

(45)

SECONDARY
STANGER INDIAN SCHOOL HISTORY.

Before 1893, there were no schools in the infant village of Stanger which had been created on the old site of King Shaka's Royal Kraal, Dukuza.

Dr. Peter Sutherland was asked to help survey out the general layout of Stanger Village in 1872, and later in that year/early in 1873, the Magistracy and Military were moved up from Williamstown, near Umhlali, into two sets of buildings.

On the corner of Jackson and Rood Streets, on high ground there, and around a convenient natural water spring, a Complex of Police Buildings, and the original part of the Jail were built.

Across on the high plateau, where Dawnview Indian School now stands a Fort building was erected, from which the Mounted Divisions operated. We still have the Police Complex, but unfortunately the Fort was demolished in 1971.

Early in 1873, the village was then called, "STANGER", named after Dr. William Stanger, Natal's first Surveyor-General.

Down at Isipingo, in 1892, we find record of a young European man teaching in an Indian School which he had started. His name was Mr. Anthony A. Simon. A friend of his from Stanger, who later became his father-in-law, Mr. Joel Peters, persuaded Mr. Simon to come up to Stanger and start a school here as there were none.

We are fortunate that Mr. Simon did come up. He rented a small house, built as a home for the Seedat family in 1880. This dwelling was situated on the corner of Hulett and Jackson Streets, opposite the Methodist Church. Unfortunately this building has recently been demolished.

With financial help from the Minister of the Anglican Church, the Rev. Booth, Mr. Simon opened his small, multi-racial school, early in 1893, with 6 pupils, and called his tiny school, "WHITES".

By 1895, there were many more pupils. On the 5th. August, 1895, Mr. H.R. Dukes opened two rooms in his huge house in Stanger, as "Stanger European Government School", and the 75 European pupils from "Whites" (and a few Indian pupils, I am told), moved across to Mr. Duke's School.

After the High School pupils moved and then in 1976, the Junior School pupils moved to their new schools, in August, 1977 Mr. Duke's old house/School, greatly added on to over the years, was taken over by the Indians as "Stanger South Indian School", which it still is today (1985).

By the turn of the century (early 1900's), there were some 20 pupils at "Whites" School, Indians and Coloureds. Mr. A.A. Simon remained in charge there until in 1910, when Indian teachers were sent here from Durban to run the School.

Mr. Simon moved to a small, wood and iron building, rented from the Kajee family, situated on the top corner of Couper and Lindley Streets, where he taught Indian children, referring to this school as "Simon's Private School". Barclay's Bank was built on this site in 1972. "Whites" became known as "St. Aidan's Indian Mission School".

The first Indian Principal there at the "Mission School" was Mr. L.C.B. Ephraim, with Mr. Solomon Peters as an Assistant Teacher. Then Mr. G.V. Naidu was appointed as another Assistant teacher in 1912.

As this school was becoming too cramped, it was decided to approach the Natal Education Department for a new school to be built. Mr. M.N. Naidu, a local Solicitor's Clerk was successful in his written approach to the Superintendent of Education, and Mr. H.C. Ballance, the Inspector of Schools was sent to Stanger to view the situation. A Committee was also formed at this time, upon which Mr. D. Bramdaw and Mr. Philip Thomas were prominently involved. The outcome was that 5 acres of land was acquired from the Stanger Town Board.

A school, consisting of five classrooms, an office and two cloakrooms

were completed towards the end of July, 1920.

The school was officially opened on the 3rd. of August, 1920 by Mr. A.J.S. Maritz, the District Magistrate.

"Whites" sent across 161 of it's pupils, (137 boys and 24 girls). Mr. S. Doolarkham was appointed as the first Principal with Mr. G.V. Naidoo as Senior Assistant and Mr. Paul Peters as a teacher. In no time at all, there were 225 pupils and more teachers were needed. Messrs. B. Doolarkham, A. Rowley and E.E. Soobroyal were appointed in the latter months of 1920.

In 1923, "Whites" closed it's doors as a school, and was bought by Mrs. Momien, an Indian lady, as a house for her and her family.

By 1930, there were 238 pupils, 202 boys and 36 girls.

By 1940, there were 564 pupils, 426 boys and 138 girls.

On the 1st. May, 1930, a further 111 pupils were enrolled when the Veda Dharma Sabha Hall was taken over as an annex. This brought the numbers to 349 pupils. This hall was used until the end of 1940.

An important feature of the school from 1930 to 1940, was the increase in number of pupils in Standard 6. In 1930, 12 (all boys) sat for their Standard 6 examination, and in 1940, 34 pupils, five of whom were girls, wrote this exam.

In the early 1940's, after passing Standard 6, they had to continue their education at Sastri College.

In 1942, 29 pupils (including 5 girls), were admitted to the newly created Standard-7 class.

The first Junior Certificate Examination pupils entered the following year, 1943, consisting of 21 boys and 5 girls.

The Sabha Hall had to be used once again, until the end of 1959.

In December, 1943, there was a change in leadership. After almost 23 years, Mr. S. Doolarkham was transferred to Durban.

From the 11th. December, 1943 until the 11 th. October 1944, the school came under the management of Mr. Ephraim Samuel, (son-in-law of Mr. A.A. Simon, having married his daughter, Lily, in 1927).

Mr. E. Samuel had trained as a school teacher in Durban, qualifying as such on the 1/7/1924. His first appointment was at the Stanger Secondary School. His wife, Lily, was the first girl pupil at the school when it opened in August 1920, being in Standard 5 at this time. Mr. H.C. Maraj was the first boy pupil. (Mrs. Lily Samuel is still alive ; August 1985).

Another of Mr. A.A. Simon's daughters, (in fact, all his six children took up the teaching profession), Miss. Agnes Christina Simon (now Mrs. George), was the first Indian lady to qualify as a teacher, doing so in Durban, obtaining her certificate on the 1st. January, 1930. She returned to teach at this Indian school, in Stanger. Mr. A.A. Simon's only son, Mr. B.M. Simon, a highly qualified school teacher, opened the New Guelderland Government Aided Indian School on the 2nd. of April, 1929. He later took up the post of Assistant Teacher at the Stanger Government Indian School.

On the 11th. October, 1944, the school received it's second Principal, Mr. B.W. Charles. (after who the B.W. Charles Library in Stanger is named), and was regarded and regraded to "Secondary II".

In 1949, the school was raised to "High School" level. the Junior classes being moved elsewhere in 1950 and through to 1963.

Mr. Charles was a keen sportsman and he represented the staff when inter-staff matches were organised. The school, now, excelled in cricket, soccer and athletics. In fact, on August 2nd, 1948, just one day short of the school's 28th. birthday, the school won the "Dr. Christopher's Shield", a prize which was awarded to the school which emerged victorious in the North Coast School's Athletic Competition.

In 1949, the school participated in the Chetty Shield debates competition, and has done so ever since, winning the "Jan Hofmeyer speech contest" in 1951.

In 1950, the first Matriculation class was introduced, with 26 pupils.

In April, 1950, a kitchen was added to the school buildings. On the sudden death of Mr. B.W. Charles, in mid August, 1952, his deputy, Mr. M.H. Keerath took over as leader. Mr. R. Moodley became the school's third Principal in 1953. 1960 saw the completion of additions to the school, in the form of an administration block, six new classrooms and a new kitchen. On the 3rd December, 1955, a grand fete was held, which raised the first R500 towards the cost of building a school hall. Towards the end of 1957, an Annual Speech Day was held, the first guest speaker being Mr. M.R. Muthukrishna. On the 20th. March, 1963, two prefabricated classrooms were erected and made available. Mr. R. Moodley was promoted as a Supervisor (later an Inspector) of Indian Schools in January, 1964. Taking over from him as the school's 4th. Principal, from the first January, 1964, was Mr. T. Vadivalu. The number of pupils rose to almost 1,000 by 1965, and again new classrooms were built. From the 1st. April, 1966, Indian education came under the control of the Department of Indian Affairs. In this same year of 1966, Afrikaans and Accountancy subjects were introduced as part of the school's curriculum. Art and Music have also been added. At last, on the 3rd. June, 1967, the School Hall was built and opened by Mr. P.R.T. Nel, the then Director of Indian Education, and was called the "Memorial Hall". By 1970, there were 976 pupils, with Mr. T. Vadivalu still as Principal.

Built in 1920 opposite the old Stanger Country Club and is now an Indian school. The first Headmaster there was Mr Doolarkhan. The first girl pupil was Mrs Samuels (Std 5 pupil by then)

On Looking Back — Fifty Years of Progress

THE BEGINNING

At the turn of the Twentieth Century Stanger was a little country town with a small Indian Population. The early beginnings of formal education for the Indians in the area cannot be accurately established. However, about 1910 there was a private school situated in the vicinity of Lindley and Couper Street corner. Apart from the fact that it was under the control of the late Mr. A. A. Simon very little else is known of this school.



LATE MR. A. A. SIMON, Head teacher of Private School. The Simon family played an important part in the early days of this school. A son late Mr. B. Simon and daughter Miss Agnes Simon taught at this school.

In the year 1912 the St. Aidan's Indian Mission established a school with state assistance. A building which still stands to this day in the corner of Jackson and Hullett Streets was used for this purpose. This school known as the Stanger Government Aided Indian School was sometimes referred to as the "Mission School".



"Mission School" corner of Jackson and Hullett Street.

The first Principal of this school was Mr. L. C. B. Ephraim with Solomon Peters as an assistant. On the resignation of the latter Mr. G. V. Naidoo was appointed as assistant teacher in 1912.

The school continued to attract pupils but soon the accommodation which was limited to 109 pupils became inadequate. Since the building was not entirely suitable there was a

general feeling that approaches should be made to the Natal Education Department for the erection of a Government School in Stanger. With this in mind, Mr. M. N. Naidu, a local solicitor's clerk, wrote to the then Superintendent of Education. He received intimation that Mr. H. C. Ballance, the Inspector of Schools, will visit Stanger to discuss the building of a Govt. Indian School. It was also suggested that a Committee be formed to investigate this possibility. On the appointed date the Inspector met Mr. Naidu and a committee representative of the local Indian population and the need for a Government School was clearly established.

THE FIRST GOVERNMENT SCHOOL

Thereafter the Natal Education Department took the necessary steps. The land where the present High School stands was acquired from the Borough and a school consisting of five classrooms, an office and two cloakrooms was completed towards the end of July, 1920. The school was officially opened on the 3rd of August, 1920 by Mr. A. J. S. Maritz, the district magistrate. This was certainly a significant day in the life of the Indian community. They were so joyous over this great development in the education of their children that they gave the first group of pupils a generous treat.

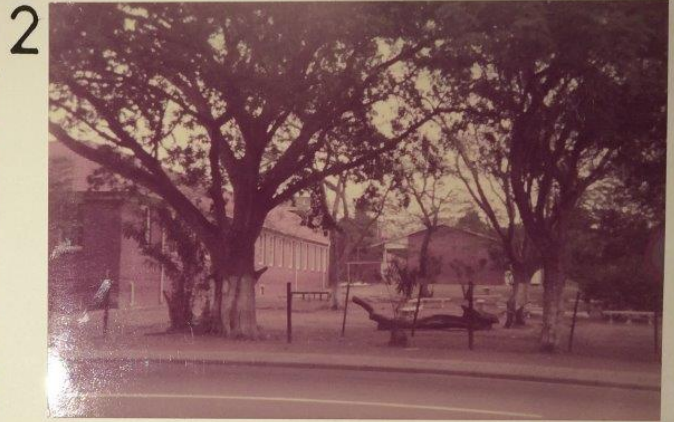
On this day 161 pupils (137 boys and 24 girls) were enrolled. Most of them were transferred from the Govt. Aided Indian School. Mr. S. Doolarkhan was appointed the first principal with Mr. G. V. Naidoo as his Senior Assistant and Mr. Paul Peters as "an unqualified assistant teacher".



Part of the original building.

INDIAN JUNIOR SCHOOL

Built in 1920 opposite the old Stanger Country Club and is now an Indian high school. The first Headmaster there was Mr Doolarkhan. The first girl pupil was Mrs Samuels (Std 5 pupil by then) and the first boy pupil was H.C. Maraj.



1. Old Indian Junior School (1920). Later Indian High School. Front view. See Brochure 10/1282.
 2. Old Indian Junior School (1920), as above. Side view.
 3. New Indian High School. M.L. Sultan School.
- Photos taken in June 1983.