

The Natal Society Library from 1974 to 1980:

Recollections of a chief librarian

by Tony Hooper

Part one: repairing and re-imagining

The history of the Natal Society and its library has been well documented in the pages of this journal over the years. Up to her resignation in 1974, and even afterwards, Miss U.E.M. (Sue) Judd provided comprehensive and very readable accounts of the history, personalities and events of the Natal Society from its inception.¹

David Buckley wrote an article on the Natal Society Library from 1975 to 1995, which was followed by Jewel Koopman's analysis of the contributions made by Pam Reid and Sue Judd to the Natal Society and its library during the years that they worked together.² Koopman's article tells a dramatic story

of two strong and determined women and the library for which they shared an abiding concern. But the years immediately after Sue Judd's resignation have been dealt with only in tantalising omission.

One may justifiably ask what happened after the pouring of the last slab of concrete on the top floor of the new library building, mentioned by Jewel Koopman. How was the move to the new building planned and co-ordinated? What happened when the library was finally opened to people of all races? What was the response of the citizens of Pietermaritzburg, and of the apartheid government of the time? Why did Sue Judd never come into the new library building that she had played such an

important role in designing? Indeed, who replaced Sue Judd as chief librarian after her resignation was so peremptorily accepted by the Natal Society Council at the time? These issues were not addressed in David Buckley's short history of that period.³

It is now over 46 years since Sue Judd's resignation and 44 since she died of cancer in 1976. Sadly, most of the people involved in those events have also died, and their personal views can no longer be canvassed. With the passing of June Farrer in 2012 and Pat McKenzie in 2019, I believe I am one of the last of the employees of the Natal Society Library who can provide a personal account of events from 1974 to 1980.

Like Jewel Koopman's article, this is a story of a dramatic period in the history of the library, of the city of Pietermaritzburg and of the nation itself as it wrestled with its past to create a more just society for the future.

It starts in June 1974 when I received a letter from Councillor Pamela Reid, chair of the Natal Society, informing me that the post of chief librarian at the Natal Society Library had become vacant. She had received my name from my friend Don Schauder, university librarian at the University of Natal, Pietermaritzburg. Would I be interested in applying? If so, please could I phone her. I was living in Pretoria at the time, my foot firmly on the ladder of professional advancement. The invitation from the Natal Society was an opportunity that I could not ignore.

I phoned Pam Reid that evening, expressing my interest. She responded by asking for a curriculum vitae after receipt of which she would, on behalf of the Natal Society Council, invite me for an interview. I would be collected

at Durban airport and need to spend a night in Pietermaritzburg before returning to Pretoria the following day. My costs would naturally be borne by the library.

Within a matter of days, I flew to Durban and was met by Pat McKenzie, secretary of the Natal Society. On the way to Pietermaritzburg he asked me whether I knew anything about the circumstances that had given rise to the resignation of Sue Judd as chief librarian. I knew nothing, having accepted Pam Reid's letter at face value. Pat then said, 'Let me not pre-empt anything. I think I must leave this to Councillor Reid to fill you in on the details sometime during your stay here.' It was a characteristically correct and diplomatic reply. After checking in to the Imperial Hotel, I was interviewed that afternoon by the full Council of the Natal Society, an illustrious and esteemed group of Pietermaritzburg citizens, with Pamela Reid in the chair.

Pam Reid was an imposing, broad-shouldered woman with steel-grey hair; the sort of person you would expect to wear tweeds, brogues and pearls. Quite a heavy smoker, she was forthright, assertive and totally dedicated to the Natal Society and the promotion of the library. Cultural amenities in Pietermaritzburg were her 'thing'. She focused on the Pietermaritzburg Philharmonic Orchestra, the art gallery and the library. She knew what she wanted, and she knew how to get it. At that initial interview, I knew nothing of this. All I knew was that she was in the chair and she would drive the decision.

The interview lasted about an hour after which I was asked to recuse myself so that Council members could consider my application. Before I left the room, Pam Reid asked me, almost as an aside,

‘If you were to be offered this position, what sort of salary would you require and how soon could you begin?’

Her question was, in fact, not an aside. It was the crux of the matter. The way the question was put required me to make an immediate decision of immense consequence for my future and that of my family. At the same time, if offered the job, it was an unanticipated opportunity for me to prove my ability as a librarian. ‘If invited, I would accept the offer provided that you can meet my current salary. I need to give three months’ notice to my present employers before I can move to Pietermaritzburg,’ I replied. Although the salary I specified was significantly more than Sue Judd had been paid, it confirmed her assertion that the library staff had been underpaid. If the quality of the library and its staff was to be maintained, their salaries would need to be adjusted accordingly.

I was not kept waiting long. Pat McKenzie was sent to invite me back into the meeting. I was offered the position of chief librarian of the Natal Society Library. I accepted. To celebrate the occasion, I was invited to join Pam Reid and several of the councillors for dinner that evening at the Victoria Club. On the way to the Victoria Club, Pam Reid finally told me her side of the story of Sue Judd’s resignation.

‘Miss Judd had been the chief librarian for many years. She was an excellent librarian. Recently the City Council of Pietermaritzburg agreed to our proposal that they should build a new library building on Market Square to house the collections of the Natal Society Library and provide proper library services to the citizens of Pietermaritzburg. For many years, Miss Judd had been agitating for improved salaries for her staff. Finally, with the new library building

to be opened within a year she thought she could use that as leverage for a salary rise for her library staff. The Natal Society and the City Council who largely funded the Natal Society Library could not afford it. In the end Sue Judd threatened to resign. The Natal Society Council members, who you met today, considered her resignation and decided to accept it, with immediate effect.’

‘In accepting Sue Judd’s resignation, the Natal Society Council considered that it was inappropriate for the chief librarian to threaten resignation in order to negotiate salary rises in the current financial climate. This was not the first time that the Council and Miss Judd had thought differently about matters. We realised that it would be a difficult situation to go into should Sue Judd leave at this critical time. Hence the urgency to fill the vacancy. She was given 48 hours to clear her desk.’

‘However, I want to assure you that you have our full support and we will assist you in handling the final commissioning of the library with the architect, and the move to the new building. We will also endeavour to ensure that the salaries of all the staff of the Natal Society Library are adjusted appropriately to a new scale that is comparable to salaries offered elsewhere in the country.’

Pam Reid asked me how I responded to her explanation. ‘It is not for me to comment on a decision made by the Natal Society Council,’ I replied. ‘I really don’t know enough about the situation. I think it is clear that some sort of investigation into the salaries of the staff is needed and the Council knows that. I am looking forward to living and working in Pietermaritzburg. It would not be wise for there to be too much of a gap between my salary and those of other staff members.’

A press release about my appointment was issued by Pam Reid the next day. In the *Daily News* (Durban), the item was headed 'Former CSIR man gets controversial library post'. The substance of the article referred to the controversy surrounding Sue Judd's resignation in the following words:

Mr Hooper, who is 31, is married and has a son and takes up his appointment on October 1st. It is understood that he will be starting on a salary of R9 900 a year R2 300 higher than that paid to his predecessor Miss Ursula Judd who left in a storm of controversy earlier this year. Miss Judd, who served the library for 21 years, gave the Natal Society three months' notice in June in frustration at the library council's continued rejection of her request for better salaries and conditions for staff. Miss Judd's notice was discussed at a meeting of the Library Council, called by the chairman, Miss Pamela Reid. Miss Judd was asked to leave the meeting during the discussion, and when recalled, she was told that she had less than 48 hours to pack up and leave the library.

From that text, one can almost imagine the conversation that took place between Miss Judd and the journalist who phoned her for comment. I felt for Sue Judd. I have no doubt that she had the best interests of the library and its staff at heart. Her problem had been her confrontation with a similarly determined chairman of the Natal Society Council, Pam Reid. At some stage the relationship between the two women had broken down, and they knew it. When faced with Sue Judd's resignation, Pam Reid must have recognised the opportunity it presented. Whatever the Council debate, the members accepted Miss Judd's resignation with immediate effect. 'You can't have the

tail wagging the dog' was the observation made to me by one of the Council members who was at the meeting when the resignation was accepted. Sue Judd's forcing bid was turned against her and she had no fallback position. It was a bitter blow and a slap in the face after all her years of service. But it was a gamble that had not paid off. It was not something that I could do anything about – it was not my fight.

On the other hand, I could understand where Pam Reid and the Council were coming from. The building was nearly completed. They did not have the time to allow a long notice period for Sue Judd. Nor could they spend much time recruiting her replacement. They needed a credible librarian in the post as soon as possible to drive the final commissioning of the building and to supervise the move. The idea of directly approaching potential candidates rather than simply advertising the position had paid off for Pam Reid and the Council.

On my return to Pretoria, I had to break the news to my employers. I consoled myself with the thought that the Natal Society had offered me an unexpected chance to prove myself as a manager; to take a significant step up the ladder of professional success. It was a tremendous compliment and a vote of confidence. I was content to leave it at that. Under the shadow of the Sue Judd controversy, I would need to move a major library collection into totally new premises that I had played no part in designing. I could see that it would be a significant challenge, but also an opportunity for my whole family.

Having left my wife and baby son in the Transvaal, I drove down to Pietmaritzburg to start work as the chief librarian of the Natal Society Library

on 1 October 1974. On my first day in office, I walked from my hotel to Pam Reid's record shop on Chapel (now Peter Kerchhoff) Street and reported for duty. She was pleased to see me and offered me a cup of tea. Afterwards, I walked across to the library in its premises on Longmarket (Langalibalele) Street.

There Pat McKenzie welcomed me, showed me into my office and introduced me to the staff. They were polite and welcoming, but I was aware of a tension in the air. During the course of the day I received a phone call from the *Natal Witness* requesting an interview. For them, and presumably for the citizens of Pietermaritzburg, the appointment of a new chief librarian at the Natal Society Library was newsworthy. I was rather bemused by it all.

On his arrival it soon became clear that the *Natal Witness* reporter wanted to focus on the issue of Sue Judd's resignation. I was entirely new to local political issues, but realised that Pam Reid, as well as being chair of the Natal Society Council, was an influential, but controversial member of the City Council.

'So Mr Hooper, what do you have to say about Miss Judd's resignation after 24 years of faithful service?' asked the reporter as a photographer hovered around in the background taking pictures. 'I have nothing to say. In fact, I can't quite understand what all the excitement is about. In Pretoria, an

issue like this would not even receive mention on one of the innermost pages of the *Pretoria News*.'

'The *Natal Witness* understands that your starting salary is significantly higher than that paid to Miss Judd after 24 years of service. Can you confirm that?' 'The salary I am paid is, I understand, a confidential matter between me and my employers. It was negotiated with the Natal Society Council when I was offered this position. It is the same as the salary I was earning in my previous position. I moved across at no increased financial benefit to myself.'

'Have you any comment to make about the controversy surrounding Miss Judd's resignation at this critical time?' 'No, I don't. I was not here at the time. As I understand the situation, Miss Judd offered her resignation and it was accepted. Why is this an issue?' A photograph of me sitting at my desk appeared in the *Natal Witness* the following morning, together with a comparatively innocuous report on the interview. But



Tony Hooper, Natal Society chief librarian (Natal Witness, 2 October 1974)

the issue would not go away.

A month or so after I took up my job, I came in to my office one morning to find that someone had ransacked my desk and upended the contents of the drawers over it and the floor. No one had any idea who might have done it. I tidied things up and said nothing further.

Shortly afterwards, I was invited by Sue Judd to meet her over a cup of tea one morning. She was charming. She outlined her lengthy battle with the Natal Society Council for improved salaries for library staff. It was clear that her relationship with Pam Reid had not been good for some years. I came away with an impression that Sue Judd was actually quite relieved, if not at the opportunity to retire, then to have come to the end of a long battle. As Jennifer Whitelaw and June Farrer were subsequently to record in their obituary for her, she had done what she could.⁴

Sue and I did not have much to do with one another after that meeting. She was working at Shuter and Shooter, and making a new life for herself. I was deeply involved in the final commissioning of the building, and preparing the move of books and journals from several separate venues around the city. Certainly, there was no personal animosity between us, although there was some residual hostility towards Pam Reid from certain sections of the Pietermaritzburg community.

That hostility came to the fore at the next annual general meeting of the Natal Society. Under Pam Reid's very capable chairmanship the annual report of the Natal Society for 1974 was presented together with the library budget for the coming year. The meeting was held in the library reading room and was well attended – more so than one would normally have expected for such an event.

There was some hostile heckling from the floor, but a sprinkling of lawyers and academics in the audience ensured that due process was followed. After some noisy arguments, Professor Colin Webb moved that 'the matter be now put'. It was a forcing motion and resulted in the passage of the annual report and a budget that made provision for salary adjustments for the library staff.

On 24 January 1975, the *Daily News* again reported on the controversy under the headline 'Library chief asks for R15 000 pay rises for staff': 'The new Chief Librarian of the Natal Society Library, Mr A S C Hooper, has asked the Pietermaritzburg City Council for R15 000 more for salaries for his staff – including a maximum R3 000 increase for himself.' The report made it clear that 'the present salary scales of the Natal Society Library had come into force on April 1 1973. Since then the Natal Provincial Library Services and the Natal University Library had had two salary adjustments.'

The report ended with the comment that 'Mr Hooper was appointed head of the library from October 1 last year, following the controversial resignation of the former Chief Librarian, Miss Ursula Judd after 24 years' service. At the time, Miss Pamela Reid, chairman of the library, refused to comment on a claim that Mr Hooper was being employed at a salary of R9 900, which was R2 300 more than Miss Judd had been earning.'⁵

Within a year of Sue Judd's resignation, and even before the move into the new building, the salaries of the library staff had been adjusted in the way that Sue had wanted. For Sue, that was a win. For both her and Pam Reid the running conflict had ended. Pam now had the opportunity to build on my arrival to

create a new future for the Natal Society Library. Unencumbered by the past, she looked forward to opening the library's services to all races, and to extending its reputation and reach beyond the municipal boundaries of Pietermaritzburg.

The adjustment of the staff salaries fulfilled Pam Reid's commitment to them and to me. It also put an end to the controversy surrounding Sue's resignation and my subsequent appointment. But my engagement with the local press was only just beginning. I was soon to discover that Pietermaritzburg is a little town where, as Pat McKenzie once told me 'if you kick a can in Scottsville, it can be heard across town in Town Hill.'

Part two: making history

Pietermaritzburg, as the capital city of the province of Natal, had deep roots in the history of South Africa. The battlefields of three wars – the Boer-Zulu, Anglo-Zulu and Anglo-Boer wars – could be reached in two or three hours' drive. It was also an hour's drive from Durban where my own ancestors had lived, so when I moved there in 1974 with my little family, I returned to the land of my cultural roots.

In the 1970s, Pietermaritzburg had a stable community of families many of whom had lived in the city for generations – Boer and Brit, Zulu and Indian. In some ways the society was more British than the British, reflecting some of the jingoistic rhetoric and attitudes of a British colony prior to the Anglo-Boer War – genteel and middle class. Businessmen wore suits and ties to work; their wives often wore hats, gloves and stockings when going into town to shop.

Like some of my Natal-born ancestors, many of the inhabitants were highly suspicious of Afrikaners, intensely hostile to the National Party

and its apartheid policies, and refused to learn or speak Afrikaans. The citizens reflected a range of political views across the full spectrum of South African society at the time. Several of my Afrikaans-speaking colleagues, whose families had been interned in Kitchener's concentration camps, were still trying to implement the policies that triggered the Anglo-Boer War. Among the people I knew, many had been members of the Liberal Party before it disbanded. Some of their wives were members of the Black Sash movement; quietly angry and just as determined.

In the years I lived there, Pietermaritzburg was still essentially a white society, the sort of racially segregated, patriarchal community that seems to have been the target of political activism and derogatory comment ever since – like a huge cumulonimbus cloud, bright white on top and ominously black underneath, with tumbling and churning currents in between. But it was unusually well-bred and courteous in terms of the Natal traditions of the time. These were people for whom integrity and honesty were not just desirable, but expected. They were kind and considerate, generous to others and intent on contributing to their community; people who were determined to make the country a better place for all.

Those who joined the Liberal Party did so not for what it could do for them, but for what it would do for others. They held their leaders accountable. Their leaders knew it, and lived accordingly. The lives of Alan Paton, Peter Brown and many other distinguished citizens of Pietermaritzburg attest to that statement.

With the issue of staff salaries having been settled, my primary responsibility in the first few months of my tenure

was to supervise the final building processes in liaison with the project architect while planning for the move of the bookstock into the new building. In this regard I relied on Pat McKenzie and Brian Spencer to form my project team. They were magnificent. Together we developed a process by which the books and staff were moved from three separate facilities around town into the central seven-storey building. It involved counting the linear metres of shelving required for each section of the bookstock, where it came from and where it would go. The ability to read two-dimensional building plans and be able to imagine them in three dimensions was crucial.

The library bookstock and in particular the legal deposit collection was a significant historical and literary resource for the province of Natal. To Sue Judd's credit, the Natal Society Library took its legal deposit responsibilities extremely seriously, co-operating with the other four legal deposit libraries in South Africa to ensure completeness of the collection and its proper cataloguing and curation. Planning how to get the books into a sequence that was related to subject and form, but above all retrievable, was crucial.

The library staff too was magnificent. They worked extremely hard boxing books, keeping them in their classified or alphabetical order, and then unpacking them again in their new accommodation. In the course of the planning and move, an enthusiastic spirit was built up among all members of staff. Any divisions of the past seemed to vanish in the challenge to work together to create a new and better library service for Pietermaritzburg. It was for most of us an inspirational experience.

The opening of the new Natal Society

Library building came on 17 June 1975. Again, we received huge coverage from both the *Daily News* and the *Natal Witness*.⁶ The *Natal Witness* articles stretched over three pages, provocatively starting with one entitled 'New library size can be doubled'. Another report spoke of the new role of the library as a 'Vast source of information benefit to all'. There were photographs of the old and new buildings as well as a team photo of the staff of the library, in which I appear seated between June Farrer and Pat McKenzie looking as if I had just laid an egg.⁷

The coverage appropriately featured a long article by Sue Judd on the people who founded the Natal Society in 1851. Sue focused on the values and principles of the Society, its museum and its library. She made it clear that the Society's origins were to 'bring about a greater settlement in the town and harmony and understanding between Afrikaner and British.' She quoted Henry Cloete, recorder of the Natal Court and the first president of Natal Society in 1851 who 'hoped that Pietermaritzburg would be, in due course, the centre of an extensive colony where the Zoolah and the European may enjoy equal rights and privileges.'⁸ In her featured article Sue Judd rightly identified 'equal rights and privileges' as the link between 1851 and 1975. The Natal Society Council had announced its intention to adopt this principle by making the new library open to all races. That decision was to influence my activities significantly in the coming years.

The Natal Society celebrated the opening of the new library building with a cocktail party held in the library building at 6.30 pm on 17 June 1975. Before the party, Administrator of Natal W.W.B. Havemann performed the

official opening by unveiling a plaque on the side of the building. It was a notable occasion hosted with great dignity and presence by Pam Reid. In a letter I wrote to the *Natal Witness*, I recorded my gratitude to the editor for the excellent press coverage given to the opening of the City Council's new building. It was an historic occasion and gratifying to note the interest of Pietermaritzburg's only newspaper in the events of its home city.⁹

Nevertheless, despite leader page advertisements for three days in the *Witness*, and signs in English and Afrikaans placed on the main door and in the entrance concourse of the library for a full week warning patrons that the library would be closed for the afternoon of 17 June, some were annoyed that the library had been closed for the opening ceremony. At least one member of the Pietermaritzburg public wanted to know why the new library building had not also been provided with new books. I ended my letter by stating that we sincerely regretted any inconvenience to users caused by Tuesday afternoon's closure but were 'encouraged by the fact that the services of the library are appreciated, and that even a short interruption in the service is a matter of concern to the people of Pietermaritzburg.'

Shortly before the library was opened in a press report we emphasised that 'a library is not just a place where you go to take out books. The real library should be a place which stores and disseminates information.'¹⁰ In addition to the main lending and reference areas, there were now a children's library as well as specialised collections for archival, photographic and map material. Our new building had an auditorium to be used for lectures of interest to differ-

ent sections of the population. We were in business.

Initially there was a slow trickle of people into the new library from the Indian and African communities of Pietermaritzburg. They were curious at first – a little bit uncertain as to what to expect from the reference department and how it could be used in their lives. However, in a couple of weeks the library became totally inundated, especially on Saturdays and Sundays, when students from all over Pietermaritzburg flooded in to do their homework.

I watched with interest this massive growth in the use of the library. After all, this is what libraries were all about. This is what we wanted for our library services to the people of Pietermaritzburg – all the people of Pietermaritzburg. The place became so full that the students were sitting on the floor and on the staircases in order to find space to work. Or so it seemed to me. Maybe the *Natal Witness* observation that the 'New library size can be doubled' was not far from the truth after all!

I soon discovered that, in reality, the library was seen as a very good place for young teenagers to meet up with members of the opposite sex. The Indian community had built strict protocols around opportunities for teenage boys and girls to meet. Now, unwittingly, the library staff found themselves fulfilling the role of proxy chaperones, if only nominally. Of course, the kids loved it. While some were there to read or do their homework, many were there to meet their pals. The people who started to grumble were those who found that the library was not the quiet contemplative environment for reading the newspapers that they had imagined, or had previously experienced.

A *Natal Witness* front page featured a

picture of children in the library learning to make Christmas decorations.¹¹ This followed an earlier report headed 'New world opens for Pmb children' announcing the story hour on Saturday mornings to be run by my wife.¹² Encouragingly, it showed the active involvement of children in the library, demonstrating how it was reaching out to all portions of the community. However, all was not entirely well within the Pietermaritzburg body politic. The first shots in a coming battle had been fired in an Afrikaans-language broadsheet of uncertain provenance entitled *Tempo*.¹³

While reference facilities in the new building were opened to all races, lending was initially still divided into separate services for white and black citizens. The white clients came to the main library on Churchill Square whereas the black library users continued to use the Market Square branch library in Longmarket (Langalibalele) Street. This was an illogical arrangement that resulted in cumbersome delivery processes: orders had to be placed and the requested books delivered to the Market Square branch by messenger from the main library collection.

Our intention was to change the agreement with the City Council so that the Natal Society could provide library services to all population groups from the same facility. Authored by Henri Crouse the *Tempo* article recorded his objection to the proposal. He wrote that 'In practice it is obvious that the white library will be completely opened for use by all races.' Crouse quoted me as saying that the Department of Community Development had already been informed by letter of the proposed changes in Pietermaritzburg's library services. 'As far as we can determine and according to the advice of our legal

representative the permission of Community Development is not necessary for this new arrangement in library services.' The public had been given a month in which to record any objections to the new arrangement, 'but so far no one has recorded any objection to the integration of the library', he quoted me as saying.

Subsequently, the *Witness* published a letter from D. Gurusamy admiring 'the purity of mind' of those who were fully in support of a library that is open to all races. Those opposing the idea were in his opinion 'quite revolting and despicable'.¹⁴ Then, under the title of 'Books for differing tastes' a reader who styled himself 'For East is East and West is West', lit into Gurusamy, accusing him of 'racial prejudice against the Whites'. The writer then proceeded to justify his objection to a multiracial library.¹⁵

Two days later, G.J. Claassen, chairman of the Voters Policy Association in Pietermaritzburg, accused the Natal Society Library of operating the new library building in direct contravention of the Group Areas Act (1966) and also in contravention of the terms of the lease agreement with the City Council as approved by the Administrator.¹⁶ On 16 January 1976 there was a flood of letters published in the *Witness*.¹⁷

Rushing to the defence of the City Council, Councillor Mike Woollam recorded that it had agreed

to the principle of a multiracial library in September 1974 and reiterated this decision on April 22, 1975. These decisions were well-publicised and led to no objections. Now when the Council wants to vary the lease, which is only a technical matter, we have a protest from the Voters Policy Association... One of the statements is that the library is "provided by the

whites". This is not true – it is paid for out of rates which are paid by whites, coloureds and Indians.¹⁸

David Maughan Brown congratulated the City Council 'on having the vision and the courage to conduct this particular affair of the public in an orderly, intelligent and civilized manner.'¹⁹

I was told that the library had received visits from members of the security branch of the police. I wasn't surprised; that was their job. We were doing nothing wrong and all was peaceful. What could they possibly do? It needed to be dealt with at a much higher level than that of the ordinary security branch cop. I soon started to get phone calls and visits from professional colleagues in other centres who wanted to do the same as we had. Principal among them was the city librarian of Johannesburg Public Library who wanted to know how we got away with it. Some expected me to be arrested at any moment.

The tangible evidence of our success was demonstrated clearly in the annual report to the Natal Society for the 1975/76 financial year, an extract of which was published in the *Natal Witness* of 27 November 1976. There had been an overall increase in the usage of library books by all sections of the community. Membership had increased by 12% and book purchases had increased by 34.75%.

The value of the reference library to scholars and university students had spread largely by word-of-mouth. Greater use was being made by children doing school projects and students writing essays, papers and theses. Businessmen and researchers in various fields had expressed appreciation of the library services. The housebound service had become so popular that it was necessary for new members to fill

in registration forms. More than 1 000 selected books were issued each month by the staff who operated the library's housebound service van. The recorded music library, which had previously been housed in the reference library, had been completely refreshed. Many new purchases had been made and most of them were in cassette form as they were less likely to be damaged.

On 17 June 1976, a year after opening the new building, the president and Council of the Natal Society had celebrated the 125th anniversary of the founding of the Natal Society by holding a cocktail party in the library. It turned out to be a memorable year in many ways.

NOTES

- 1 Ursula E.M. Judd, 'The origins of the Natal Society: Chapter 1, early Pietermaritzburg' *Natalia* 2 (1972), pp. 30–33; Ursula E.M. Judd, 'The origins of the Natal Society: Chapter 2, 1845–1846' *Natalia* 3 (1973), pp. 45–49; Ursula E.M. Judd, 'The origins of the Natal Society: Chapter 3, 1847–1849' *Natalia* 4 (1974), pp. 55–60; Ursula E.M. Judd, 'The origins of the Natal Society: Chapter 4, 1850–1851' *Natalia* 5 (1975), pp. 42–47; Ursula E.M. Judd, 'The origins of the Natal Society: Chapter 5, May 1851' *Natalia* 5 (1975), pp. 48–52; Ursula E.M. Judd, 'The origins of the Natal Society: Chapter 6, May–June 1851' *Natalia* 6 (1976), pp. 24–27.
- 2 David Buckley, 'The Natal Society Library 1975–1995' *Natalia* 25 (1995), pp. 77–80; Jewel Koopman, 'Dedicated lives: Miss Sue Judd and Miss Pamela Reid' *Natalia* 31 (2001), pp. 11–24.
- 3 Buckley, 'The Natal Society Library 1975–1995'.
- 4 Jennifer Whitelaw and June Farrer, 'Ursula Evelyn Mabel Judd (1917–1976): a tribute' *Natalia* 6 (1976), pp. 9–11.
- 5 *Daily News*, 24 January 1975.
- 6 'Library with a touch of Natal history' *Daily News*, 17 June 1975; *Natal Witness (NW)*, 17 June 1975, pp. 6–8.
- 7 *ibid.*, pp. 7–8.
- 8 Ursula E.M. Judd, 'Reminiscing on founders of Natal Society' *NW*, 17 June 1975, p. 8.

- 9 Tony Hooper, 'Surprised at users' *NW*, 23 June 1975.
- 10 'Maritzburg's new library: not just a place to borrow books' *Natal Mercury*, 28 May 1975.
- 11 *NW*, 18 December 1975.
- 12 *NW*, 6 September 1975.
- 13 'Biblioteek-deure dalk gou oop vir nie-blankes' *Tempo*, 28 November 1975.
- 14 D. Gurusamy, letter, *NW*, 5 January 1976.
- 15 'For East is East and West is West: books for differing tastes' *NW*, 12 January 1976.
- 16 G.J. Claassen, 'These are the real issues, says Claassen' *NW*, 14 January 1976.
- 17 *NW*, 16 January 1976.
- 18 Mike Woollam, 'Woollam gives his views of the real issues' *NW*, 16 January 1976.
- 19 David A. Maughan Brown, 'Call to ignore VPA criticism' *NW*, 16 January 1976.