

Durban Art Deco Society

Art Deco: East meets West

Sunday 13 October, 2019

A talk by Professor Franco Frescura, followed by a walk along Durban's Dr Yusuf Dadoo Street, taking in business and residential buildings with Art Deco features. The mainly Indian businessmen who developed this area adopted many aspects of this popular style in the 30's and 40's, often mixing in Eastern elements.

1. 300 Dr Yusuf Dadoo Street



An imposing streamline-styled building which has retained its open balconies.

2-5. Carlisle Street Group

Carlisle Castle 53
Vel-Vet Mansions 51



Carlisle Castle: WJ Cornelius, 1940. The marginalized community of Indian origin, that had suffered decades of discrimination, pulled itself up from institutionalised poverty into a position where elements of economic independence emerged. Many of the buildings in the "Indian" quarter adopted Art Deco motifs, even those designed by "European" architects.

Mount View 45
Berea View 43



There are charming examples like the cluster in Carlisle Street with well-scaled small blocks which look as if they would be at home in Miami. Dating from 1933, these are well-cared for apartment blocks with good quality geometric meso-American inspired decoration in stucco. (Dennis Claude)

6. Vedic Temple

Carlisle Street +/- 90



This now unused temple is part of the original Ayra Pratinidhi Sabha (APS) compound. A number of struggle leaders were associated with the APS, so that it was constantly under the surveillance and scrutiny of the Security Branch of the apartheid regime. Eventually, attendances at the Vedic temple and Aryan

Hall declined, partly due to migration to the suburbs and safety concerns. The compound was sold to Joint Medical Holdings in 2014. JMH owns the nearby hospital and planned to use APS as a training facility.

7. 286 Dr Yusuf Dadoo St *c/r Ismael C Meer Street*



"Karson's Corner" - Patterned brick & plaster, with a streamlined open verandah and decorative portholes above.

8. SAHMS

280 Dr Yusuf Dadoo Street
c/r Ismael C Meer Street



The South African Hindu Maha Sabha was founded in 1912, and aims to promote Hindu Dharma through observing the best principles of Hindu religion, philosophy, ethics, values & culture according to the highest tenets of Hindu teachings. It aims to advance all members of the Hindu faith among all Hindu linguistic groups in a spirit of respect, unity and brotherhood

9. Grey Court 1938

264 Dr Yusuf Dadoo Street
c/r Charlotte Maxeke Street



“Ariff Corner” – true to its name (actually the old street name), now painted in dismal greys. Collonades rising past an enclosed upper veranda ending in finials. Decorated stream-lined corner.

10. Empire Court

256- 260 Dr Yusuf Dadoo St
c/r Charlotte Maxeke Street



Curved veranda over the pavement with elaborate geometric patterning. Nice contrast between the sweep of the veranda and the rectangular roof parapet above.

11. Dominion Court

Charlotte Maxeke Street



Dominion Court next to Empire Court has similar pilasters and a similar patriotic name of the era. The dull colouring would benefit from a new paint job.

12. Fireworks Shop

69 Charlotte Maxeke St



Formerly “Bobby Naidoo’s Travel” but now over-signed as a fireworks shop. Interesting sunburst feature over a stepped arch.

13. Randaree Charitable Trust

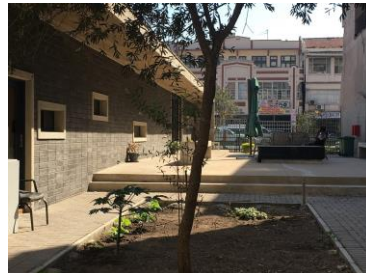
401 Bertha Mkhize Street c/r
Dr Yusuf Dadoo Street



Built in 1941, this building was originally a Muslim Guest House. The trust was founded by Mr. M. S. Randeree in 1932, thus this year is displayed in relief on the building.

14. Mahatma Gandhi Memorial Museum

95 Dr Goonam Street



Ruben Reddy architects, 2008: The site was purchased by Gandhi himself. The character of the memorial, to honour Mahatma Gandhi, lies firstly in the design of the structure, which focuses on

a simple, educative, modest building, portraying Mahatma Gandhi’s life and teachings, with minimal fanfare and with maximum opportunity for public benefit; and secondly, in the intended multiple uses of the facility, which include commemorative, educative, historical and heritage, as well as training-related opportunities. It has been designed for minimum-maintenance, to reduce long-term maintenance and operational costs.

15. Soni Valjee Nathoo 1937

13A Bond Street



Possibly connected to jeweller Soni Valjee Nathoo. Slab supported by stepped cantilevers for shade below, striking geometric crest above.

16. NM Ebrahim Building

19 Cross St c/r Bond St



1931 Embraces sidewalk on two levels. Decorated ballustrades and stepped arch beams.

17. Sayed Fakroodeen Building 1937

c/r Cross St & Dr Goonam St



(bounded by Bond, Cross and Dr Goonam Streets) The building is named after one of the founding members of the Muslim **Darul Yatama Wal Masakeen** (Muslim Home for Orphans and Destitutes) in the 1930s.

Shops at street level with a verandah providing shade for the customers on the footpath. On the upper floors, accommodation, perhaps for the traders and their families. The second storey balcony is enclosed providing more living space and also serves as the base of an open terrace area for the third storey residents.

The Sayeed Fakroodeen who put his name to this building in 1937 is thought to be the same man who joined with other young Muslims in Durban in 1934 to found the Muslim Darul Yatama Wal Masakeen (the Muslim Home for Orphans and Destitutes). A Sayed Fakroodeen was on that first committee in 1934, serving as Treasurer. The Institute celebrated their 75th anniversary in 2009 and now has several homes caring for orphans and the aged.
(David Thompson)

18-19. Abad Court & Essop Moosa Building

125-131 Dr Goonam St



Abad Court – Taj Company #125; AM Khan & Co. #127. Essop Moosa Building – 1935. Small and large arches at lower and upper levels. Pilasters capped with numerous finial urns along the skyline.

20. Building “AD 1935”

+/- 97 Dr Goonam Street



Smartly capped pilasters, decorative rope rings and keystones.

21. Arbee Mansion

102 Dr Goonam Street



1940. Rounded corner windows. Striking emphasis using bars of colour. Stepped skyline above top balcony.

22. Hindu Tamil Institute 1939

90 Cross Street



An Important building of modest Art Deco character built by the Hindu Tamil community and owned for almost 70 years. Officially opened in April of 1939, by **Sri Sarvapalli Radhakrishnan**, who would go on to become India’s second president from 1962 – ‘67. Reports confirm that a few months later the Mayor of Durban **Mr. R. Ellis Brown** also opened this school building before a large gathering of Indians and Europeans on the Saturday of 27 January, 1940.

