

2025

# ALAN PATON SHORT STORY COMPETITION

Calling all KZN Midlands, Pietermaritzburg, and Durban school pupils!  
Each school may submit **THREE entries** (selected by teachers)

## T H E M E

**"Ah, But Your Land is Beautiful"**

(Inspired by one of Alan Paton's novels)

DATES AND TIMES: **23 MAY | 09AM - 16PM** AND **24 MAY | 09AM - 13PM**

VENUE: **LEEB DUTOIT COUNCIL CHAMBERS**, UKZN PIETERMARITZBURG CAMPUS



## STORY GUIDELINES:

**Word count:** 500-800 words

**Theme:** "Ah, But Your Land is Beautiful" must be integrated into your story or act as the title.

### What to include:

- Learner's name
- School name
- School email address (personal email allowed if school has not assisted with the story).
- Your story must be original and not a summary of Alan Paton's novel.

## WHAT JUDGES ARE LOOKING FOR:

- **Quality of writing:** Good sentence structure, language command
- **Creativity:** Originality, imagination, and storytelling ability
- **Engagement:** The ability to capture and hold the reader's attention

## PRIZES:

**Top 10 winners** will be invited to read their stories at the **Midlands Literary Festival** in Howick on **30/31 August 2025**.

## HOW TO ENTER:

**Submit your story to:**

**Darryl Earl David**

Director, Alan Paton Literary Festival

**Email:** [ddavid@uwc.ac.za](mailto:ddavid@uwc.ac.za)

**Closing Date for Submissions:**

**29 July 2025**



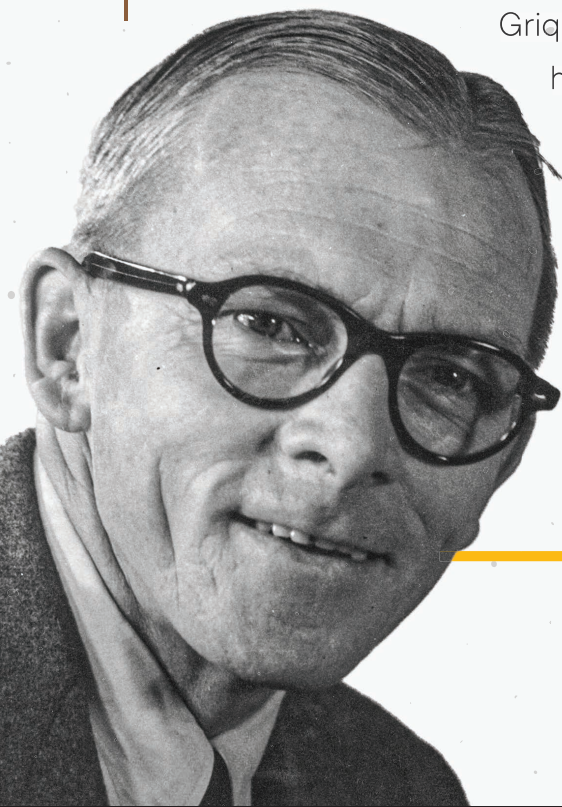
## ABOUT ALAN PATON

Alan Paton is Pietermaritzburg's most famous writer. And indeed one of South Africa's first literary superstars. He is best known for his novel *Cry the Beloved Country* (1948), which was published to instant international acclaim. The main road from Durban into the city of Pietermaritzburg is called Alan Paton Drive. The most prestigious literary prize in SA is named after him. And the Pietermaritzburg Campus of UKZN is home to the Alan Paton Centre, which contains the original study of Paton. Such is Alan Paton's fame that the most quoted literary passage in the history of South African writing belongs to him:

## THE MOST FAMOUS QUOTE IN ALL OF SA - CRY THE BELOVED COUNTRY

There is a lovely road that runs from Ixopo into the hills. These hills are grass-covered and rolling, and they are lovely beyond any singing of it. The road climbs seven miles into them, to Carisbrooke; and from there, if there is no mist, you look down on one of the fairest valleys of Africa. About you there is grass and bracken and you may hear the forlorn crying of the tithoya, one of the birds of the veld. Below you is the valley of the Umzimkulu, on its journey from the Drakensberg to the sea; and beyond and behind the river, great hill after great hill; and beyond and behind them, the mountains of Ingeli and East

Griqualand. The grass is rich and matted, you cannot see the soil. It holds the rain and mist, and they seep into the ground, feeding the streams in every kloof. It is well-tended, and not too many cattle feed upon it; not too many fires burn it, laying bare the soil. Stand unshod upon it, for the ground is holy, being even as it came from the Creator. Keep it, guard it, care for it, for it keeps men, guards men, cares for men. Destroy it and man is destroyed.



# PROGRAMME

## ALAN PATON LITERARY FESTIVAL - UKZN PIETERMARITZBURG CAMPUS & ALAN PATON CENTRE

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### FRIDAY 23 MAY

9.00- 10.00 Uma Mesthrie - Alan Paton and The Phoenix Settlement. Keynote Speaker

10.00 - 10.30 George Hughes- Natal Parks Board

10.30 - 11.00 Saleem Badat- Ruth First and Activist Research

11.00 - 11.30 TEA

11.30- 12.00 Morgainne Sue du Plessis : The Reception of Cry The Beloved Country in the UK & US

12.00- 12.30 Cameron Peters - Roy Campbell

12.30 - 13.00 Betty Govinden: When Rain Clouds Gather

13.00 - 14.00 LUNCH

14.00 - 14.30 Jaqui Hilterman. The Filming of Cry the Beloved Country at Hilton Station

14.30 - 15.00 Ayub Sheik. Wopko Jensma: A Monograph

15.00 - 15.30 Brian Khoza - The Hopeful South African

15.30 - 16.00 Yvonne Spain. The Time Of My Life

### SATURDAY 24 MAY

9.00 - 9.30 - Kobus Moolman - Like a hole in the head

9.30 - 10.00 - Darryl Earl David. Karoozing: An Ode to the Open Road

10.00 - 10.30 - Robin Sewlal - My Radio Memory: Listening to the Listener

10.30 - 11.00 - Sean Christie & Hedley Twidle - The Interpreters

11.00 - 11.30 - TEA

11.30 - 12.00 Malcolm Pearse - All The Hills Are Home

12.00 - 13.00 Richard Zenith - Pessoa - A Biography - Keynote speaker

Alan Paton Short Story Competition