

THE PRETORIA BAR MEMBERS AND ACCOMMODATION

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There was a time when the Pretoria Bar could be compared with a good rugby team, working “under one blanket”, all accommodated in a single building. Time has brought about change and today the members are spread over Pretoria in six buildings. With an annual intake of more than 60 pupils, the need to accommodate all members will increase and yet another project is in the planning to accommodate another group in what will be known as the “Club” building in the east of Pretoria.

The current accommodation of the members is as follows:

- High Court Chambers:** 295 members
- New Court Chambers:** 63 members
- Brooklyn Advocates’ Chambers:** 59 members
- Circle Chambers:** 101 members
- Parc Nouveau Advocates’ Chambers:** 48 members
- Groenkloof Chambers:** 71 members



High Court Chambers - 295 members



New Court Chambers - 63 members



Brooklyn Advocates’ Chambers - 59 members



Circle Chambers - 101 members



Parc Nouveau Advocates’ Chambers - 48 members



Groenkloof Chambers - 71 members

On 3 May 2016 a total of 637 advocates were members of the Pretoria Society of Advocates.

All advocates need good administrative support and a total of 153 receptionists, secretaries and other administrative personnel, assist the members daily – these personnel have to be accommodated as well. A daily total of 790 persons grace the accommodation of the various buildings. With an annual growth of 50 members, the need for accommodation has to be attended to almost on a daily basis. The need for further accommodation will result in more buildings in the future.

ACTING APPOINTMENTS

The following members of the Pretoria Bar held acting appointments in the Gauteng Division Pretoria:

Third Term:

- N Davis SC
29 August to 23 September 2016
- BR Tokota SC
25 July to 5 August 2016
- B Neukircher SC
12 September to 23 September 2016
- CJ van der Westhuizen SC
25 July to 9 September 2016
- JJ Strijdom SC
25 July to 23 September 2016
- SK Hassim SC
1 August to 5 August 2016

Stefan Maritz



Modernisation of member accommodation to keep up with the ever changing face of our occupation is something that each Bar struggles with from time to time. The Pretoria Bar is no exception and during 2010 the idea of new chambers in the eastern suburbs of Pretoria was conceived over a cup of coffee. The idea and the subsequent development of Groenkloof Chambers was a collaborative effort pioneered by Bastiaan Boot, Michelle van Antwerpen and Sarel Wagener SC.

The striking building was completed during January 2016, and is situated at 205 Florence Ribeiro Street. The modern architecture of the new Chambers is complemented by its surroundings, being situated in the evergreen suburb of Groenkloof and in close proximity of Brooklyn and the Pretoria CBD. Groenkloof Chambers enjoys magnificent views of the neighbouring cricket fields and sporting grounds of the CBC Old Boys Cricket Club. The ultra-modern vision of the architect Beyers Slabbert culminated in a design which makes optimum use of space and light and coupled with the liberal use of large windows, showcase the lush green surroundings.

The various arbitration/consultation rooms (which can accommodate from 6 to 25 persons) are all equipped with state of the art technology that includes video conference, teleconference and screen projection facilities. In order to maintain the old-school barrister feel, all the con-

sultation rooms are named after famous cricket fields. Fibre-optic cables provide members with high-speed internet. Visitors can similarly enjoy free high speed wi-fi. When entering the building one is welcomed by the inviting aroma of fresh coffee and freshly baked croissants coming from the Groundsman, the in-house café operated by sous chef Ivan Richards, where a weekly members-lunch is served.

Another novelty first is the self-funded bus service that was established by the members of Groenkloof Chambers. During January 2016, the members purchased a 23-seater bus that is operated in conjunction with King Price Insurance Company. The bus transports members from chambers to the Pretoria High Court on a regular basis. No more getting frustrated in traffic as members can enjoy a last cup of coffee en route to Court.

Attorneys and colleagues (especially from visiting Societies) are welcome to book the various facilities and to make use of the bus service, when visiting the Pretoria High Court.

Membership at Groenkloof Chambers consists of 71 advocates of varying seniority and the building offers a diverse area of expertise including commercial, personal injury, labour, tax and insurance litigation.

The developer Neotrend together with the steering committee, consisting of Bastiaan Boot, Michelle van Antwerpen and Sarel Wagener SC, have managed to

set a new benchmark for advocates’ chambers, not only in terms of technology and design but also with regard to their effort to go green in numerous respects such as the installation of motion sensors that cuts down on the use of electricity.

Groenkloof Chambers is ideally situated next to major access roads making it an ideal venue for arbitrations and disciplinary hearings to be conducted at a neutral venue.

The official opening of the building was held on 8 September 2016 under starry skies, a magnificent marquee tent and thousands of fairy lights. The memorable opening was attended by dignitaries such as the honourable Deputy Judge President Ledwaba who also conducted the customary cutting of the ribbon ceremony. In the background the sultry sounds of a jazz band seduced the crowd until late into the night. The function, which was attended by all members, is indicative of the spirit of comradery that is so unique to the Bar and that already become entrenched in all aspects at Groenkloof Chambers.

Whereas the building itself promises to be an architectural jewel of Pretoria, its real value and appeal lies in its members who continuously strive and aspire to do the best for their clients. As Lord Denning said:

“If we never do anything which has not been done before, we shall never get anywhere. The law will stand still while the rest of the world goes on, and that will be bad for both.” 