

# BOOK REVIEW

**Book Title:** OTASA - A Remarkable Story  
**Editor:** Rosemary Crouch, with contributions from many members of the profession.  
**Qualifications:** BSc OT (Wits), MSc OT (Wits), PhD (MEDUNSA)  
**Official Position:** Historian of OTASA

**Details of the book:**  
**Publisher:** Shorten Publishers, Cape Town.  
Available in soft cover only.  
**No of Pages:** 381  
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**ISBN number:** 978-0-620-686-04-4  
**Price:** R350 (excluding postage) and can be purchased from the Office of OTASA (<http://www.otasa.org.za/>)

The President of OTASA, Dr Helen Buchan (2012-2018), commissioned this book as a project of the OTASA historian. The purpose was to produce a coffee-table publication to celebrate the history of OTASA (1945-2018), and to highlight OTASA's contribution to the founding of WFOT so that the book could be presented on the occasion of the 2018 WFOT Congress being hosted by South Africa for the first time.

This beautifully illustrated contemporary book is dedicated to Ruth Watson. She was one of the first occupational therapists educated in South Africa and had a career that spanned almost 60 years. She was a past President and Honorary Life President of OTASA and just completed her contribution to this book before her death in 2014. It is fitting that this book honours her and her contribution to OTASA.

The book is a comprehensive narrative of the history of OTASA over the years and reports on the many challenges that have faced the profession and the numerous successes and achievements. There are seven chapters in this book, each dedicated to a unique aspect of OTASA's history.

**Chapter 1** is the longest chapter (219 pages) and describes the development of OTASA over the past eight decades. Text in each decade lists the interesting people who served OTASA and outlines the main issues that were addressed at the time. Pictures and humorous anecdotes illustrate this section and hold the reader's attention. Changes in OT uniforms and hairstyles over time add interest. The text indicates how the profession has progressed and matured over the eight-decades and the contribution of OTASA to this process. Reports of the Council indicate the growth within the association and formation of standing committees and their reports attest to depth and breadth of the work carried out on behalf of the OTASA membership and the profession as a whole.

Reports of past Presidents have been included in this section to highlight the main issues of concern, challenges and successes during their tenure, as well as the impact of the socio-political changes in the country as well as policy changes in health, education and social development that have impacted the profession.

**Chapter 2** (17 pages) describes the history of the two publications of the OTASA: the South African Journal of Occupational Therapy and the newsletter named the FOCUS.

The Journal, first published in 1953, has been the mouthpiece of the association to communicate views to members, the government of the day, the public and other health professions. It has gained recognition as journal for scientific work with the DNE and ISSN approval and with on-line access to full text articles in important databases more recently. The FOCUS is published as a means for communication to the members and for the reporting of branch events and other activities of interest.

**Chapter 3** (31 pages) includes a review of the historical relationships OTASA has had with other organisations and groups both nationally (HPCSA, Vona du Toit Foundation, DPSA and interest groups) and internationally (WFOT, OTARG). There is a brief dis-

ussion of each organisation/group, its purpose and the nature of interaction with OTASA.

**Chapter 4** (17 pages) discusses the history of the OTAs and OTTs in South Africa. This chapter highlights the importance and role of this category of worker within the OT services in South Africa, as well as the many challenges with training, registration and the creation of posts.

**Chapter 5** (49 pages) is dedicated to the voices of the OT students who are the leaders and future work force. This chapter reflects the enthusiasm of the students for the career they have chosen; their education process and their perception of the professional leadership needed from OTASA in the future.

**Chapter 6** (3 pages) records all the congresses that have been hosted by the branches of OTASA.

**Chapter 7** (9 pages) lists the OTASA prestigious awards and names the recipients of these awards.

Rosemary Crouch, OTASA Historian and editor of this Book, must be congratulated in compiling this important, comprehensive and enlightening narrative of the history of OTASA from the OTASA archives and the stories of many occupational therapists in such an interesting way. This is an important historical record of OTASA's development that should have relevance for all South African occupational therapists.

## **This book review has been compiled by:**

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