

Eastern Cape Bar – Makhanda

Contributed by Julian Barker



BAR COUNCIL AND ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

At the Eastern Cape Society of Advocates AGM held in February, Niel Schoeman SC, Kerry Watt, Aviwe Teko, and Gavin Brown were elected to the bar council.

In line with our society's tradition, the chair of the bar council alternates between Gqeberha (formerly Port Elizabeth) and Makhanda (formerly Grahamstown). This year, Gqeberha holds the position, with Albert Beyleveld SC appointed as chairperson and Schoeman SC in Makhanda serving as vice-chairperson. We thank Schoeman SC for serving as chairperson from the previous year through to the AGM in February 2025.

Judge Azhar Cachalia, retired judge of the Supreme Court of Appeal, was the guest of honour at the bar dinner, held in Makhanda, after the February AGM.

RESIGNATION OF JOHAN KOEKEMOER

Johan Koekemoer who joined the Eastern Cape Society in July 1992 resigned in June. He held door chambers from October 2022 when he entered semi-retirement, until June, when he completed his last ongoing matter.



ACTING APPOINTMENTS

Nicola Molony held acting appointments in the second and third terms as judge of the Eastern Cape division and has an interview in October before the Judicial Service Commission for a permanent appointment. Molony is one of five interviewees for two vacancies in Makhanda and one in Mthatha.

David de la Harpe SC and Gavin Brown held acting appointments as judges of the Eastern Cape division during the second term.

EASTERN CAPE PROVINCIAL LEGAL PRACTICE COUNCIL

Two members of the Eastern Cape Society, Mfundo Somandi and Thomas Miller, have been elected to the Eastern Cape Legal Practice Council ("the EC LPC"). They are two of the four advocates on the EC LPC.

GAVIN DUGMORE SC

We extend our condolences to Gavin Dugmore SC and his children, Ryan, Caitlin, and Callum, on the passing of Alison Dugmore on 15 April.

NEW MEMBERS

At the start of 2025, we welcomed a new member, Sovash Chetty (BA LLB, Rhodes University), who successfully completed his pupillage in Makhanda in 2024. We wish Sovash every success for his future at the Bar.

We also welcomed two new pupils in 2025, Yonela Booie and Litha Nododa, who attended advocacy training in Gqeberha and participated in online lectures with the Cape Town pupils. We are grateful to our colleagues in Gqeberha and Cape Town for providing them with this opportunity. We are also grateful to retired member Torquil Paterson SC for taking our pupils through the GCB legal drafting syllabus.



NAMING OF LEX MPATI HOUSE AT RHODES UNIVERSITY

Many, if not most, members of the Eastern Cape Society with chambers in Makhanda hold one or more degrees from Rhodes University in Makhanda. It is therefore fitting that we extend our congratulations to our former

member, retired Judge President of the Supreme Court of Appeal, Lex Mpati, on the renaming of Lincoln House at Rhodes University, which houses the university's faculty of law, in his honour. Judge Mpati completed his LLB degree at Rhodes University and was a member of the Eastern Cape Society from February 1989 to January 1997. [A](#)

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