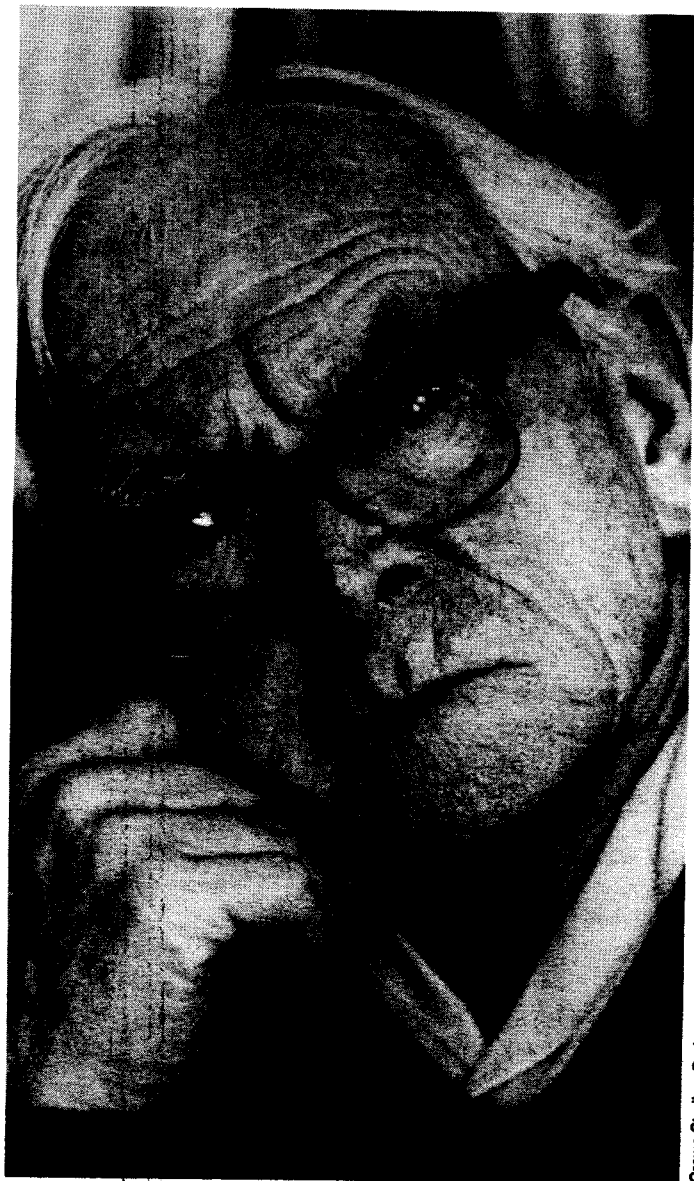


THE ALAN PATON CENTRE



Crown Studios, Durban

**A WORTHY MEMORIAL
TO A GREAT SON OF PIETERMARITZBURG
AND THE UNIVERSITY OF NATAL**

The Man

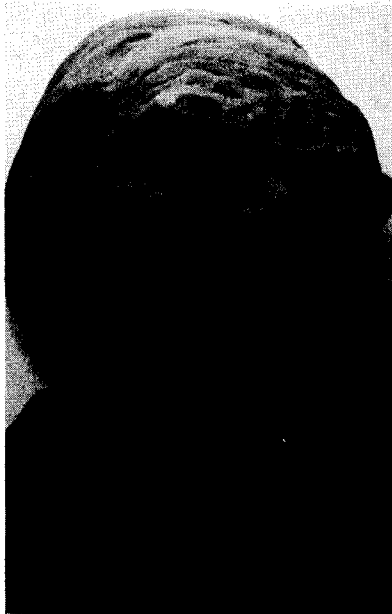
Alan Stewart Paton. Born in Pietermaritzburg, 1903. Died in Durban, 1988. Author, educationist, politician, humanitarian. One of the most distinguished people to have come from Natal, South Africa.

Paton studied at the University of Natal in Pietermaritzburg, taking B.Sc and B.Ed degrees. He taught in white schools for 12 years, including a post in the Ixopo district which would later be so movingly described in the opening pages of *Cry, The Beloved Country*. In 1936, Paton became principal of the Diepkloof Reformatory for African Juvenile Delinquents, and it was only in 1948, after the international success of his famous novel, that he attempted writing as a full-time career.

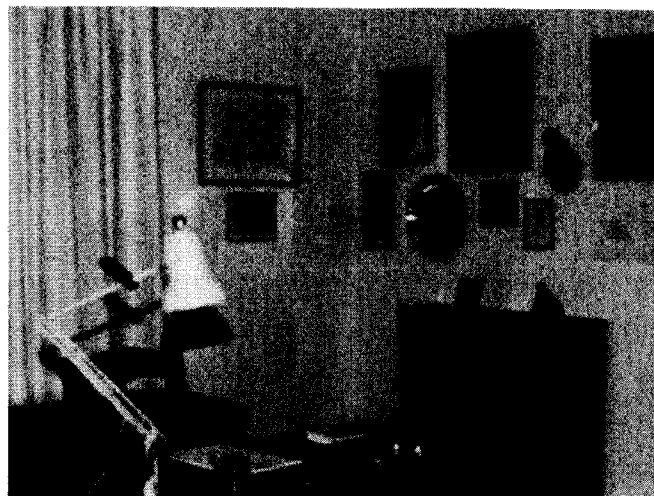
After a few years, however, the conflict between literature and the need for more direct action in a land filled with injustice led him into politics. He was a founder member of the Liberal Party and remained its president until it was disbanded in 1968 in the face of repressive new legislation forbidding multi-racial political organisations.

Even during his active political career, and most certainly after 1968, Paton continued to write, and has left us with many outstanding books, including his two biographies, *Hofmeyr* (1964) and *Apartheid and the Archbishop*, (1973) which won the CNA Literary Award for 1973, and his two-volume autobiography, *Towards the Mountain* (1980) and *Journey Continued*, published in the year of his death.

Paton, who received many honours in his long and busy life, once summed up his credo in four simple words: truth, justice, freedom and tolerance.



The Study



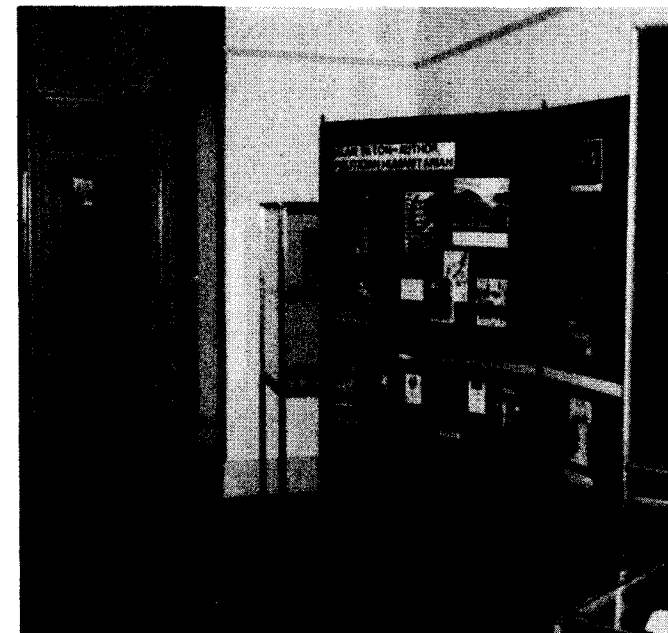
Shortly after the death of Alan Paton, his widow Mrs Anne Paton made available a large part of the contents of Paton's study for the establishment of a permanent memorial to him on the Pietermaritzburg campus of the University of Natal where he had studied. The University responded by setting aside accommodation in its archives building at 165 King Edward Avenue for the establishment of The Alan Paton Centre which was to include a room that would accommodate the items donated by Mrs Paton.

Although the room itself is not identical to the study in Lintrose (the Paton home at Botha's Hill), care has been taken to adhere closely to the original layout and colour scheme. Much of the actual furniture can be seen in the recreated study, and most of Paton's books, journals, awards and memorabilia are on display. A signed photograph of Albert Lutuli, leader of the ANC in the late 1950s, Jock Leyden cartoons depicting Paton as a stern opponent of apartheid, a framed copy of the *Desiderata*, honorary doctorates from overseas universities and numerous plaques adorn the walls. One of the plaques was given to Paton by Penguin Books, to mark their 50th year in publishing and 'sales of one million copies of *Cry, The Beloved Country*'.

Other items in this fascinating collection include an old bible, inscribed to Paton by his mother; scrap-books which were begun when the reviews of his first novel came pouring in; and an early edition of Robert's *Birds of Southern Africa*, annotated by Paton himself, thus revealing his life-long interest in ornithology.

The Centre

In his address at the official opening of the Alan Paton Centre, the vice principal on the Pietermaritzburg campus of the University of Natal, Professor Colin Webb, summed up the aims of the centre: 'The intention is to build up around the core donation (from Mrs Paton) a study and research centre devoted to the literature and politics of intergroup conciliation – two of the deepest concerns of Alan Paton's life.' Already, a number of unsolicited monetary donations have come in, and several documentary collections of major importance have been given to the Centre. There are thus grounds for anticipating the



development of a truly worthy memorial to a great son of the University of Natal in the form of a study centre of national and international significance.

The Centre houses the official papers of the Liberal Party, material relating to the KwaZulu/Natal Indaba, and Detainees Aid Committee papers. The acquisition of the Paton Archives makes accessible a wealth of documents – unpublished works, verse, articles, diaries, speeches and correspondence. An active buying policy is also being pursued in respect of secondary published material relating to intergroup relations, thus bringing together under one roof resources that will be of particular value to students and researchers – and to future biographers of Alan Paton himself.

'THIS MEMORIAL IS NOT A
GRAVEN MONUMENT; STILL
LESS IS IT A SHRINE. IT
IS NOT A PLACE FOR HERO
WORSHIP OR FOR THE
VENERATION OF SOMEONE WHO
IS DEAD. ITS PURPOSE IS
QUITE DIFFERENT. IT IS A
FACILITY FOR THE LIVING,
AN INSTRUMENT FOR
CARRYING FORWARD THE
STRUGGLE FOR IMPROVED
HUMAN RELATIONS THAT
FILLED SO MUCH OF ALAN
PATON'S ESSENTIALLY HUMAN
LIFE.'

Professor Colin Webb,
opening the Alan Paton Centre,
25 April 1989.



University of Natal

PIETERMARITZBURG

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