



*Delegates attending the first PSSA Congress in 1954.*

## PSSA formed: *Together we are stronger*

After many failed attempts to form a unifying body to represent all the South African clubs and photographers, a campaign spearheaded by Dr Kin Bensusan of the Photographic Society of Johannesburg, culminated in a founding congress in the Durban City Hall on 24 July 1954, attended by delegates from 26 clubs.

During the successful campaign Dr Kin mailed 4 000 letters to photographers across the country, finally convincing the doubters that they would not lose their identity and would have a stronger voice when united. He also emphasised that a representative body would offer the best vehicle for promoting high photographic standards in the country.

There are currently 116 senior and Youth clubs in eleven photographic regions affiliated to PSSA. In addition, the society has more than 1 100 active individual members.

PSSA has succeeded in realising its main objective, promoting high photographic standards in South Africa, through various means.

- The society was invited by the official government training body — MICT SETA — to assist with formulating a curriculum to obtain photographic qualifications.
- PSSA promotes the skills of members by offering a countrywide competition base against which to measure their work through national and international salons. One of the toughest photographic competitions in Africa, the Impala Trophy, won by the salon entrant with the most points during a year, is a true test of skills. To win this trophy requires entering award-winning images in most of the six categories in 24 salons hosted during the year. About 1 000 PSSA members compete for the PDI Impala Trophy, and many of them also enter salons for the print trophy.
- Members are encouraged to work towards earning Honours titles on various levels by submitting panels representing their best work. An expert panel of Honours Judges meet twice a year to decide if the work submitted by members meet the required criteria. PSSA also assists members to earn international distinctions from the international photographic federation, FIAP.
- At the annual PSSA and regional congresses speakers, who are experts in their fields, share their knowledge and workshops are offered where delegates can learn new skills.
- A year-long national training course, referred to as JAP, is conducted to train judges who are expected to enhance photographic skills at club level by offering constructive comments on images entered at club level.
- Clubs benefit from the access PSSA offers to an online entry system for salons and competitions, and the various guidelines for running successful clubs.