Maharaj Singh, wife of the then Agent-General for the Government of India. On July 4 the hospital was formally opened by the Countess of Clarendon, the wife of the Governor-General of the Union of South Africa. The building was designed by Mr. W.B. Oxley and erected by Messrs Tedder and Brown. The initial stages of the building programme had cost approx. R20 000 and by 1940 the hospital had accommodation for 60 patients.

From this date onwards, the history of the hospital is a continuous record of expansion, increasing staff, introducing up-to-date medical equipment and very important, acquiring additional funds. Fortunately the Indian public too had become aware of the important role which St. Aidan’s hospital was destined to play in the life of the Indian community. Among the early benefactors were the R.K. Khan Trust, M.E. and M.A Motola and the Rustomjee Trust which, in 1938, contributed towards the installation of modern X-Ray equipment. Men and women of all races and religions came together in a great effort to alleviate sickness and suffering. In an age before medical societies came to be accepted as the norm, the Hospital provided a great service for rich and poor alike. In 1940 the Rev. Satchell was one of the founders of the Friends of the Sick Association (F.O.S.A.) which still exists today.

The Diocese aware of its responsibilities and aware of the great social and material upliftment which had taken place in the Indian community over the past eighty years, passed a Resolution (ACT II of 1946) which henceforth placed the administration of the hospital under a BOARD of MANAGEMENT. This Board consisted of 12 members, six of whom were elected by the Synod and the remaining six would be elected by the INDIAN MEDICAL SERVICES TRUST. The Bishop would act ex officio as Chairman or alternatively, a Deputy Chairman appointed by the Bishop would preside (at present the Rector of St. Aidan’s Parish). The Indian Medical Services Trust, established on 22 July 1947 and registered on 29 September 1947, represented the interests of the Indian community and was composed of doctors, merchants and persons from the professions. Dr K.M. Seedat was the first Chairman of the Trust and in this capacity, he collected R48 000 from the Indian community for the second phase of the development of the new hospital.

Aware of the acute shortage of accommodation, the Board of Management embarked on a R76 000 programme of expansion. During 1948/49 plans were completed and in August 1949 extensions commenced. On 22 September 1951 the new extensions were officially opened by the Hon. Mr. D.G. Shepstone, Administrator of Natal. By 1952 the hospital had accommodation for 100 beds. When completed the central building appeared as a rectangle with a large central square as garden. The extensions had cost R75 287,50 and the Natal Provincial Administration contributed two-thirds of the total cost.

In May 1952 Miss L. Pratt and Miss E. Hart laid the foundation stone of the St. Luke’s Chapel which adjoined the hospital. It is this Christian aspect which has given St. Aidan’s mission its special characteristic. The hospital admits all races as patients and employs multi-racial staff. It offers facilities for the training of nurses. At present 157 local doctors and specialists visit their patients at the hospital. There are three types of patients, full fee-paying, part fee-paying and ten percent of the beds are reserved for indigent patients. During each decade the hospital has striven to offer the most up-to-date facilities and patients can be accommodated in private as well as general wards.
Miss Laura Pratt, longest serving matron with approx. 28 years service, seen here with the Most Rev. Joost de Blank, Archbishop of Cape Town and a new arrival.

A familiar sight to thousands — the “old” entrance to St. Aidan’s Hospital.
In 1960 the Hospital faced an entirely new problem - the Group Areas Act, which declared the Hospital a "Special Zone" and for many years the Board sought permission to undertake further "extensions". In 1966 the new St. Aidan's church was built on a plot adjoining the hospital. By 1970 when the Natal Indian population had reached 500,000, patient accommodation had reached acute proportions but residence for nurses was perhaps the most urgent priority.

Eventually in 1977 the hospital embarked on a R5 million project which should be completed by 1984. The plans, drawn up by the Architects, Messrs C. McLaren, Alcock and Bedford are most impressive and work on the project has been divided into three phases.

On 24 November 1978 Mr Frank Martin, M.E.C. officially opened a new Administrative Block, which included a dispensary, surgical stores, Children's ward, Intensive Care Unit etc. On 6 February 1981 Mr Martin opened a 100 bed Nurses' Home and an adjoining Service block which incorporates lecture rooms, a dining room and the catering department. On Saturday, 3 September 1983, the Bishop, the Rt. Revd. Michael Nuttall, officially opened new extensions which included, a new Theatre Block, Surgical Wards, Medical Wards, Maternity Labour Room Suite and Examination Rooms, Administrative Offices and entrance to the hospital. With the third phase (still in progress) the aim is to extend hospital accommodation to 240 patients.

Interesting hospital statistics for 1982 include: 12,710 patients admitted, 3,555 operations performed, 5,289 births, over 400 staff and 104 nurses in training. A truly magnificent achievement! Dr Booth did have the vision in 1883 to cater for the medical needs for the Indian population — but how would he view this achievement in 1983? He would go on his knees and thank God for all those doctors, nurses, donors, teachers and missionaries, in fact all the humble men and women, who gave of their services to alleviate suffering.
Aspirant nurses receive a thorough training at St. Aidan's Hospital

A typical hospital ward
The old operating theatre of 1924 was probably very primitive by modern day standards.

Today the hospital possesses modern up-to-date equipment.

MESSAGE BY R.J. RUSTOMJEE

On behalf of the Indian Medical Services Trust (Est. 1947), I offer my congratulations and best wishes to the Diocesan Trustees on the occasion of the Centenary of St. Aidan’s Mission. I feel honoured and privileged to be serving on the Board of Management of the St. Aidan’s Hospital.

From humble beginnings the hospital has grown to attain an official status as a fully-fledged training institution. In this respect special significance is attached to the missionary zeal, initiative and forethought of the Diocese. The Hospital being non-racial in character as well as being a non-profit making institution, has motivated considerable and continuous community participation. The very planning of this Hospital has been the joint effort of the medical practitioners, businessmen and financial support in no small measure from the Indian Community, as also from all other races, has helped to bring this project to fruition.

May this Hospital be enabled to continue its work and grow from strength to strength.

R.J. RUSTOMJEE
(Chairman — The Indian Medical Services Trust).
### MATRONS OF ST. AIDAN'S HOSPITAL

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAME</th>
<th>PERIOD</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Miss Olive Cole</td>
<td>1.08.1916 to 1923</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miss Wells</td>
<td>1923 to 1924</td>
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<tr>
<td>Miss Laura Pratt</td>
<td>1924 to 31.10.1946</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miss G.A. Pike</td>
<td>1.11.1946 to 1946</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miss S.A. Evans</td>
<td>1.11.1951 to 1956</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miss R.V. Sipple</td>
<td>1.11.1954 to 30.06.1955</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miss L. Pratt</td>
<td>1.11.1956 to 31.05.1957</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miss E.J. Dean</td>
<td>1.06.1957 to 30.06.1957</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miss L. Pratt</td>
<td>1.07.1957 to 30.11.1957</td>
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<tr>
<td>Miss A.W. Webb</td>
<td>1.12.1957 to 1958</td>
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<tr>
<td>Miss E. Harding</td>
<td>1.11.1958 to 1960</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miss L. Pratt</td>
<td>1.08.1960 to 31.01.1964</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mrs D.A. Warne</td>
<td>1.02.1964 to 1968</td>
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<tr>
<td>Miss G.V. Wessels</td>
<td>1.04.1968 to 31.03.1971</td>
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<tr>
<td>Miss M.A. Bentley</td>
<td>15.04.1971 to 1976</td>
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<tr>
<td>Miss P.H. Taft</td>
<td>1.08.1976 to 02.05.1980</td>
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<tr>
<td>Miss M.M. Veitch (Mrs Grant)</td>
<td>5.05.1980 to 09.10.1982</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mrs I. Poodhun</td>
<td>1.03.1983 to present</td>
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Mrs. Ivy Poodhun (centre) the present Principal Matron, who is the first Indian to hold this position, seen here with her assistant Matrons (1 to r) Mrs. J. Naidoo, Miss. T. Naidoo, Mrs. R. Maharaj, Mrs. M. Thumbadoo (Senior Matron)

Miss Olive Cole
the first matron
## ST. AIDAN’S MISSION CLERGYMEN 1883 — 1983

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Clergyman</th>
<th>Years</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rev. Lancelot Parker Booth</td>
<td>1883 – 1900</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rev. Solomon Vedaken</td>
<td>1890 – 1895</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rev. Joseph Nullathamby</td>
<td>1890 – Dec 1916</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rev. Simon Peter Vedamuttu</td>
<td>1892 – 1911</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rev. Arthur Halstead Smith</td>
<td>1901 – 1911</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rev. A. Bevil Browne</td>
<td>1906 – Jun 1907</td>
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<td>Rev. Dravian Koilpillai</td>
<td>1911 – 1917</td>
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<td>1918 – 1920</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rev. A. Alcock Baillie</td>
<td>1911 – 1917</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rev. Cecil Mathew Charlotti Bone</td>
<td>1914 – 1917</td>
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<td>1917 – 1920</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rev. John Moses Sundrum</td>
<td>1919 – 1942</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rev. George Hibbert-Ware</td>
<td>1921 – 1930</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rev. Harold Duran Mullett</td>
<td>1922 – 1923</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rev. Eric W. Lawson</td>
<td>1924 – 1927</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rev. Winfred Timothy Simon</td>
<td>1925 – 1929</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rev. William Harold Satchell</td>
<td>1930 – 1947</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rev. Isaac Anthony</td>
<td>1955 – 1956</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rev. Jacob Christopher David</td>
<td>1946 – 1961</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rev. Lambert Poodhun</td>
<td>1956 – 1960</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rev. Francis Cull</td>
<td>1961</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rev. John Pender-Smith</td>
<td>1977 – present</td>
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</tbody>
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* = Superintendent/Priest-in-charge

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S. P. Vedamuttu
HOSPITAL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE (20 August 1983)

Back Row, l to r : Dr. Y. Minty, Mr C.T. Bhoola, Dr. E.M. Barker, Dr. M.Y. Kadwa, Dr. P.H.B. Mayton, Mr. R.J. Rustomjee.
Front Row, l to r : Mr. K. Whitaker, Mr B.D. Thandroyen, Rev. John Pender-Smith, Prof. H.S. Govinden, Mr. R.S. Naidoo.
Absent : Mr. M.A. Lewis, Dr. A.R. Robertson, Dr. P.L. Patel, Dr. B.T. Naidoo.

IN MEMORIAM
DR. KASSIM MAHOMED SEEDAT

The late Dr. K.M. Seedat was associated with St. Aidan’s Hospital for over three decades. He left behind him a memory of great service not only in the medical, but also in the administrative and public relations affairs of the hospital. The Intensive Care Unit bears a plaque to a great humanitarian who served as:

Member of the Board of Management 1947 — 1976
Honorary Medical Officer 1935 — 1964
Honorary Medical Superintendent 1964 — 1976
Chairman Indian Medical Services Trust 1947 — 1976

OUR BENEFACTORS

The St. Aidan’s Hospital acknowledges with sincere appreciation all the thousands of benefactors who throughout the decades have contributed to the progress of the hospital. Unfortunately lack of space does not permit the publication of the names of all our benefactors.
FUTURE EXPANSION

In this brochure you will have read of the tremendous expansion of the hospital since the days of Dr. Booth and the question may be asked: have you reached your goal? Not yet, but nearly there.

The ground floor central core has still to be completed, this will be changed from the existing administration area to become Post-Natal wards.

We have had soundings taken of the foundations of the front wing of the hospital and of the central core and we have been assured that we can indeed continue with our expansion programme. The Board of Management has decided that the whole of the front wing should be refurbished and a third floor added. This will mean that we shall have forty two beds of a private or semi-private nature and these will be en suite with toilets and showers.

It is our intention to add a light structure to the central core on top of the existing Care Unit and Paediatric section. Here will be the Matron's complex, the Medical Superintendent's office, the Board Room and a place for visiting doctors.

These additions are expected to cost approximately R1.5 million and we anticipate the final number of beds to be 240. There will be times of strain and difficulty ahead, but we appreciate the forebearance of the public so far, and we ask that you continue to show your understanding of our difficulties and continue to give us your support.

We are confident that, when completed, we shall have a hospital that we shall all be proud to have had a share in creating.

JOHN PENDER-SMITH (REV.)
DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN

Mr Barney Thandroyen, retired secretary (1 Dec. 1939 to 30 Sept. 1982) illustrates aspects of the building extension programme
A present day view of St. Aidan's complex in Centenary Road, Durban.

ST. AIDAN'S

PARISH