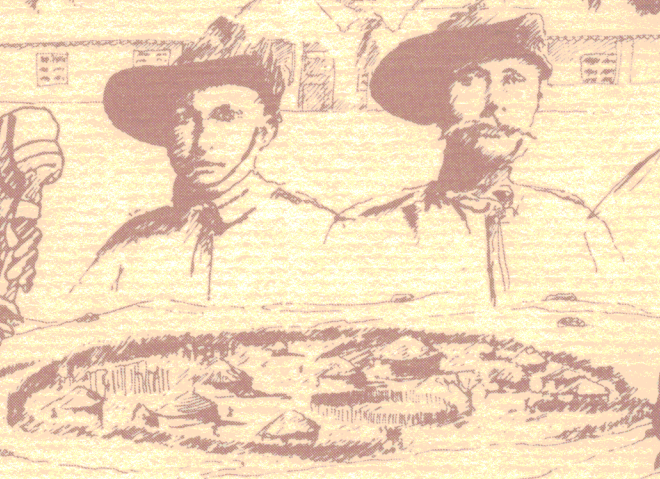
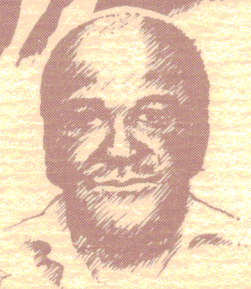


John Dunn
Souvenir Programme



JOHN DUNN OF ZULULAND

THE MAN, THE LEGEND, THE LEGACY

Few personalities in the history of Natal and Zululand have aroused as much controversy as the legendary "white chief" John Dunn. He is mostly remembered for his taking of nearly fifty Zulu wives and the siring of over one hundred children. But, this fact alone does not make Dunn singularly unusual. Rather, John Dunn's exceptioned place in history rests on his prominent role in events that were crucially important in the shaping of modern South Africa. In a real sense, John Dunn's history is "living" history for his numerous descendants have formed a distinct and vital community in southern Zululand - a community whose roots, heritage and identity stem from a common ancestor of uncommon talents.

John Dunn's father was Robert Newton Dunn who was born in 1795 in Scotland. In 1820 he immigrated to South Africa and settled on the eastern Cape frontier near Port Elizabeth. In 1824 he married Anne Harold Bigger, the daughter of a prominent 1820 settler, Alexander Bigger. In the early 1830's the Dunn family moved to the frontier settlement at Port Natal. It was during this time that Anne Bigger Dunn gave birth to her only son, John Robert in 1834. John Dunn grew up on the Natal frontier and reached manhood at the time Natal became a British colony. After the death of his father, John Dunn took up the occupation of hunter-trader and in 1856 he was invited by the Zulu heir opponent, Prince Cetshwayo to settle in the Kingdom and become his political adviser. Dunn accepted the offer and "announced civilisation" as he phrased it, and settled permanently in the Zulu Kingdom in 1857.

John Dunn observed Zulu customs and law and he exploited Zulu social institutions to his political and economic advantage. His accumulation of land, cattle, wives and clients made him one of the wealthiest men in the Zulu Kingdom. Dunn manipulated and utilised his wealth to increase his status and influence. His privileged position with King Cetshwayo and prominent British officials, his alliances with many clans through marriage and his access to firearms made Dunn a powerful figure in the Zulu Kingdom.

In 1883 John Dunn retired from political life and spun out his last years as a cattleman and labour recruiter. After a short three month illness, John Dunn, aged sixty one, died of a dropsy and heart disease at his Emoyeni home on 5 August 1895.

PROGRAMME

MASTER OF CEREMONY: MR. ALEC FYNN.

11.00 a.m. (1) Opening Prayer by Bishop Mansuet Biyase.

(2) Welcome address by:
Daniel Dunn - Chairman of the Dunn Descendants Association.
Mr. Wilson Dunn.
Mr. Amos Dube.

(3) Historic address by:
Mr. Simon Maphalala from the University of Zululand.
Song by the choir.

(4) His Majesty King Goodwill Zwelithini's address.

(5) THE PRESENTATIONS:

(a) The book of John Dunn, "The White Chief of Zululand" by Dr. Charles Ballard.

(b) His Majesty King Goodwill Zwelithini will unveil the bronze busts of His Majesty King Cetshwayo and John Dunn made by the renowned Sculptor Fritz Stellar.

(c) Dan Dunn Chairman of the Dunn Descendant Association on behalf of the Dunn family will now present the bronze busts of His Majesty King Cetshwayo and John Dunn to His Majesty King Goodwill Zwelithini and the Zulu Nation.

(d) Presentation by Chief K Mathaba and his tribe.

Other Presentations:

(6) Vote of thanks:

Entertainment: Ngoma Dancers and Choirs.

(7) Luncheon and Refreshments.

DUNN'S DESCENDANTS

Apart from his significant contributions to the political and economic life in Zululand, John Dunn is rather unique in South Africa's historical annals for he founded a distinct new community. The product of Dunn's union with his nearly fifty wives, with an estimated one hundred and fifteen children, the overwhelming majority of whom were "classified" as "coloureds". Yet, John Dunn unknowingly bequeathed a bittersweet legacy to his descendants. One which inspired a common cultural and family consciousness through ancestral identification and, on the other hand, one which placed the obstacles of racial discrimination and bureaucratic inertia in the path of a newly created multi-racial community.

From 1898 onwards many of John Dunn's descendants were forced to leave Dunnsland and seek employment in Natal, the Transvaal and the Cape. Most of these followed the stream of migrants who were also forced to leave impoverished and over-populated reserves and work as wage labourers on the mines, railways and white owned farms. A fortunate few earned a better living as artisans, transport riders, seamen and teachers. The diaspora has continued to the present day with Dunn's descendants having settled as far-afield as the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia and the United States of America. Those Dunns who remained in Zululand have fought a long and frustrating battle with the South African Government for the right to live and work on their lands unfettered by restrictive controls.

In 1902 the Zululand Lands Delimitation Commission, on the recommendation of the Natal Government, was instructed to reserve 10 000 acres for the use of the Dunn family. The 10 000 acres set aside for the Dunns was delimited as Reserve VIIA, Mangete and included the much smaller Dunn settlement at Emoyeni in Reserve IX.

The failure of the Dunns to get clear and inalienable titles to their land had serious, if not severe, repercussions for the economic development of the Dunn community. But after several impoverished decades, a viable agriculture was established with the support of the South African Sugar Association. The Dunns turned to the production of sugar cane which was ideally suited to the soil and climate of the humid subtropical coastal regions of Natal and Zululand.

By the early 1970's the Dunns' long-standing appeals for the South African government to resolve the land issue were viewed more seriously and sympathetically. The untiring labours of the Dunn community were rewarded on 10 October 1979 when an impressive and moving ceremony was held at the Mangete Farmers' Hall to issue ten of the twenty-six deeds of grant. It had taken the Dunn community forty-four years to receive the deeds from the time when the John Dunn (Distribution of Land) Act. No. 15 of 1935 was promulgated. It was a day of special rejoicing because John Dunn's only surviving son, Leonard Dunn, aged eighty, was the recipient of one of the deeds of grant.

The 800 or so members of the Dunn community at Mangete and Emoyeni seek to develop their lands to their full economic potential and to contribute to the stability and prosperity of the greater Natal-KwaZulu region.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS TO SPONSORS

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