

# South African Sugar Technologists' Association

## Fourth Annual General Meeting and Conference

The Fourth Annual General Meeting and Conference of the South African Sugar Technologists' Association was held at the Chamber of Commerce, Salisbury House, Durban, Natal, on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, April 15th, 16th, 17th, 1930.

The following members and others were present :—

<i>Name.</i>	<i>Address.</i>	<i>Name.</i>	<i>Address.</i>
H. H. DODDS ( <i>Chairman</i> ) .. ..	Mount Edgecombe.	D. MCKINLAY .. ..	Empangeni.
G. S. MOBERLY ( <i>Vice-Chairman</i> )..	Durban.	E. W. STEWARD .. ..	Empangeni.
D. M. EADIE ( <i>Secretary</i> ) .. ..	Durban.	W. WHITE .. ..	Felixton.
P. FOWLIE .. ..	Mount Edgecombe.	A. A. LIVINGSTONE .. ..	Amatikulu.
D. MCRAE .. ..	Felixton	F. W. HAYES .. ..	Empangeni.
J. BIJOUX .. ..	Amatikulu.	A. D. ELYSÉE .. ..	Inyezane.
G. C. DYMOND .. ..	Empangeni.	S. SCHEWITZ .. ..	Inyezane.
H. M. JACOBS .. ..	Felixton.	E. F. GIELINK .. ..	New Guelderland.
P. MURRAY .. ..	Durban.	D. MARSHALL .. ..	Felixton.
J. RAULT .. ..	Mount Edgecombe.	J. L. DU MOLLARD .. ..	Melville.
J. W. WICKES .. ..	Durban.	R. G. DUCRAY .. ..	Esperanza.
J. R. SIMPSON .. ..	Mount Edgecombe.	J. A. MOONEY .. ..	Gledhow.
E. P. HEDLEY .. ..	Darnall.	T. C. JACOBS .. ..	Darnall.
R. ARDÉ .. ..	New Guelderland.	A. C. WATSON .. ..	Amatikulu.
A. D. DE BROGLIO .. ..	New Guelderland.	C. L. WAGNER .. ..	Illovo.
P. D. DE BROGLIO .. ..	New Guelderland.	P. L. DRAEGER.. ..	Illovo.
L. LAVOPIERRE .. ..	Melville.	G. BOOTH.. ..	Doornkop.
A. MAROT .. ..	Chaka's Kraal.	H. E. H. PALAIRET .. ..	Darnall.
M. VIGER .. ..	Darnall.	B. J. W. PEARCE .. ..	Gledhow.
L. BLACKLOCK .. ..	Rossburgh.	A. D. MCLEAN .. ..	Durban.
J. F. POUGNET .. ..	Chaka's Kraal.	W. H. FOSTER .. ..	Maidstone.
O. A. FELTHAM.. ..	Felixton.	J. POUGNET .. ..	Sezela.
O. W. KARLSON .. ..	Esperanza.	J. BEHRENS .. ..	Amatikulu.
H. E. HUSBAND .. ..	Empangeni.	B. E. D. PEARCE .. ..	Illovo.

# ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

HELD AT THE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE,  
SMITH STREET, DURBAN.

ON THE 15TH APRIL, 1930, AT 10.15 A.M.

Present: Mr. H. H. Dodds (Chairman) and 40 members.

NOTICE: Notice of meeting read.

MINUTES: The Minutes of the last Annual General Meeting having been circulated, were taken as read and confirmed.

## CHAIRMAN'S ADDRESS.

The Chairman addressed the meeting as follows:

I have pleasure in welcoming you to the Fourth Annual Meeting and Conference of this Association.

The year that has elapsed since our last Annual Meeting here has been one of depression and difficulty in the sugar industry both local and world-wide. We have had another record output in South Africa, but no one is very elated about that in view of the difficulties in marketing it due to universal over-production.

As long as capacity for scientific mass production so far outstrips our social organization and regulation of production and of distribution and disposal of product, such periods of over-production are inevitable in every industry. Eventually the crisis passes, it may be through reduction of output, or through lowered prices stimulating an increased consumption—usually through both factors.

This solution is, however, generally much delayed in the case of sugar. For one thing, land recently planted with sugar cane cannot be rapidly diverted to other use without much loss owing to the system of ratooning practised in most countries; and in the second place, no other commodity produced on a large and world-wide scale is so subject to political direction for various reasons. Consequently it takes long to re-attain a balance between world production and consumption of sugar.

However, signs are not wanting that this state of balance will be reached before very long to the general relief of the industry.

The prime necessity in our local sugar industry to enable us to survive these crises with as little difficulty and loss as may be, and to sell at a sufficient profit in our overseas markets during normal times, is to reduce our cost of production. This can only be done to any appreciable extent by increasing our production per acre both by bigger yields of cane in the field and higher recovery in the factory. And whether we continue our present progressive increase in output by maintaining or increasing our area under cane, or whether it is considered better to divert some of the land now under cane to other uses, in any case an increased yield of sugar per acre is essential to the survival and prosperity of our industry under modern conditions.

The ways to this increased yield can only be pointed out by scientific research which I regard in consequence as the greatest need of our sugar industry to-day.

We have the instructive and inspiring examples before us of those countries who were pioneers in the application of scientific research to sugar technology, such as Java and Hawaii, who as a result are now comparatively prosperous even in the present difficult time. It is perhaps a natural human failing to think that "the fishing always looks better the other side of the stream," but the countries I have mentioned have natural advantages that may possibly be greater than ours; they have, however, difficulties both natural and political that are as great or greater than ours. The point for us is that they have exploited their advantages, and circumvented their disadvantages largely with the aid of scientific research, and thereby attained their present pre-eminent positions. Other sugar producing countries are not slow to profit by these examples, and all over the sugar-growing world we may note increased study in science as applied to sugar production; and this country must follow suit if it is to maintain its position in the race.

The proportion of the resources of our industry devoted to research, whether collectively through the experiment station of the Sugar Association, or privately by individual estates and manufacturing concerns, is still all too small, and relatively far behind that of almost any other sugar-growing country we may cite. I do not propose to burden you with statistics in support of this statement, which have been quoted and published repeatedly.

Our slogan as a Technologists' Association should be: "Research and still more research."

We have I believe an interesting and valuable agenda before us that I think reflects credit on this infant organization.

Nevertheless, there are several important aspects of sugar production that are not dealt with very fully, if at all, in the reports and papers to be read to you.

I particularly regret to note that we have no report from the committee on clarification and filtration. This committee was re-organized and strengthened, but evidently does not yet consider itself in a position to give us anything further on the lines of the excellent report read to us two years ago. However, we have a valuable paper from Mr. W. H. Foster, a member of this committee, on his recent experience with a continuous type of filter.

The committee on manufacturing machinery you will recollect made an excellent report last year, largely through the activity of their former convenor, Mr. B. E. D. Pearce. It is unfortunate that we have nothing from that committee this year. Most factories closed down very late last year so that most of the engineering staffs have been kept busily employed with the usual off-season repair and replacement work right up to the present, with little time for anything else.

The committee on field tramlines also does not report this year. There has been much difficulty in getting someone to take the place of Mr. E. Masters as convenor, but recently Mr. H. E. H. Palairt has accepted, and I am sure the continued good work of this committee will be assured in his hands.

The other committee on transport, dealing with standard gauge problems, however, reports under the energetic organization of Mr. J. W. Wickes, who although very busy with one thing and another since his return from Australia, has found time to prepare a valuable and constructive report.

We had at last found a suitable convenor for the committee on irrigation and drainage in the energetic and capable person of Mr. Wallace Jex; but unfortunately a week or so ago he had a bad attack of malarial fever which naturally stopped his work on the preparation of a report which must therefore be held over. Happily, Mr. E. Royce, one of the other members of the committee, stepped into the breach at short notice and has prepared a paper giving us his ideas on the prospects for irrigation in this country.

Of the newly-formed committees, the one on cultivation and planting went to the trouble of compiling and circulating to certain representative planters a questionnaire regarding field practice. Unfortunately, the response to this was very poor, so that the committee are not able to give us any statistical information based on representative practice, but have prepared a valuable report founded on their own wide experience.

The committee on cane pests and diseases has not found it practicable to hold meetings, but Mr. A. P. D. McClean has prepared a paper on sugar cane diseases, a subject of fundamental importance to the industry.

It remains to be seen how far the system of technical committees will apply to our conditions. We have borrowed the idea, like many others, from the older established sugar technologists' associations who have, however, numbers of highly-trained specialists to call on. Undoubtedly this system has worked very well with us in some subjects—in others, it would appear perhaps that a series of papers by individual members would suit our conditions better.

I apologise for having spoken at such length, and hope that this Congress will be of much service to our industry, even more than its predecessors. (Applause.)

#### REGISTRATION OF CHEMISTS.

Secretary read the following report from the General Committee:—

The following resolution was passed at last General Meeting:—

“That a Register of Chemists be kept within the Association. That the Council form a sub-committee to draw up qualifications for the Register, and that the S.A. Institute of Chemists be approached with the wish that they advise the Council on the matter of qualification.”

A sub-committee duly took this resolution in hand and reported to the General Committee that the resolution proposed action which was outside of the scope of the Constitution of the Association, and taking that view they did not consider that they were justified in following the particular line laid down. They recommend, however, that opportunity be taken to have a record of membership classified according to the qualification of members. Such a record would require a form of application for membership in which the qualifications of the member would be stated, and provision would have to be made for existing members providing this information. The committee was of opinion that if a membership roll was established on this classification principle the Association would be keeping within the scope of its Constitution and inclusion in the lists would have that value to members which it was expected to gain from making a register of chemists.

On being reported to the General Committee it was decided to refer the report of the sub-committee to the next General Meeting so that members might have an opportunity, if they so wished, of discussing the subject anew.

CHAIRMAN: That is the position. It has proved a very difficult matter for the committee appointed. I would be glad to have the feeling of members present on the matter.

Mr. BECHARD: The Secretary has just read the exact motion that was proposed by Mr. Moberly last year and duly seconded and passed. This motion, as you see, said that a Committee should be appointed to draw up qualifications for the Register and that the S.A. Chemical Institute be approached to advise the Council. (Reads motion.) I put it this way, it was not asked that the Committee should go into the question as to whether it was advisable or not. The Committee was asked to make a report on the conditions, not on the advisability. We had already discussed the advisability and the motion had been carried.

CHAIRMAN: It is one thing to appoint a Committee to carry out certain things and it is another actually to carry out the proposals, and the Committee that you appointed last year for this purpose have reported to the General Committee in the terms that the Secretary has just read. They felt it would be an undesirable thing to push this matter and would possibly lead to dissension within our organisation. However, they point out a way in which the matter could perhaps be approached by the General Committee; failing that they did not wish to take it on themselves to make this Register without further discussion and pointing out the position to this meeting. Personally, so far as I am concerned, I have given the matter a good deal of thought during the year, and I am convinced that it would not be in the interests of the Association or in the interests of the Chemists themselves to

attempt to form a registered list of chemists from the Association. This Technologists' Association was formed to study the problems of the Industry, and includes in its ranks a good many professions besides Chemists. There is in this country an institution—the South African Chemical Institute—which has been formed entirely for Chemists and by Chemists, to represent them and to act in their interests, and it seems to me that any scheme of registration should be referred to them. In other words, individual chemists who require to be registered I think should join the Chemical Institute. A branch of that Institute has been formed in Natal. Unfortunately it has not had the support which they think they should have had from the sugar chemists.

Mr. BECHARD: In view of the very well considered views which you have expressed I would like to go back to the proposal of Dr. Hedley last year. I don't wish to propose his suggestion, but I think we can go back to that. I don't know whether Dr. Hedley is still prepared to make the same motion as he did last year, but if he does I would like to support it. His proposal was:

“That the Sugar Chemists approach the South African Institute of Chemists with the idea of affiliating with them, and thereby getting Sugar Chemists defined.”

CHAIRMAN: That proposal I don't think requires a formal motion of this kind, because the South African Chemical Institute are always ready to accept applications from eligible members, and there is no need to pass a resolution to this effect. The thing to do is for as many qualified sugar chemists as possible to apply for membership of the Chemical Institute, and that I think will be the eventual solution of the problem Mr. Bechard had in mind.

Mr. BECHARD: My point is to have a definite affiliation as one body affiliated to the other. A good many of the sugar chemists would not have the qualifications required by the Chemical Institute; on the other hand a definite affiliation could be made.

Mr. BOOTH: I raised the question last year I think; it is all very well for the members of the Association—the Chemical Section—to band themselves into a Society, but it has to be considered first and foremost that there are two bodies of employees, one is the milling section and the other the Cane Growers' Association, and unless you get some sort of sanction or encouragement from them to go on these lines I don't see much use in it. We have the South African Chemical Institute; quite a few of us are members of that Institute. It would be much better if we were to put our own house in order and join up with that body, and when we have sufficient strength if we wished to close up the profession we could approach the governing

employers in the Industry. But I don't see how you can go about it until you first of all get their sympathy.

Mr. MOBERLY: I was the seconder of the original motion two years ago. This matter was brought up to give it a fair start, and I agreed to it at the time. Last year when we thrashed this out very considerably I again supported the motion, and it was my proposition which was eventually passed. But it has been borne on me during the last year that in spite of that proposition passing it has not got the support of the Association behind it. It seems to me this Association does not desire this. I think it is a pity. I think the original idea is a good one, but it is rather a pity to go on forcing the matter on a reluctant Association. We have spent a great deal of time on this at each of our last two meetings, and I think it would be a good thing if some way could be found to settle it, and I suggest the matter be held over until some future date when the Association is prepared to agree to something of the sort. I am not withdrawing my support, as I think if some way could be found to meet everyone's objections it would be a good thing; but I feel it would be no good beating against general opposition.

Dr. HEDLEY: I also took part in this discussion last year, and having attended every General Committee meeting I think I don't quite see where Mr. Moberly gets his antagonism of the Association to the idea. I do see, as was pointed out at the last general committee meeting which was held about three or four weeks ago, that it is not possible under the Constitution of the South African Sugar Technologists' Association to carry out the proposition. Speaking to members of the Association during the year I can't say that I have found that the Chemists are antagonistic to it. The idea at the back of it is that the chemists in Sugar should be recognised and appreciated by their employers and among themselves as fully qualified chemists. At present the employer does take a man who is not a qualified man and labels him as that type to the detriment of the profession, but I now understand and quite appreciate that it is not within the powers of this Association to do anything to define or bring about this register. I don't see the way out. It is a desirable thing and a condition we had to meet in England during and after the War, but there the body of chemists was so great that the Association which was formed has in the course of time done excellent work. I don't know that we could form one now in South Africa among sugar chemists, but I would like to again support the suggestion that I made that the sugar chemists approach the South African Institute of Chemists with the idea of affiliating with them and thereby getting sugar chemists defined. The only difficulty in the way is this, that individuals can do nothing. Possibly the incoming committee might have informal talks with the South African Institute of Chemists. They

can only be informal, and they can put them again before a general meeting of the Society, and then carry on from that. It is using the Society for an object which it was never intended, but one which must come with the growth of it.

CHAIRMAN: Dr. Hedley has explained the position as a member of the General Committee. You will realise that the General Committee feel that the matter is not within the scope of the Constitution at present. If necessary our Constitution can be changed by putting the necessary machinery into force, but that as you know will take some time. With regard to the question of affiliation to the South African Chemical Institute, I would like to know who it is proposed should affiliate? I can understand individual members applying for membership, which I think is the best eventual solution of it, but from what Dr. Hedley and Mr. Bechard have just said they have in mind apparently some section of this Association applying for affiliation as a body to the Chemists' Institute. Is that so? If so, exactly what body?

Dr. HEDLEY: Take as an example the body at Home, which is divided into several sections. It might be possible to have a sugar section of the chemists in South Africa. If individuals apply, the individual alone receives his status; if a body applies the thing is quite different. There are those who are sugar men who, having no degrees at all, yet have years of experience, deserve a status which they do not at present hold, and it would have that effect of strengthening the South African sugar employer's confidence in his chemists. That is the object at the back of my interest on the subject.

Mr. McRAE: As this is of practical concern to the Chemists' section I would suggest this matter be first of all discussed by the Chemists themselves. I can quite imagine that all the discussion we are having is of a very little interest to the engineering and agricultural sections of our Association. I suggest this be discussed by the chemists themselves; find out if all the chemists are in support of such a scheme, and then come to the Association with a scheme for definition of our status and so on. I propose that we have a meeting of chemists.

CHAIRMAN: You propose to have some time during this Congress an open meeting to which anybody who is interested or might call himself a chemist could attend, and discuss the matter separately from the Association as a whole?

Mr. McRAE: Yes.

Mr. BECHARD seconds the proposal.

Dr. HEDLEY: I support that. We should give notice of it as there are many men interested in the question who are not here and who may not be here. It might be done next year or some time before

that so that they get notice and attend to discuss the question. I would like to add that to the proposal.

Mr. BECHARD: I don't think the matter should be delayed any more; the general bulk of the members of the Association knew that this matter was coming up. If they wished to attend I think they should be here to-day. I think if we followed the lead we had last year and had a Chemists' meeting at nine o'clock it would meet the case.

CHAIRMAN: It is for the meeting to decide, but I think it is a matter that should not be hurried as we ought to give everybody interested an opportunity to attend. Has the mover of the motion, Mr. McRae, any preference as to the time of the meeting? Mr. Bechard suggests to-morrow at nine.

Mr. McRAE: I think it would be a suitable time. If it is mentioned at the afternoon session as well, I think most of the people interested will be here to-day.

CHAIRMAN: It has been proposed that a meeting of the Chemists within this Association be held to discuss the question of registration. First of all we should decide on the principle. Once we are agreed on the principle of holding the meeting a time can be fixed. Will those in favour please signify.

Voting by show of hands: 12 in favour, 2 against.  
Declared carried.

It was then agreed that the meeting of Chemists be held at 9 a.m. on the 16th April.

#### ELECTION OF OFFICERS.

**Chairman:**

On the proposal of Mr. Bechard, seconded by Mr. Dodds, Mr. G. S. MOBERLY was elected as Chairman.

**Vice-Chairman:**

Mr. Simpson proposed, and Mr. Wickes seconded, that Mr. Dodds be Vice-Chairman.

Mr. Dodds proposed, and Mr. Bechard seconded, that Mr. Dymond be Vice-Chairman. Mr. Dymond stated he could not accept without his Company's consent.

Mr. P. Murray proposed, and Mr. Jacobs seconded, that Mr. Wickes be Vice-Chairman.

Mr. Wickes stated that they should await Mr. Dymond's final decision before making any appointment.

Mr. Moberly then proposed that in the event of Mr. Dymond being unable to take the position, Mr. Wickes should automatically be appointed Vice-Chairman.

This was seconded by Mr. Fowlie, and agreed to.

**General Committee:**

Secretary reported that the General Committee had nominated twenty members, and of these fourteen had accepted, which necessitated the holding of a ballot. The names of the acceptors were then read out, and a ballot proceeded.

The result of the ballot was declared as follows:—Messrs. H. H. Dodds, G. C. Dymond, E. P. Hedley, J. Rault, J. R. Simpson, L. Blacklock, B. J. W. Pearce, H. M. Jacobs, G. C. Wilson, B. E. D. Pearce, R. M. Bechard.

**FINANCE.**

Secretary reported as follows:—

The expenditure for the year just ended is £267 9s. 6d. The finances of this Association are made up of a grant of £200 last year from the Millers' Association and subscriptions. The position of subscriptions is that there is a credit balance of £99 8s. 7d., so that the actual revenue is £299 8s. 7d. We will have a credit of about £50 after payment of expenses.

We have been endeavouring to bring all members up to scratch in regard to subscriptions, and it seems to be rather a difficult job. Later on I think the Association will have to make a rule that unless subscriptions are paid the member is not entitled to the privileges of the Association, which are chiefly participation in this meeting and copies of the proceedings, which I think everybody will agree are of very great value indeed. (Applause.)

Mr. MOBERLY in proposing a vote of thanks to Mr. Dodds for the work he had done during the Association's existence, stated that Mr. Dodds had done a tremendous amount of work in connection with the various reports, and the work of the committees; and altogether had been a very active and useful member. (Loud applause.)

Mr. DODDS suitably replied.

The business of the Conference then proceeded.