

HERITAGE SURVEY OF UMZIMKHULU TOWN

**FOR
UMZIMKHULU MUNICIPALITY
&
STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL FOCUS**

DATE: 2 DECEMBER 2008

By Gavin Anderson

**Umlando: Archaeological Tourism and Resource
Management**

PO Box 102532, Meerensee, 3901

Phone/fax: 035-7531785 Fax: 0865445631 cell: 0836585362



INTRODUCTION

The Umzimkhulu municipality was recently incorporated into KZN. Umlando cc was contracted by the Umzimkhulu Municipality to undertake a heritage survey of the main town. Certain areas of the town are to be relocated, whilst potential upgrades to certain economic and social may also occur.

The aim of the heritage survey was to note those areas that have heritage potential, are protected by the KZN Heritage Act, and may require further attention.

Much of the area is in currently built up areas, however, several open fields still exist. The built-up areas consists of houses in various stages of disrepair to more modern houses. Some of these houses are older than 60 years and thus require special attention.

The town of Umzimkhulu owes its origins to the Strachans who set up a trading store on the banks of the Umzimkhulu River, near the original ferry crossing in the 1880s. This store (and specifically the trading company) formed an integral part of the regional economy. Strachan & Co. even had its own coins minted that were accepted by the banks in Kokstad. Appendix A has an excerpt from the web page relating to the history of Strachan & Company, and the family.

No archaeological sites were observed during the course of the survey; however, several historical buildings do occur in the town, as well as possible palaeontological sites in the shale formations. The buildings will need an additional specialist study.

The area of Umzimkhulu is located in figure 1, while the area of development is demarcated in figure 2.

FIGURE 1: UMZIMKHULU LOCALITY MAP

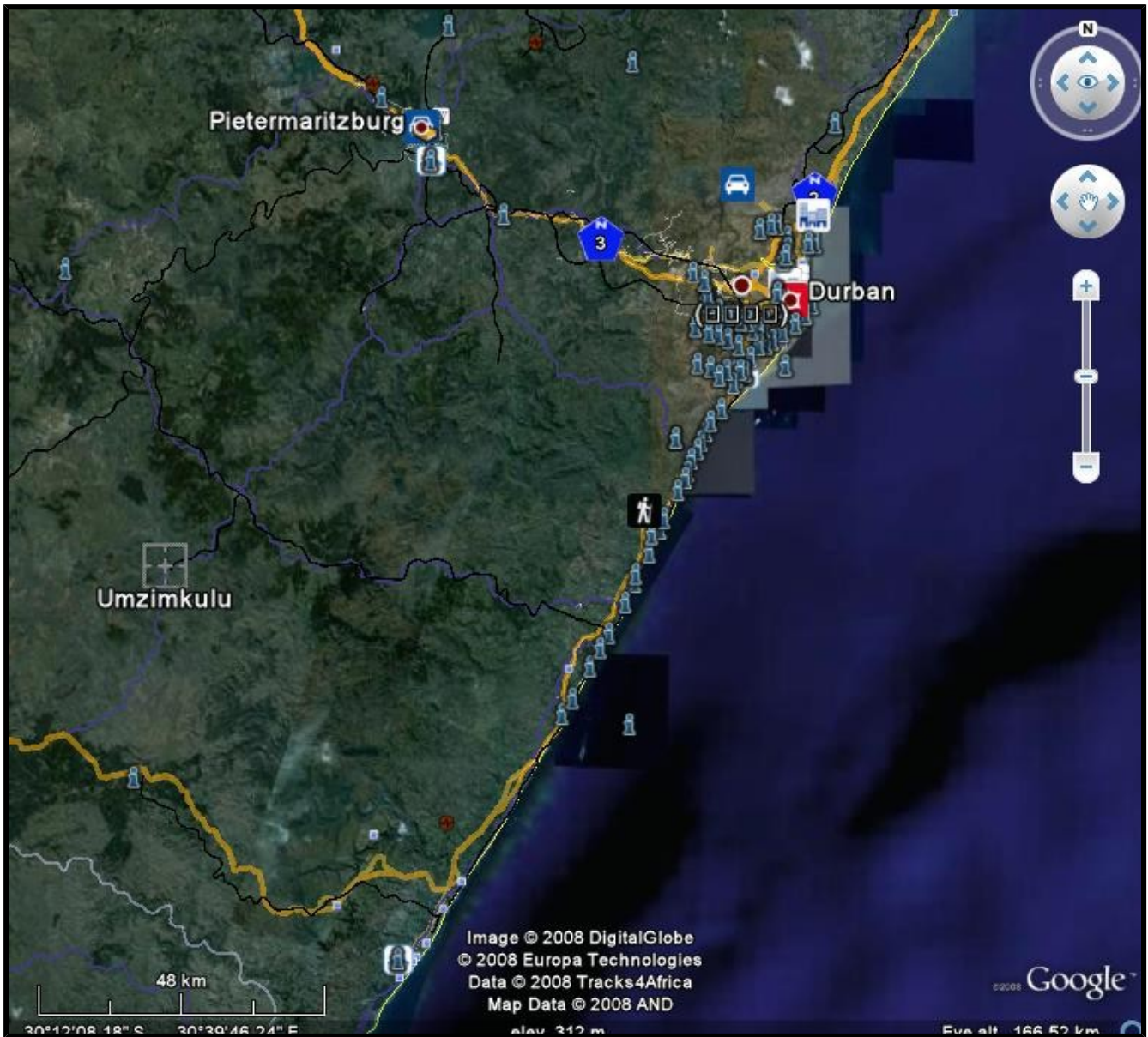
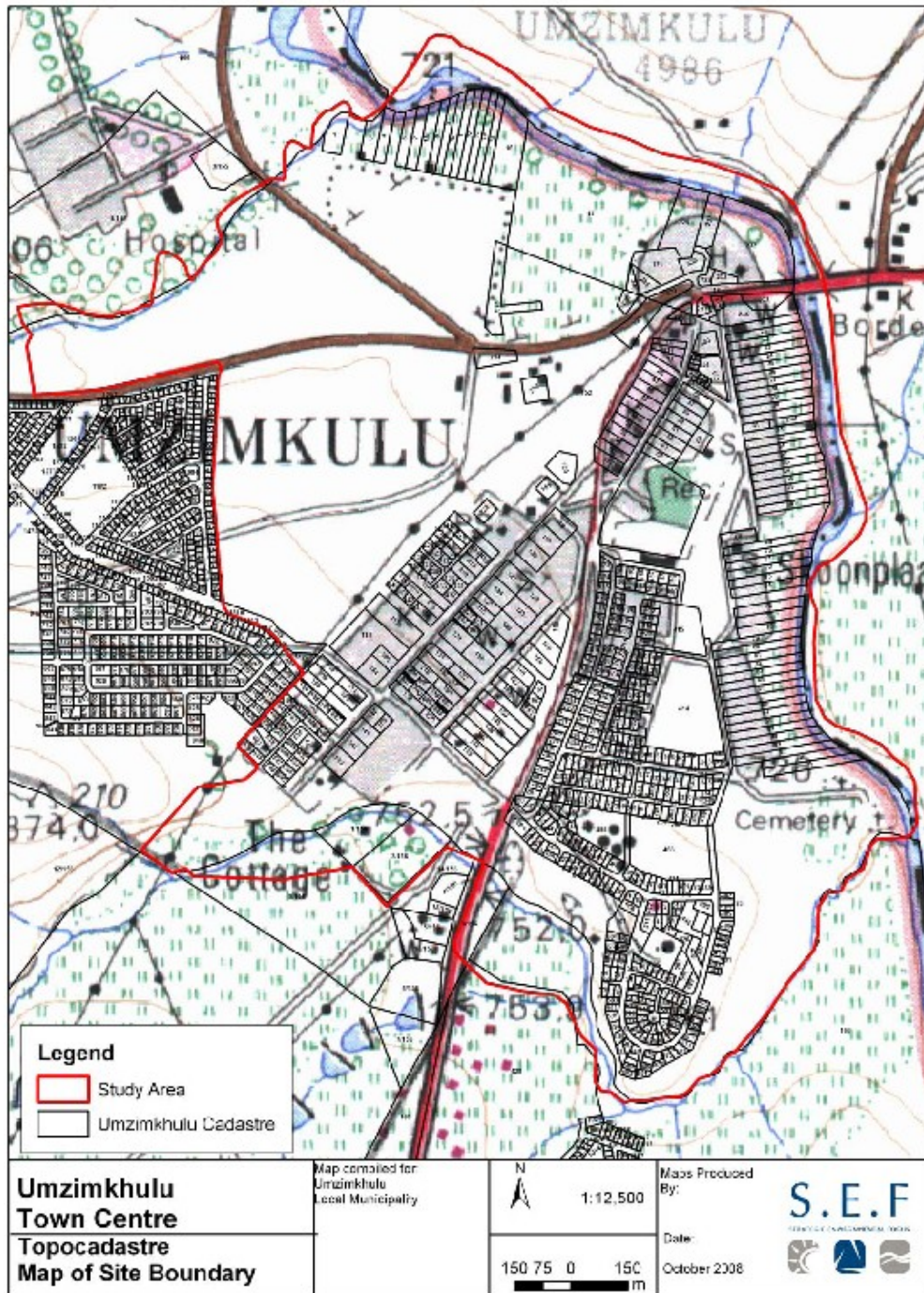


FIGURE 2: PROPOSED AREA FOR DEVELOPMENT IN UMZIMKHULU



METHOD

The method for Heritage assessment consists of several steps.

The first step forms part of the desktop assessment. Here we would consult the databases from both Umlando and the Natal Museum. These databases contain most of the known heritage sites in KwaZulu-Natal. This database does; however, tend to be restricted to archaeological and palaeontological sites. Consulting with the relevant authorities will also cover known battlefields and historical sites. We also consult with an historical architect and an historian where necessary: in this case, I subconsulted Arcaic to undertake a brief architectural desktop assessment in conjunction with photos that were emailed...

The initial archaeological survey (i.e. fieldwork) consists of a foot survey where the selected area was covered. The survey results will define the significance of each recorded site, as well as a management plan.

All sites are grouped according to low, medium and high significance for the purpose of this report. Sites of low significance have no diagnostic artefacts, especially pottery. Sites of medium significance have diagnostic artefacts and these are sampled. Sampling includes the collection of artefacts for future analysis. All diagnostic pottery, such as rims, lips and decorated sherds are sampled, while bone, stone and shell are mostly noted. Sampling usually occurs on most sites. Sites of high significance are excavated and/or extensively sampled. Those sites that are extensively sampled have high research potential, yet poor preservation of features. We attempt to recover as many artefacts from these sites by means of systematic sampling, as opposed to sampling diagnostic artefacts only.

Defining significance

Archaeological sites vary according to significance and several different criteria relate to each type of site. However, there are several criteria that allow for a general significance rating of archaeological sites.

These criteria are:

1. State of preservation of:

1.1. Organic remains:

1.1.1. Faunal

1.1.2. Botanical

1.2. Rock art

1.3. Walling

1.4. Presence of a cultural deposit

1.5. Features:

1.5.1. Ash Features

1.5.2. Graves

1.5.3. Middens

1.5.4. Cattle byres

1.5.5. Bedding and ash complexes

2. Spatial arrangements:

2.1. Internal housing arrangements

2.2. Intra-site settlement patterns

2.3. Inter-site settlement patterns

3. Features of the site:

3.1. Are there any unusual, unique or rare artefacts or images at the site?

3.2. Is it a type site?

3.3. Does the site have a very good example of a specific time period, feature, or artefact?

4. Research:

- 4.1. Providing information on current research projects
- 4.2. Salvaging information for potential future research projects

5. Inter- and intra-site variability

- 5.1. Can this particular site yield information regarding intra-site variability, i.e. spatial relationships between various features and artefacts?
- 5.2. Can this particular site yield information about a community's social relationships within itself, or between other communities?

6. Archaeological Experience:

- 6.1. The personal experience and expertise of the CRM practitioner should not be ignored. Experience can indicate sites that have potentially significant aspects, but need to be tested prior to any conclusions.

7. Educational:

- 7.1. Does the site have the potential to be used as an educational instrument?
- 7.2. Does the site have the potential to become a tourist attraction?
- 7.3. The educational value of a site can only be fully determined after initial test-pit excavations and/or full excavations.

8. Other Heritage Significance:

- 8.1. Palaeontological sites
- 8.2. Historical buildings
- 8.3. Battlefields and general Anglo-Zulu and Anglo-Boer sites
- 8.4. Graves and/or community cemeteries
- 8.5. Living Heritage Sites
- 8.6. Cultural Landscapes, that includes old trees, hills, mountains, rivers, etc related to cultural or historical experiences.

The more a site can fulfill the above criteria, the more significant it becomes. Test-pit excavations are used to test the full potential of an archaeological deposit. This occurs in Phase 2. These test-pit excavations may require further excavations if the site is of significance (Phase 3). Sites may also be mapped and/or have artefacts sampled as a form of mitigation. Sampling normally occurs when the artefacts may be good examples of their type, but are not in a primary

archaeological context. Mapping records the spatial relationship between features and artefacts.

RESULTS

Palaeontological sites

No palaeontological sites *per se* were observed during the course of the survey. However, the sub-surface shale formations throughout the study area probably contain some palaeontological remains. These would only become visible once exposed.

I surveyed several areas for palaeontological finds. These included the vast water, or sewage, reticulation project that is currently being undertaken. This project has 1m – 2m wide/deep trenches throughout Umzimkhulu, and these trenches have reached some of the shale formations. I specifically assessed the shale debris for fossilised faunal remains, but did not observe any.

Archaeological sites

Archaeological material was observed in the various open fields. This material consists of a total of four (Middle) Stone Age flakes in different areas. My criteria for an archaeological Stone Age site is 10+ stone tools. These few flakes do not meet the definition of a site.

I surveyed along the many reticulation cuttings and trenches as well as road cuttings for artefacts, but these were essentially absent. The isolated artefacts suggest that more stone tools may occur in the area, but at a very low density. The stone tools would be in a secondary context and of low significance.

Historical features

The first colonial buildings in Umzimkhulu date to 1858 when the Strachan brothers started their trading store and this later included a hotel. These were wood and corrugated iron structures and are unlikely to have left any traces. As

the town expanded, more buildings were erected. There are many historical buildings located on the western side of the R56. These areas are highlighted in yellow in Figure 3. Figure 4 is a selection of these houses.

An old farmhouse and related buildings were also observed during the survey. However, there were aggressive dogs in the (ruined) fenced area with no one nearby to control them. I decided it would be safer not to attempt to get closer and photograph the house!

The various historical buildings observed during the survey, and indicated in Figure 3, are probably older than 60 years in age. They are thus protected by the KZN Heritage Act. These buildings also require a specialist that is not covered in the Phase 1 of the heritage impact assessment¹.

Significance: The buildings are over than 60 years and are therefore significant in terms of the history of the town, and vernacular architecture. The areas outlined in the map (fig. 3) should be flagged as potential heritage resources that are significant until otherwise stated.

Mitigation: D. Whelan undertook a brief desktop architectural survey of the buildings. Her report (Appendix B) clearly shows these houses in the area before 1937. She suggests the mitigation should be as follows:

“The entire site has to be systematically surveyed with each structure separately assessed in terms of its potential, condition and merit. It is the strong recommendation that a full audit of the built environment of Umzimkhulu town be carried out, and that Amafa aKwaZulu-Natali be ‘on board’ with the process. It is also strongly recommended that the Heritage/Architectural Impact Assessment include the input of Milner Snell in connecting the history of the buildings with the architecture for expediency sake.”

¹ The Phase 1 identifies those areas that are significant and may suggest further research if needs be.

FIGURE 3: LOCATION OF VARIOUS HISTORICAL BUILDINGS IN UMZIMKHULU



MANAGEMENT PLAN

The heritage survey observed the occurrences of three types of site:

1. Possible palaeontological sites
2. Middle Stone Age artefacts
3. Historical buildings

Palaeontological sites

While no palaeontological sites were observed, there is still a likelihood of fossil remains occurring in the shales. These sites are currently subsurface, and can thus not be assessed unless they are exposed. A site inspection should occur after any large earth working operations, whereby a sample of the shales can be analysed. This will need to be undertaken by an accredited palaeontologist.

Archaeological sites

The exceedingly low frequency of Middle Stone Age tools in the study area indicates that these tools are of low significance. No further mitigation is required.

Architectural sites

Three main areas were demarcated as being architecturally sensitive. These areas consist of buildings that predate 1937 and are thus protected by the KZN Heritage Act². The buildings need to be assessed by an Amafa accredited architect-historian. Each building will need to be photographed, measured and placed into its social and architectural context. These buildings may **not** be damaged or altered unless a permit has been issued by Amafa KZN.

CONCLUSION

A heritage survey of the proposed Umzimkhulu town was undertaken. While few archaeological artefacts were observed other heritage resources were noted.

² The National heritage Resources Act would have protected these buildings prior to the incorporation of Umzimkhulu into KZN.

These included possible palaeontological finds, and buildings of architectural and historical value.

The buildings would require an expert to undertake a full audit of all houses and structures as indicated in the report, as well as a general survey of buildings outside of the demarcated.

The municipality is currently undertaking water and/or sewerage reticulations. The municipality needs to ensure that a heritage survey was undertaken before the pipes routes were excavated. These pipe routes are longer than 50m and are thus covered by the KZN Heritage Act. The current survey has indicated that there may be palaeontological remains in the area.

Appendix A
Excerpt about Strachan & Co.³

³ Info supplied by www.tokencoins.com/strachan.html#intro

Related history of the Strachan family

- [Introduction to the Strachan family](#)
- [Background to Strachan and Company](#)
- [The Strachan and Co trade tokens](#)
- [The Mountain Home set of S&Co tokens](#)
- [The scrapped Strachan and Co tokens](#)
- [Further reading.](#)

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Introduction

The Strachan family came to Natal from Campbeltown on the Null of Kintyre in Scotland, Thomas Strachan being born there on 29th January 1838 and Donald Strachan the 22nd May 1840. Donald Strachan was only ten when their parents, Robert and Mary Strachan brought them to Natal under the [infamous Byrne Scheme](#) - aimed at settling the new British territorial claim of Natal. The family, who came across on the "Unicorn" was granted 60 acres of land in the Illovo district but found it unsuitable for farming or became a victim of Byrne's bankruptcy in 1850.

They settled in Durban where Robert Strachan, their father, was killed on 2nd February 1852 in a building accident.

The orphaned boys, twelve and fourteen were cared for by a faithful servant, [Simon Rhadebe](#), who was later rewarded by Donald Strachan becoming a headman in the Umzimkhulu District and his trusted adviser during times of conflict. The teenage boys were employed by James Kinghurst, the butcher in Durban, taking wagon trains from Durban to Pietermaritzburg and then Nomansland in the mid 1850s. Kinghurst was always in financial trouble and reneged on paying the young men when they left his employ.

By 1858 the boys had raised enough capital through other means to open a trading store near their farm Clydesdale at the Drift (later Umzimkhulu) just across the Umzimkhulu river in Nomansland. The evolving town that arose around the Strachan store had many names in the 1800s. It was originally called "[Madonela](#)" by the Africans who settled there in the late 1850s to be near the new trading post; Madonela meaning "*the place of Donald*". It was later called **Clydesdale**, the name of the Strachan's farm on maps published in the 1880s, - until finally being named **Umzimkhulu** after the river in the late 1800s.

The origins of the name "Umzimkhulu" river are cemented in Zulu tradition. "Umzi" means *kraal or home*, and "omkhulu" means *which is big*. The home the Zulus referred to was the river - not a home as you would perceive it. Legend has it that the river was given this name because in 1823 it swelled to such a point that the Zulus could not pursue the Bhacas who were fleeing King Shaka's feared army. One of the Zulu warriors said, while gazing across the fast moving stretch of water that had stopped their pursuit, "*Umuzi Ubumkhulu*" (the kraal -of water- has been great) and so the river became known as Umzimkhulu - the great river.



Image right: Strachan and Co letterhead with transcript of newspaper article on the death of Thomas Strachan (original document in the Balson Holdings Family Trust collection)

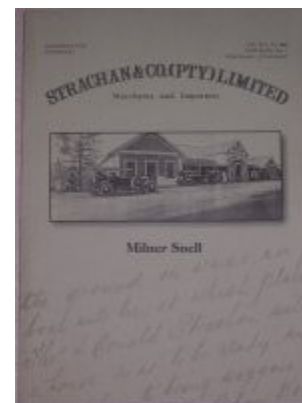
At the time the boys established their trading business in 1858 Donald was only eighteen years old and Thomas twenty. By the time the Griquas arrived in Nomansland in 1862 the boys' trading operation had become well established and accepted by the natives in the district.

Trade blossomed over the next ten years despite a major handicap - the need to barter without coinage and the great distances to markets to trade goods created a growing hurdle for the young boys and other traders in the area. Their income was supplemented when Donald Strachan was honoured with being the only white Magistrate appointed by the Griquas.

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Background to Strachan and Company

Image right: The extremely rare 100 page history of Strachan and Co written by Milner Snell of the Kokstad Museum (only thirty copies were printed).



On the 13th January 1874 Thomas Strachan and **George Charles Brisley** established the trading store partnership of Strachan and Co with their first store handily placed at the upper Umzimkhulu Drift - the site of the ferry from Natal to East Griqualand crossing the Umzimkhulu river.

Donald Strachan maintained a very keen interest in the business taking over his brother, Thomas', share of the business after his untimely death in August 1879; Thomas broke his leg following a sawmilling accident near his property at Clydesdale and never recovered, dying in 1879 (see [Strachan and Co scan of report of Thomas's death](#)).

Thomas' death, Donald Strachan's position as Resident Magistrate at Umzimkhulu coupled with his time consuming activities engaging his small private army **the Abalandosi**, in confrontations with local hostile native tribes put an enormous strain on their fast growing business and his partner Charles Brisley. This pressure eventually led to their once great friendship becoming strained. When it appeared things could not get worse, they did. In 1882 a severe recession hit East Griqualand and many traders went out of business following the collapse of the local economy - the Strachan and Co trade tokens circulating East Griqualand

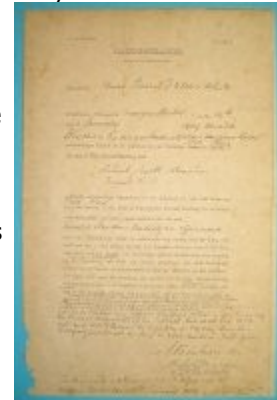
as currency did just enough to keep the business afloat. The main cause of the economic collapse in South Africa at this time was over speculation in diamond shares following Rhodes and Barnato's battle to secure the big hole of Kimberley. Eventually the recession coupled with the growing rift between the business partners hit Strachan and Co very badly and in January 1887 the company was temporarily dissolved after Strachan and Brisley could not agree on how to pay the company's debts to the trading house Randles of Durban.

Image right: Umzimkhulu in 1883 - there is a large African township today where Strachan's main store and hotel once stood alone on the banks of the Umzimkhulu River.



For three months Strachan and Co effectively ceased to trade but in April 1887 Donald Strachan revived the company with part of the company's indebtedness, by agreement, being left to George Brisley. Strachan was depending on the sale of a large tract of land at Lourdes to the Catholic Trappist Monks to fund his acquisition and pay his debts but found himself in a very deep hole as Brother Hudson refused to budge on an offer representing just 60% of the land's book value. Despite the enormous hurdles the company's trade tokens continued to be circulated and honoured by Donald Strachan.

Eventually Donald Strachan was forced to sell the land to the Catholic Trappist Monks in late 1887 to avoid bankruptcy - the Monks paying just £9,100 for a 50,000 acre block - earlier valued at £15,000 and today worth millions. The valuable land, which allowed Donald Strachan to pay off his debts, is still owned by the Trappist Monks who are also based at Mariannhill near Pinetown (Natal). (Sources: "**The Foundation of Lourdes Mission**" by **Brother Nivard** - dated 17th April 1895 and "**Strachan and Co, Merchants and Traders**" by Milner Snell).



Over the next fifty years the business blossomed and under consecutive generations it grew into the trading empire of the region - with thirty stores spread across East Griqualand. The trade tokens playing a major part in the business' success. In 1986 the business was disbanded through the homeland policy which saw the transfer of white businesses in this region (now Transkei) being handed over to the African population. The trading stores and hotel at Umzimkhulu were sold to individual black proprietors and are, sadly, today in a state of ruin.

Image right: The liquor licence granted to Donald Strachan of Strachan and Company at Umzimkhulu in 1904

The document instructs Strachan not to allow "men or women of notoriously bad fame to assemble on his premises"....

The only lasting legacy of this once great Strachan and Co trading store empire **is their trade tokens**.

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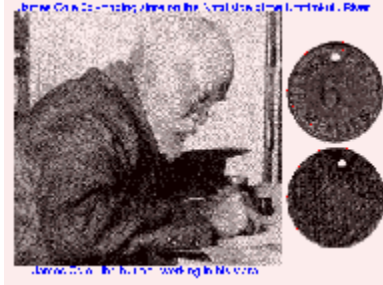
The Strachan and Co trade tokens

Ken Strachan, who **Scott Balson first met in 1976**, told him that the trade tokens minted by his grand father, Donald Strachan, were inspired by the successful circulation of the **1860**

Durban Club 6d. As Margaret Rainier notes on page 150 of her book "**Madonela**" that Donald Strachan stayed at the Durban Club when he visited Durban.

Douglas Strachan, the Managing Director of Strachan and Co from 1915 tells us, "The first minting (of trade tokens) was, like the others, done in England, and it is thought to have been prior to 1880, probably as early as 1870. This was not a success as it had no hole near the rim and could not be strung on a string round the owner's neck - the natives had no purses in those days."

None of these first Strachan tokens, without the hole, have ever been found - if any were they would be extremely valuable. Like the first **F C Larkan trade tokens** it is highly likely they were made locally out of cardboard and not struck in England. Unlike the **S&Co** tokens they would not have reflected the partnership with Brisley. (ie They might, for instance, have had "Strachan" and a value hand written on the cardboard.)



Douglas continues, "This (first token) was soon replaced by the tokens showing values and the name "**S & Co**" in 1874 or 1875. The third issue, printed like the second on one side only, had the additional letters "**MH**", these represent a branch of the company - "Mountain Home" - and were primarily intended for use there. The fourth and last issue are printed on both sides and have the words "**In Goods**" added. This series of tokens is said to precede those of **James Cole (image right above)** by many years and were in general use throughout this area and Southern Natal until withdrawn in about 1932. At least two separate strikes of the "**In Goods**" set were made.

"The first tokens with S&Co were accepted everywhere including church collections - but are seldom, if ever, seen these days." (The later S&Co "**In Goods**" sets were also widely used as currency in the region up until 1932)

Image Right: Donald Strachan with some of his staff in 1906...

Back Row L-R: Alexander "Bob" Greening (Umzimkhulu Store); **George Druce** (the blacksmith and farrier); **Thomas Wallace Strachan** (ran the Umzimkhulu store later); **Frederick Strachan**; **Douglas Donald Strachan** (took over running the business in 1915); **Frank Hulley**; **Mr Howes**; **Mr McHugh** (the barman at the Umzimkhulu Hotel who was shot in 1909 by a member of the CMR).
Seated L-R: "Doonie" McIntyre (Donald Strachan's cousin); **Robert S Strachan***; **Donald Strachan**; **Henry C Curson** (Merchandise Manager); **F G Pennales**; **E E Richer**
Front Row L-R: D Roussouw; **Robert Mnini**; **Piet Nero**; **A G Adams** (Rondedraai Store) **and the dog "Bull"**



*Robert Strachan married **James Cole's** eldest daughter Kate.



The first issue of the **Strachan & Co coins** bearing the "S&Co" (seen above) would have been minted around 1874 - when the company was first formed by Brisley and Strachan. This was over ten years before the production of the **"Afrikaner" ZAR coinage under Paul Kruger** used in the Oranje Vry Staat and the Transvaal and at the same time as the **Burgerspond** was minted.

Lengthy research supporting Douglas Strachan's claim that these tokens were accepted as currency over a large area and minted in about 1874 can be seen at this link.



Image right: Donald Strachan and his sons.

It was only in the later years, probably in the early 1900s that the change was made from trade token to barter token by the inclusion of the words **"In Goods"**. By then the S&Co tokens had become so popular as an alternative currency that tens of thousands of these coins were struck. This volume was obviously far more than was required for the sole purpose of trade at their stores. **At least two strikings of the S&Co "in goods" tokens were made.** It is interesting to note that all other trading stores of substance followed Strachan's lead - minting their own coins. Dr Theron's excellent (1978) book **"Tokens of Southern Africa and Their History"** notes several including: **F C Larkan, James Cole; St Faiths; Dawood Amod; G Roe Scott; St Barnabus Anglican Mission; WW Phillips** (Lurwayizo and Mendu); Edward Sprag; and LP Moore - more varieties than the trading tokens struck in the major city of Durban on the coast.



Image right: Historic photograph showing the landing spots for the two ferries at Umzimkhulu c 1875

Importantly the sheer volume of token coins issued by the company **runs into tens of thousands** - far more than any other token in S Africa and just about anywhere else in the world. It is quite clear that their purpose went beyond that of trading alone - **they were used as currency in the region for 50 years.**

When the token coins were withdrawn from circulation in the 1930s they were collected and stored by Strachan and Co in small black metal containers in their Umzimkhulu store for over 50 years. It was from this collection that my research and documentation was done **nearly 50 years later.** Interestingly, in recent years, large numbers of S&Co tokens have appeared - tokens that did not form part of that initial count made by Balson in the 1970s.

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The Mountain Home set of S&Co tokens

Ken Strachan told me that his grandfather, Donald Strachan, during a land buying spree in the 1880s acquired the farm **Mountain Home** from Bishop Henry Callaway. The location of "Mountain Home" is interesting as Strachan, at this time, *"swapped a number of the farms he bought for properties in better locations. He bought the farm **Riverbank** from Bishop Henry Callaway and had it resurveyed in a different position as **Mountain Home**, which was on a wagon route from Umzimkhulu to Kokstad."* (Source: pp 15 "Strachan and Co Pty Limited by Milner Snell)

Rupert Jackson, Strachan's favoured nephew (son of Marth Hulley the second wife of William Jackson), wanted a piece of the trading store action and an agreement was entered into in which he had a 50% share in the profits of a trading store that he ran that was set up at Mountain Home. To identify the store and its coins from the other stores in the group the small number of currency tokens used there were struck with the letters "MH". The "MH" tokens were accepted at a Strachan store and the Mountain Home store accepted the other S&Co tokens - later exchanging them by value to *"balance the books"*. Only about one hundred of each denomination of the S&Co "MH" tokens were struck for the store making these token coins extremely rare and the most sought after of the S&Co coins.

I am unaware of any of these extremely rare tokens ever being auctioned on the Internet.



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The scrapped Strachan and Co tokens:

A few years after the establishment of the homeland of **Transkei** the Strachan and Co chain of stores were bought out by the S African government in 1984 and the shops sold to the new homeland of Transkei. Ken Strachan took the tokens with him when he left Umzimkhulu and retired in Pietermaritzburg - keeping them in bank bags in his garage up until the mid-1980s. (*Scott Balson personally saw the tokens in canvas bank bags in his Pietermaritzburg home where he made an offer to purchase them from the then aging Ken Strachan.*) Strachan would not sell them despite his wife's appeals - melting them down and donating the money to a church. In recent years large numbers of scrapped Strachan and Co tokens **are now sold on the Internet** for about US\$11 each. These scrapped tokens are not related to the tokens counted by Balson - **as can be seen in the email from the company selling them on the Internet.**



Related reading: "[Kence, the trade tokens of Strachan and Co](#)" by S Balson and C Graham (1978)

The Strachan & Co empire was eventually sold to the South African Government in September 1983 as a direct result of the Independent Homelands Policy when East Griqualand became Transkei. (Source: [No Mans Land - Griqualand](#) by Ken Strachan.)

Email: info@tokencoins.com

APPENDIX B

Architectural report



archaic consulting

architecture: research: conservation: anthropology: impacts consulting

debbie whelan
po box 21834
mayors walk
3208
debbie@archaic.co.za
2/12/08

tel: 033 3442522
fax: 033 3443122
cell: 083236 0410
email:

Notes on Umzimkhulu town

Debbie Whelan from Archaic Consulting was requested by Gavin Anderson of Umlando to carry out a short preliminary investigation of the centre of Umzimkhulu town with respect to the map produced for the Umzimkhulu Local Municipality demarcating the 'study area' by SEF. The author was also sent the photographs which are included in the document, by Gavin Anderson from Umlando and requested to comment on them within the context of the town of Umzimkhulu.

Given that the Umzimkhulu region has recently been incorporated into the province of KwaZulu-Natal the area falls under the provincial legislation and thus ***any alteration or demolition to the built fabric which is over the age of 60 years is subject to the KwaZulu-Natal Provincial Heritage Act no 10 of 1997.***

Umzimkhulu town is particularly important in that it has always served as a border, being situated on the river separating provinces, tribal groups, and identities. It is also important as the development of the drift into a town was largely as a result of Strachan and Co. who started one of the earliest rural trading posts in the province, and indeed, the town. Buildings associated with this empire are thus an important part of the historical and architectural fabric of the region, in addition to the more recent histories of the Transkei and apartheid, as well as providing integrity as starting points in terms of scale and architectural language in the development process. Design and development does not need to happen in an incoherent and random manner. Given its transient status, there has been no assessment to date with respect to heritage of the built environment.

Donald and Thomas Strachan opened their first store at the drift at Umzimkhulu in 1858. They were orphan brothers, whose parents had been Byrne settlers. The brothers had taken to transport riding for survival, at the ages of 10 and 12 respectively, and started trading on the Umzimkhulu drift when barely out of their teens. The history of the town, the magistracy, the farms around it and all civic buildings including the stores and hotels, is thus bound up in this history, and many of the buildings date from the second half of the nineteenth century⁴. This places most of the structures within the 60 year clause of the Amafa Act, and subject to a full architectural impact assessment and application process. In addition, the attached aerial photograph dated 1937 shows clearly the development of the town to the south of the main road, and following roughly the demarcation of the 'study area' in the map provided. This is particularly reinforced given the age and vernacular status of the homesteads in the attached photographs submitted to the author by Gavin Anderson from Umlando.

⁴ Comprehensive information is provided in the publications about the town cited in the references.



Fig 1: Aerial Photograph 731-4-00036



Fig 2: House within demarcated area

Fig 3: house within demarcated area

Recommendations: given the development visible on the 1937 photograph, publications by Milner Snell and Margaret Rainier about the development of the town and the fortunes of Strachan and Co, and the photographs provided to the author, the following is recommended.

All pictures show buildings which are constructed at the turn of the century and in the first few decades. The entire site has to be systematically surveyed with each structure separately assessed in terms of its potential, condition and merit. It is the strong recommendation that a full audit of the built environment of Umzimkhulu town be carried out, and that Amafa aKwaZulu-Natali be 'on board' with the process. It is also strongly recommended that the Heritage/Architectural Impact Assessment include the input of Milner Snell in connecting the history of the buildings with the architecture for expediency sake.



Fig 4: House within demarcated area

**Fig 4: House within demarcated area
(rear of house in Fig 2)**

References

- Snell, M (2005) *Strachan and Co. (Pty) Ltd, Merchants and Importers*
Kokstad, Self-published
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