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*Natalia*  
*Journal of the Natal Society*

No. 27 December 1997

Published by Natal Society Library  
P.O.Box 415, Pietermaritzburg 3200, South Africa

SA ISSN 0085-3674

## *Cover Picture*

Vasco da Gama and Adamastor (Illustration from an  
1880 edition of Camoens's *The Lusiads*)

*"I am that mighty hidden cape, called by you Portuguese the Cape of Storms ... This promontory of mine, jutting out towards the South Pole, marks the southern extremity of Africa. Until now it has remained unknown: your daring offends it deeply. Adamastor is my name ..."*

Canto 5 (W.C. Atkinson's 1952 translation)

*Typeset by M.J. Marwick*

*Printed by The Natal Witness Printing and Publishing Company (Pty) Ltd*

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16th Century navigators using the nautical astrolabe and cross-staff.  
(Illustration in the *Warhaftig Historia*, Magdeburg, 1557)

## *Editorial*

It would be unthinkable for a journal named *Natalia*, with the remit that it has, not to note the special significance of this issue's publication date. December 1997 marks the 500th anniversary of Vasco da Gama's voyage up the south east African coast on his way to India. His naming of Terra de Natal on Christmas Day 1497 is taken as the beginning of European contact with this part of the continent.

For years there has been doubt as to whether Natal is in fact the 'Christmas Land' seen by Da Gama. Professor Eric Axelson's researches led him to believe that on Christmas Day 1497 Da Gama's three ships — the *San Gabriel*, the *San Raphael* and the *Berrio* — were probably much further south, off the coast of Pondoland.

In this issue we publish the results of Dr Brian Stuckenberg's reconsideration of the evidence, his conclusion being that the Portuguese flotilla was indeed in 'Natal waters' when the historic naming took place. There is also an article by Gavin Whitelaw discussing the people, social organisation and occupations Da Gama would have encountered if he had landed and explored the country he had named.

The Anglo-Zulu War of 1879 continues to attract the attention of scholars, and Huw Jones has provided an article which casts fresh light on the Battle of Hlobane, where Wood's forces suffered a serious reverse on 28 March 1879, prior to the victory at Khambula. Anticipating the approaching Anglo-Boer War centenary, we carry a previously unpublished letter by a very ordinary Englishwoman, Catherine Portsmouth, who had the misfortune to be living near Van Reenen's Pass when hostilities broke out in 1899. She and her family found themselves virtually at the point of contact between the British and Boer forces.

After the old Burger Street Prison in Pietermaritzburg was decommissioned, and before the buildings were repainted for their new use, two students in the university's Department of Zulu studied the graffiti left by prisoners on cell walls. Adrian Koopman has turned these observations and notes into an interesting account of the attitudes and experiences of prisoners in recent years in that grim old place.

*Notes and Queries* continues to provide items of interest. Readers of *Natalia* are invited to contribute short pieces appropriate to this section, or respond to items that appear in it. The usual obituaries, book reviews and select list of recent KwaZulu-Natal publications complete the contents of this edition.

Together with the order form for *Natalia* 28, readers will find information about back numbers of the journal that are still available — some at really give-away prices. This is an opportunity for subscribers of more recent date to acquire an almost complete set of *Natalia*, going back to its first issue in 1971.

J.M. DEANE

## *Select List of Recent KwaZulu-Natal Publications*

- ASKEW, Derek J. Cabbage production guidelines for the Umlaas River Valley area of KwaZulu-Natal. Pietermaritzburg: Department of Horticultural Science, University of Natal, 1996.
- ASKEW, Derek J. Lettuce production guidelines for the Umlaas River Valley area of KwaZulu-Natal. Pietermaritzburg: Department of Horticultural Science, University of Natal, 1996.
- ASKEW, Derek J. Tomato production guidelines for the Umlaas River Valley area of KwaZulu-Natal. Pietermaritzburg: Department of Horticultural Science, University of Natal, 1996.
- COLENSO, Harriette. Cases of six Usutu (other than the exiles at St. Helena) punished for having taken part in the disturbances of 1888. Durban: Killie Campbell Africana Library, 1996 (Colin Webb Natal and Zululand Series; No.9).
- CONYNGHAM, R.V. The "K and S" class locomotives of the Natal Government Railways. Kenilworth: Railway History Group of Southern Africa, 1996
- HARRISON, Philip, and others. An industry in distress: Pietermaritzburg's footwear sector. Durban: Centre for Social and Development Studies, University of Natal, 1997 (CSDS research report; No. 10).
- HURLEY, Denis Eugene. Facing the crisis: selected texts of Archbishop Denis E. Hurley; edited by Philippe Denis. Pietermaritzburg: Cluster, 1997.
- JENNINGS, Guy. A study of socio-economic conditions in Msinga, 1993: report prepared for Iser and the Urban Foundation. (Pietermaritzburg: Department of Geography, University of Natal), 1993.
- KIENZLE, Stefan W., Lorentz, Simon A., and Schulze, Roland E. Hydrology and water quality of the Mgeni catchment. Pietermaritzburg: Department of Agricultural Engineering, University of Natal, 1997. (WRC report No. TT87/97).
- LABAND, John and Knight, Ian. The war correspondents: the Anglo-Zulu War. Johannesburg: Jonathan Ball, 1996.
- MALANGE, Nise and Nhlengetwa, Zandile. On common ground. Durban: KwaZulu-Natal Programme for the Survivors of Violence, 1996.
- MOLLER, Valerie. Perceptions of development in KwaZulu-Natal: a subjective indicator study. Durban: Indicator Press, 1996.

- SCHWABE, C.A. and others. Service need and provision within KwaZulu-Natal. Pretoria: HSRC Publishers, 1996.
- SHEARER, Colleen. An ordinary family. Port Edward: Aries, 1996.
- SHEPHERD, Olive. Wild places of KwaZulu-Natal: nature reserves, resorts and walks; revised by Leslie Fraser. Durban: KwaZulu-Natal Region of the Wildlife and Environment Society of Southern Africa, 1997.
- SLADE, D.G. Vryheid. Pietermaritzburg: Urban and Regional Development Research, Department of Geography, University of Natal, 1994. (Urban Foundation's small town project).



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DR IAN PLAYER is a world-renowned conservationist.

SIMON ROBERTS is an attorney, and a trustee of the Natal Society.

SHELAGH SPENCER is a historical researcher, and author of the multi-volume British Settlers in Natal: a biographical register.

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