

A TRIBUTE TO WOMEN OF THE WORLD

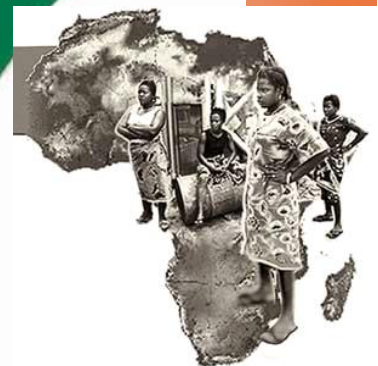
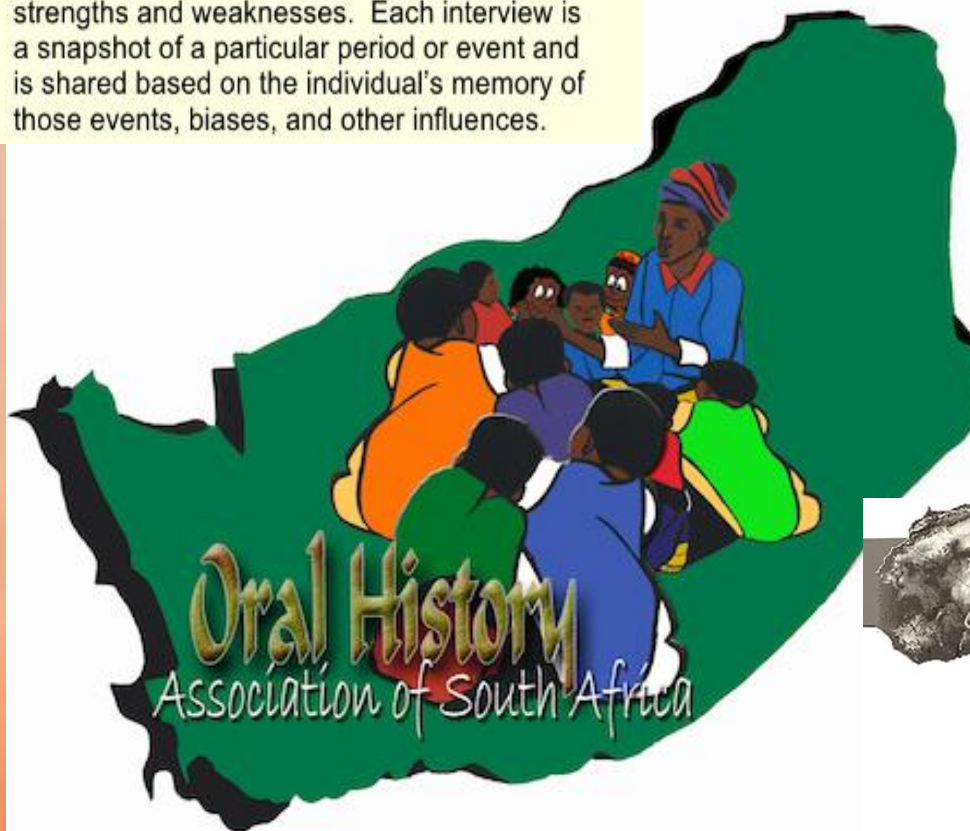
Telling Your Mother's Stories...

LIMITED DEBUT EDITION 2018

Volume 1

Oral History Defined

- Oral history is a process for recording and preserving first-hand information in a structured interview setting, and making the story available to others.
- Oral history must be evaluated in light of its strengths and weaknesses. Each interview is a snapshot of a particular period or event and is shared based on the individual's memory of those events, biases, and other influences.



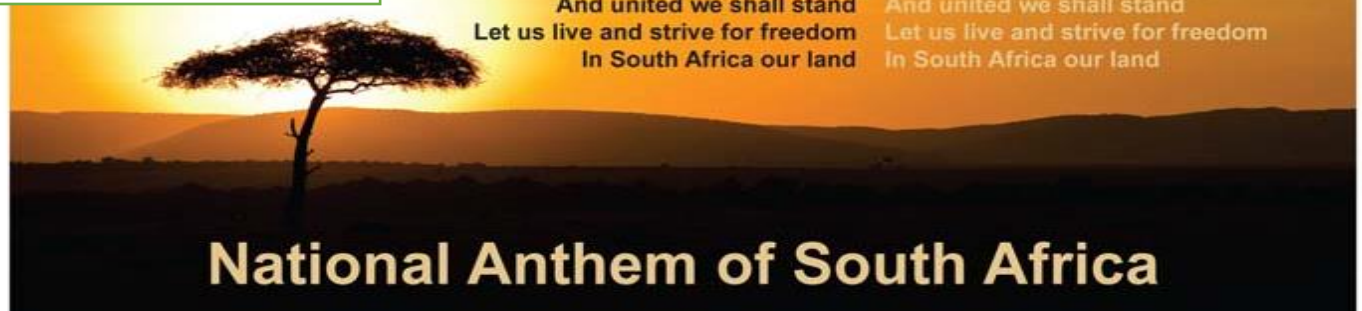
Compiled by Dr. Kogie K Archary

NATIONAL ANTHEM OF THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



Nkosi sikelel' iAfrika
Maluphakanyisw' uphondo lwayo
Yizwa imithandazo yethu
Nkosi sikelela, thina lusapho lwayo
Morena boloka setjhaba sa heso
O fedise dintwa la matshwenyeho
se boloke, O se boloke setjhaba sa heso
Setjhaba sa South Afrika – South Afrika
Uit die blou van onse hemel
Uit die diepte van ons see
Oor ons ewige gebergtes
Waar die kranse antwoord gee
Sounds the call to come together
And united we shall stand
Let us live and strive for freedom
In South Africa our land

God Bless Africa
Raise high Her glory
Hear our Prayers
God bless us, we her children
God protect our nation
End all wars and tribulations
Protect us, protect our nation
Our nation South Africa – South Africa
Ringing out from our blue heavens
From the depths of our seas
Over our everlasting mountains
Where the echoing crags resound
Sounds the call to come together
And united we shall stand
Let us live and strive for freedom
In South Africa our land



A TRIBUTE TO MAMA WINNIE MADIKIZELA MANDELA

Pictures courtesy of www.google.com.



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EDITORIAL COMMENT: DR KOGIE ARCHARY

The recording of where we have come from, the experiences that have made us who we are and the continuum that we as a society find ourselves in at this point in time most definitely traces back to our individual and collective past. The past holds the key to our greatness! It is also a pivotal part of our sadness as a nation and it unequivocally also triangulates the tributary that sets us free as we embrace the future, in terms of the present and where we have come from in relation to our past. Orality as a source of primary history, the recording of stories, the capturing of past truths as experienced in song, dance, music, culture, traditions, mores, values and art forms is the richest source of value to humankind as lessons are learnt and espoused in humanity that encourages ethical nationhood.

This compilation of unique stories adds to the body of knowledge that sheds light on our past. Authors have been sourced from different communities across South Africa and abroad. Representative writers across race, gender, age, religious background etc. have positively impacted this writing. The telling of our mother's stories is important as women continue to play important roles in the world, especially where political, economic, social, technological, legal and environmental factors are concerned. Women are at the focal point in any relationship and indeed relationships grow, terminate or remain static as a result of the input from women. Women keep culture, tradition, family values and folklore alive in the telling and retelling of tales and stories. Women's stories need to be told, their struggles need to be embraced, their successes need to be cherished and their attempts at improving society and adding value to their families need to be emphasised at every point in time.

This debut limited edition of "Women of the World...Telling our Mother's Stories" as compiled, attempts to address the need to complete the gap that exists in terms of Women's stories throughout the world as it is ordinary women that have catapulted their countries to greatness when one considers the role, value and function of women during the World Wars, during the Great Depression, through the Holocaust and the various other traumatising episodes that have shaped world history and the ensuing continuation of the human race.

This Coffee Table Publication belongs in every library, book shelf, coffee table and should take pride of place in your personal collection as it tells the story of women who came from different backgrounds, from diverse educational and cultural spheres and from divergent economic situations. Women growing up during South Africa's Apartheid regime, hold close to their heart a unique part of the country's historical experience as they witnessed this harsh oppression in its most brutal forms. Women may have chosen not to write about that aspect of their lives, or the writers may not have chosen to highlight that ideology of the struggle which was to be a South African woman of colour during Apartheid, especially a Black African female who was triply oppressed, so there still exists a need to further expose those nuances of the South African Women's stories. I hope you will enjoy reading this collection of stories as they are written with love and caution to carefully portray aspects of life in South Africa. The warmth and depth in the writing suggests a need to continue with follow-up editions as there are many-a-untold-story that remains to be told and complete the vacuum that exists in terms of women's stories. A very Special Thank You to all of our Coffee Table Publication Writers for this compilation as we appreciate your duty to national interest and embracing the voluntary nature of this project. Well done!

CHAIRPERSON'S MESSAGE_ DR. TSEPHO MOLOI

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(Pictures _courtesy of www.google.com)

The Oral History Association of South Africa (OHASA)

First and foremost, OHASA is a product of the post-1994 political transformation and a baby of the Department of Arts and Culture. The seed that brought about the birth of OHASA was planted in 1999 when the then Department of Arts, Culture, Science and Technology (DACST) was mandated by Cabinet to conceptualise and spearhead the National Oral History Programme (NOHP) for South Africa. This was the first project of its kind to be undertaken by the government. The Programme was intended to yield information that would be added to the information already existing in the country's archival holdings. It was strongly felt that the dissemination and management of information and knowledge was crucial to the restoration and sustenance of the human dignity of many millions of people, which was ravaged by colonialism and apartheid.

Rationale

The rationale for the establishment and development of the National Oral History Programme (NOHP) was based on the following 5 factors:

Firstly, in South Africa, as a result of colonialism and apartheid there are gaps in the public records and public knowledge, which are caused by deliberate omission of African knowledge, technologies, stories and philosophies from the mainstream of South Africa's body of knowledge.

Secondly, such omission concerns various aspects of African and other disadvantaged experiences in areas such as politics, economics, social development, health, culture, gender issues and religion. These aspects are inadequately represented and urgently need to be redressed.

Thirdly, the retrieval and dissemination of oral history and oral tradition are vital to fill the gaps in the education system.

Furthermore, it was felt that oral history would provide alternative narratives, fresh information and new insights into our understanding of the past. It would stimulate marginalised and distorted social practices which could enhance the well-being of the people.

Finally, it was agreed that Oral history would benefit the communities in three ways. Firstly it would provide emotional support to people through affirmation and healing. Secondly it would assist communities in retrieving traditional support systems in matters such as food conservation, funeral procedures or natural medicine, thus allowing them to save money. In this way it would provide non-monetary economic assistance. Lastly the communities would be entitled to derive some benefits from the commercialisation of commodities produced with the help of indigenous knowledge accessed through oral history.

The National Oral History Programme started with a pilot project with the theme, "The 1956 Anti-Pass March to the Union Buildings by Women of South Africa", a topic which was chosen because it was one of the many inadequately documented historic events in the country's past. The DACST was well aware of the need to train its own staff and that of the National Archives on oral history methodologies. A team of historians was appointed to oversee this process.

It was actually in January 2000 when the Minister of Arts, Culture, Science and Technology appointed a panel of experts to advise him on the drafting of a comprehensive plan for the Oral History Programme. This panel met in February 2000, and in March consultations with stake holders commenced and their input was included in a report which was produced in July 2001. At the same time that the National Oral History Programme (NOHP) was formed, a panel of musicologists was also constituted under the mandate of DACST, and it made recommendations on the National Indigenous Music Programme (NIMP). After the two groupings submitted their reports the Minister concluded that because of the similarities and overlapping areas, it was in the interest of both to merge them into a new project under the title: National Indigenous Music and Oral History Project (NIMOHP). Similarities were that:

Both projects dealt with the recording, preservation, promotion and protection of oral memories. Both projects made use of the same technological equipment and other resources. A merger between the two was therefore cost-effective. Both projects dealt with the gaps that existed in libraries and archives and they strategized as to how they should be filled. It was therefore decided that the two be merged. Shortly after the merger of these two programmes OHASA was launched (in 2003) under the arm of National Archives: **OHASA's primary objective:**

To promote and facilitate the recording, preservation, access, popularisation and study of oral history in South Africa. This includes poetry, music, oral praise, oral performance and oral tradition

MY MOTHER HARRIET DICHABE BY RUTH WALLIS (finalised by her niece Puseletso Phumo after her death in April 2017)

My mother, Mme Harriet Mookho Dichabe, was born in 1928 in the district of Herschel in the Eastern Cape. It is close to the Free State - the town of Zastron is about 40km away and Lesotho's south western areas which are also a short drive away but with border posts that have to be crossed and passports checked. She was born into a Christian home, and for as long as she can remember church every Sunday was the family norm. As soon as she was old enough she joined the church choir; singing was her first love and an innate gift which she nurtured.

Until she was to be married, she grew up as a Methodist and her faith blossomed as she learnt about the teachings in the Bible and came to understand God's love for his children, although time has nibbled at her memory she remembers some of her favourite Bible verses, words that resonated with her then and resonate with her now. Losing faith in her Creator was not something that never crossed her mind. She felt blessed no matter the circumstances. She inherited the family name, Olifant, which is an Afrikaans word meaning Elephant. How the family came by that name I do not know but it is quite common among the Xhosa people. The family were Xhosa speakers but because of our closeness to Lesotho we spoke seSotho as well.

From the church choir to the school choir the young Harriet seized every opportunity to hone her talent. This was not some hidden love affair it was a full - on personal display of affection, her appreciation for this wonderful thing called music grew by the minute, it's no wonder she was the lead in the church choir. Naturally homework and chores *disturbed the rhythm*, perhaps on the exterior, perhaps the notes danced in her ears as she thought about practice and how she was due for practice again the following afternoon, how Mr Mohapeloa, the choir conductor, must have been composing yet another song just by listening to the lovely tune of the chirping birds all around. That was pure excitement, her gift from God.

When she was a young adult she went to Johannesburg where she began meeting people from all over the country. One person she met was Dolly Rathebe, who was described in her obituary published in the London based Guardian newspaper as "South Africa's First Black Diva". For a short time, Mesang in her group before her heyday because she was inspired while watching her perform and simply asked whether she could join. Music united people then and it continues to unite people now. She also had the pleasure of singing alongside Miriam Makeba, but this was also before her heyday. Mme really could have gone quite far; she might have established a great music career and never looked back, but life just happened to get in the way.

Her husband, the now late Joseph Dichabe, grew up as member of the French Protestant Church known to the people of Lesotho as Fora ea Lesotho. At the tender age of twenty she married Joseph and with that she was no longer recognised as a Methodist but nonetheless she recognised her Creator all the same. It can't be easy switching up roles when really all you want to do is sing your heart out until you can't sing any more. Mme Dichabe emphasized the fact that becoming a wife, a daughter in - law...a mother; becoming all of the things that she would have preferred to become at a much later stage of her life. This brought about a halt to the one thing that she treasured most. Joseph worked in the big city, employed by Fraser's whose chain of shops was well known but closed down some years ago. My father already had two sons so Harriet immediately had two small children to look after. My mother had four children from her marriage, three girls, Ouma Alicetta, Monkachu and I and one boy, Tsedisio.

When asked about music, a smile rose upon her face and gave way to some reminiscent laughter as she attempted to emulate Paul's amazing base voice, a member of the group that she joined all those years ago. She did not remember his surname. That's the vague memory again. Wherever the music was she was there too but to think of the places that she must have gone to, to access the genre. South African Jazz was once used as a medium of resistance against the apartheid government, the settings would very well have included shebeens and dance halls although she has no recollection of performing in such environments. Perhaps she did indeed perform in such places. We lived in an area close to the centre of Johannesburg called Newclare near Sophiatown, which was quite different from Soweto because it was racially mixed.

The government changed hands in 1948 when apartheid residential restrictions were fiercely implemented in the 1950s which affected us as we had to go to Soweto and lived in the township of Pimville. My father was very opposed to the racism of the government and 'Bantu Education' in particular. He supported the freedom struggle and helped some apartheid victims to move to Lesotho. He decided that my mother and their children should go there, where he had family connections. My mother found a place to live in the large village of Roma where my father built a house where we started a small peach orchard. Roma is where the current National University of Lesotho began. It was funded by the British government which ruled Lesotho then. The name 'Roma' arose from the influential Roman Catholic presence there. For a time, my mother worked as a domestic servant for the Vice Chancellor of the university.

A very big moment in our lives occurred in 1970 when my father suddenly passed away following a heart attack and my mother at the age of only 42 was now a widow. I was only seventeen and attending High School. As the oldest I had to help my mother with family matters and the awful grief. She never married again. She obtained a job in Maseru, Lesotho's only real town then and now the capital city. Fraser's came into our family story again. She worked for one of their shops (Mafafa Supermarket). She found a one room place to live just behind the shop and could only come to Roma at the weekends. It is a 37km journey between the two places. It was not a happy time as Fraser's did not treat their mostly black staff well and there were some unpleasant conflicts with some of the white managers who were quite racist. She later worked in Roma for a shoe shop which was owned by a family of traders, the Thornes, who were much better employers. She was also much nearer to our home.

In 1977 there was another big moment. I became engaged to my husband, Malcolm, a University lecturer from England. She was much concerned about how race issues across the border would affect us and Lobola which would normally have been paid to 'Me. An agreement was reached with 'Me that Malcolm would pay the school fees each term for my now late brother, Tsediso, who was studying at Christ the King High School in Roma. This was a bit of a compromise with tradition but turned out to be successful. 'Me was quite happy because the boy completed High School.

Later when I went to live in England with my husband a few years after the birth of Rebecca, our daughter, she came to visit us, enjoyed life in Birmingham and even found a job at an old People's Home. Post-apartheid and following the release of struggle freedom fighter, Nelson Mandela most of the family returned to South Africa.' Me then lived with one of her sisters in Bekkersdal in the West Rand. After this sister died in 1999, she won the right, after a difficult dispute, to inherit the house and there she remains. She is now quite frail but lives with her helper and has her children and grandchildren visit her very often.



Left: My wedding in Roma 1977



Right: Hole in the Wall, Wild Coast, South Africa



Left: Our home in Lesotho

Right: On the occasion of Mme's 80th Birthday



Left: In Highgate, Birmingham 1990, Rebecca and Mme

Right: Mme and I at my home in Westville on the occasion of her birthday.



Left: Two former Anglican leaders, Reuben Philip (left) and Michael Nuttall (right)

Right: Rebecca's Graduation



Ma Motshidisi Herminah Ntsimane by Radikobo Ntsimane

Motshidisi was the third of the five children of Fani Stephen Ntsimane of Bakwena of Rustenburg and Modithwadi Mmaseope (Ntshoe) of Bakolobeng of GaMaloka. Born in 1917 in the area between Potchefstroom and Stilfontein she and her siblings grew up in the village of Matlwang. Because her three brothers, namely Seope, Tlabaki and Kgetse did not live at home in Matlwang when they were old enough to marry, she had to be in charge of the household even long after the parents had passed away.

Having remained at home when her sister Sekaakae got married and left the village of Matlwang, Motshidisi raised the children of the elder brother Tlabaki and those of her own. She was the eldest clan member when children of Tlabaki got married. Her own children are: Tshabadira, Sebokwane, Mamokopelo, Magogodi, Levy, Harries and Dimakatso. Motshidisi was a matriarch who inherited the responsibility of keeping the clan together even when in 1968 the village of Matlwang was forcefully removed to Ikageng in Potchefstroom.



When in Ikageng relatives sent their children who were of employment age to live under Motshidisi's roof with her children and grandchildren. At some point one could count about 40 people who lived together in a four-roomed house. No one was ever kicked out due to shortage of space.

Motshidisi in a gold shirt with daughters Sebokwane and Mamokopela and grandchildren

The kindheartedness of Motshidisi did not end with those who were in her household. There was a bus driver by the name of Monaisa, popularly known as Oom Nice. Due to the fact that the Monaisas were Ntsimanes and vice versa, Oom Nice used to get a flask of tea or coffee when he drove by our home in Moabi Street. There was another gentleman called Lesole whose parents were our neighbours in Matlwang. He also got refreshments when he drove past our home delivering sorghum beer in municipality bars. Another beneficiary of Motshidisi's kindness was an old neighbour called Ntate Mosiane. Mosiane spent the day by himself and always appreciated the soft porridge I used to take to him before going to school. These people used to give me money to take to my granny out of gratitude. This gesture was not a reciprocation as it was not always made after my deliveries. Due to the many nieces and nephews who addressed Motshidisi as Rakgadi (Aunty), caused neighbours and friends of her children to also call her Rakgadi. The nieces and nephews who later got their own township houses used to refer to the house at 1831 Moabi Street as Kwa Lapeng as their central home.

Today there are a few young women called Tshidi, whose parents wanted to honour our grandmother by keeping her name alive. Those parents probably also wanted their children to have the strength and resilience of Motshidisi. A Lutheran Church minister called Mabaka Lekwape does not tire from reminding me of the strength of my granny. He would say, ***"It is amazing how a woman of short stature kept a big family intact and never faltered in driving each and every member to church for worship."***

RACHEL NEL LANDMAN - LOYAL TO THE FAMILY BY CHRISTINA LANDMAN

When my mother died a few months ago at the age of 91, I made a nasty discovery. I discovered that I do not know much about my mother's story before she married my father. The year 2017, on 15 December, would have seen their 70th wedding anniversary.

Why is the story of my mother that I know so one-sided? Why do I only know her as a mother and a married woman? Why do I not know her as a child with talents, and as a young woman with dreams?

My mother grew up on a farm somewhere between Loeriesfontein and Calvinia in the Northern Cape. During all the time I knew her – for sixty years – she never went back even to visit. Also, I have to note, my mother could not drive, since she thought that it was not proper for women to drive. My mother's father died and her mother married somebody else, but since my grandmother died at the age of 62 I did not know her or any of my grandfathers from my mother's side. I only know that I was named after my grandmother. However, my mother insisted that I should only receive one of my grandmother's names, Christina, and do not carry the full load of Christina Glaudina.

Perhaps this was a sign of my mother's small pockets of resistance against the horribly stylised life she as a woman had to lead, one she had embraced but subconsciously, I believe, sometimes really tried to undermine. She believed that a woman should not work in a salary-related job because that would indicate that her husband does not earn enough to support his family. And yet the small world to which this reduced her, aggravated her. Although she obtained five distinctions in matric, she



came to the city to train and work as a secretary. Here, in Pretoria, she worked with my father's sister, Alida, and through her they met and married in 1947. They became the parents of three boys and a girl. There is a 15-year time difference between my oldest and youngest brother. My middle brother, Petrus, died of a heart attack at the age of 36 in 1988. This was the year in which he was one of the founding members of MNet.

Six weeks after his death, my son Derek was born. My mother adored him. It was as if her deceased son was given back to her. We children disappointed my mother. She invested her life and a very strict and traditional upbringing in us, which we all in some way or another rejected. She expected at least one of my brothers to become a minister of religion, and her daughter to become a housewife. Eventually her sons turned out agnostic – and her daughter became a minister of religion and professor of theology. I remember that when I was in Grade 2, the teacher asked us who of us wanted to become nothing. I put up my hand. I wanted to become a housewife and I thought that meant becoming nothing. Ironically it was the strict discipline to which she subjected me that led to me becoming an academic.



Although we disappointed my mother in terms of what she expected from us, there is one thing (amongst others) that I will never forget about my mother: her loyalty to her children. This was probably also a traditional thing, being loyal to your family come what may; placing family values above everything, also your personal expectations. Nevertheless, in this she was a powerful role model to her children. Today we all have families which may not be exactly traditional, but in which there is unconditional loyalty to our children. Sometimes I feel sad when I think about my mother and the life she was forced to lead. She had so much potential, so much energy. She was gifted and clever. And yet within her culture she was trapped in a system in which very little movement was allowed to women. What would she have become if she were free to choose?

When I was ordained into a black church, she was there although she had never been exposed politically or culturally to something as integrated as this. When I had a severe back operation a year or so ago, she was there although she always had to ask somebody to bring her to the hospital because she could not drive. My mother was there when she was needed. On the 7th of July 2017 she was driven to church by her friend and her husband. As usual, people were waiting at the church to push her into the church in a wheelchair. She had a special seat in the church – the Dutch Reformed Church - where she was a member for 60 years. Her cushion was waiting for her, as well as her Bible and hymnbook in large print. Not seeing so well was the only problem she was experiencing. For the rest her mind and body were fully functional. The next morning, she got out of bed – and her heart simply stopped beating. No suffering. No scratch on her body. She had left for heaven, as she believed. Being deeply religious, she might not have found earth to be perfect, but surely heaven would be.

SARAS SAHADEW (1948-2007) by ANEESHA CONSTANT



JULY 2016 - DINARD FLEA MARKET



1967 - MY MOM, MYSELF AND AUNTY SARAS



**2017 – “BELLE RIVE”, OUR HOME
IN DINARD**



**2017 - ANEESHA CONSTANT WITH HER FAMILY IN
PHUKET (THAILAND)**

A smile broke out on my face when I spotted that old, rusty metal iron that lay in a pile of second hand items at the monthly flea market in Dinard, a fashionable, seaside resort town in France. Our daughter Tahilia, aged fourteen could not understand why I was mesmerized by this item when I was supposed to be looking for interesting art pieces to decorate our newly renovated summer home in that town. It is common in parts of Europe for the municipality to declare certain properties as historical monuments. Our home was built in the 1860's and it is one of these properties where we can update the interior but the exterior of the building has to be maintained strictly as the original design.

I told Tahilia that when I was her age, I used an iron just like this one. I explained the process of lighting the fire, collecting the hot coals to fill the body of the iron and then to iron as fast as we could until the coals turned into ash. If the school uniforms and my dad's overalls were not all ironed for the week, we had to start the process again the next day. Tahilia had a worried look on her face when she saw that I was going to buy the iron. She protested, "Mama, it will not match our house and it will make you sad every time you look at it!" The truth is that the iron did not make me sad...for a split second my mind took me to Verulam in the province of Kwa-Zulu Natal. I felt a deep sense of appreciation and gratitude that I was actually on holiday abroad and not at my childhood home enduring "hard labour".

My mind flashed from one thing to the next, I remembered sitting by the fire with my Aunt Saras, who taught me how this type of iron worked. She also taught me other life lessons that came in handy when I was traveling alone. My aunt was surprised when I told her that my dad was teaching us a lesson by not connecting the electricity that year. To this day I still don't know what the lesson was! To Tahilia's relief, I did not buy the iron that day, but I did return to the market but the iron was sold.

Saras was my paternal aunt, who grew up in a large family with ten siblings in Verulam. A room was added to the family home each time an uncle got married. Aunty Saras spent her days doing house chores, cooking with her sisters-in-law and when she was able to get away, she embroidered designs on client's sarees. While I watched my aunt work on the sarees, I would work on designs and colour schemes in my head. This was the beginning of my love for art.

Most of my relatives (including Aunty Saras) had a soft spot for my younger sister, Asha who was quieter by nature and obedient compared to me. But, it was my rebellious nature that helped me when I ventured out into the world. Aunty Saras could have remained at home and continued with life as it was. With hard work and determination, she changed her path and made a success of her life, which was inspirational for many family members. My sister Asha has the same work ethic too so it is not surprising that she's made a success of her life too. With age, I have mellowed become more diplomatic and my sister Asha has become more outspoken. For us, the hardest part of living abroad is missing loved ones so it was always great when Aunty Saras visited and spoilt us.

When I learned that Aunty Saras was going to be a hairdresser, I was sad that she will not have time to work on saree designs anymore. My aunt left home at 5am each day to catch the train from Verulam to Durban and returned home exhausted. Over the weekends, family members got free haircuts. During my haircutting sessions, I learned about my aunt's work ethic, her dreams to travel, the personal sacrifices she made, her determination to please her clients and the passion she felt for her job despite the hurdles she faced.

Aunty Saras was thrilled when she got her first job at a “white” salon as a hair washer. She also made tea or coffee for clients, swept the floors, washed the equipment each day and she also opened and shut the salon for a lower salary than her co-workers. She learned how to interact with people of all ethnicities, picked up new cutting and styling techniques from her colleagues, saved every cent and finally bought the salon. Aunty Saras turned the salon into a very successful business that allowed her the financial independence & stability she craved. She also wanted to get married and to travel.

Aunty Saras was in love with my mother’s brother, who was much younger than herself. Due to family pressure, they were unable to marry hence my aunt remained a spinster. Her dream holiday destinations were Mauritius and India. Aunty Saras did not make it to these places either despite having millions. She could not bring herself to spend her hard earned cash on herself!

Just before my teens, I remember being really excited to spend a Saturday afternoon with my aunt in the big city of Durban. I dressed in my best clothes that I had prepared the day earlier. These were hand-me-downs from my younger aunt. It was common for parents to buy one or two bigger sizes of clothing and shoes for kids so the items would last longer. As I followed my aunt in the busy streets of Durban, she noticed that I was limping. When she examined my foot, she saw that the blister from my oversize shoes had burst and that a piece of synthetic leather was rubbing the area where the skin had come off. Aunty Saras scolded me for not saying anything and then asked me to wait in that spot. She returned a few minutes later with a pair of flip flops in the perfect size. It was the most comfortable shoes I had!

I was in my twenties when I started my first overseas teaching post in Italy. Aunty Saras and I exchanged letters regularly. Once when I returned home for the holidays, my aunt came by with food and cakes that she knew I liked when I was a kid. After we ate, she asked me if I wanted to see the Christmas lights in Durban and have an ice cream cone as we did when I was a little girl. I must have done or said something on that trip because the following year when Aunty Saras visited, she brought food and cakes but there was no mention of seeing the Christmas lights and stopping for ice-cream!

I am glad that I told Aunty Saras more than once what a great inspiration and role model she was to me. It was this work ethic, passion and determination that allowed me to grow and to prosper in projects I had no formal training in. When I was not successful, I remembered my aunt’s words and found another way to reach my target.

Sadly, in early 2000, my aunt died of breast cancer when she was in her mid-fifties. The last time we talked on the telephone, she sounded cheerful and then she casually mentioned that she had sold her thriving business. We both cried as we said our goodbyes.

After fifteen years of being an art teacher, I got an unexpected offer to design for a high end resort. For tax purposes, I had to set up a company which is still running today. As the projects came in, I had to choose between teaching or to take the adventurous path of the unknown.

At this point, I have to mention that my husband is and has been a constant supporter of my ideas – many of which are developmental and experimental. He also taught me to “stop and smell the roses” because I can be a workaholic like my Aunt Saras.

Mama Emily MaMbatha Myeza by Radikobo Ntsimane

There is no way people will know who Mrs. MaMbatha Myeza was. Precisely because she was born in 1946 in a rural area with a police station called Helpmekaar hidden from the main road that connects a one-street town of Pomeroy and Dundee. She was married to Mr. Azmon Zikhula Myeza who lived even further away from the land of the written word in Mumba under iNkosi Majozi. Their children are Ndoda, Helga, Nkosinathi, Olga, Nomusa, Sphamandla and Mzwandile.

What makes Mrs. Myeza important and famous is the fact that she dedicated a part of her life when she was strong, to walking about six kilometers almost every day from her home to the Enhlanhleni Lutheran Mission. MaMbatha cleaned the seminary student hostel and cooked basic meals for students coming from all corners of the world where the Lutheran Church in Southern Africa (LCSA) was working. The dedication to the work she did was seen when she arrived in the mornings with her pinafores and sneakers drenching. She had to walk through the footpaths where the tall grass always emptied its dew on her. Although everyone in the surrounding villages of Mambeni and Mumba did it, it was nevertheless humbling to see MaMbatha coming in with her skirts and shoes drenched by dew.



Her story is important because students who came from as far as Botswana and Liberia to be trained as pastors depended on her coming to work. The students came speaking no word of isiZulu but after a while they would hold conversations with MaMbatha. While her basic Zulu cooking took a while to get used to, before each student completed his studies they will all be looking forward to her meal after a day's classes. I wonder how much she would remember of each student if she would write a book about the life at the Enhlanhleni Seminary hostel. Surely the history of the Lutheran pastoral formation in Enhlanhleni will not be complete unless her name and contributions are mentioned. As if walking through dongas and over hillocks was not hard enough during the week, MaMbatha would also come to Enhlanhleni church for worship on Sundays. One can credit her faith for the service she rendered to the seminarians.

MaMbatha's dedication was such that when she had to stay away from work for whatever reason, she would send one of her daughters to make sure that we had a meal for that day. It is likely that Mrs. Myeza had her daughters stay away from school to attend to our culinary needs. She would also bring along her baby who she would watch her while taking care of her various chores. While this piece is meant to acknowledge my indebtedness to Mrs. Myeza for the sacrifices she made for people she hardly knew before they came, it is also meant to serve as a way of gratitude for the thank you we forgot to express while our bellies were full.

ROSY GOVENDER, MY MUM TOILED...MRS. PAM NAIDU

My mum toiled so hard in the hot, heavy sun, sorting out the rotting fruit and vegetables in the backyard of one of the rich homes in Merebank, Durban. Any fool could see that nothing was worth being salvaged from these rotting boxes. Anyway, she was quietly working away, not complaining or moaning from bending down the entire morning. I would keep glancing at her, watching her from the corner of my eye. Seeing the agony, she endured from continuously bending her back. She was not allowed to sit on even a stool. We were all at her side, her four youngest children. It was now school holidays and we accompanied my mum to the neighbourhood houses, where she went to do her daily chores, even if the payment was for a loaf of bread and milk. She would accept anything, just to feed us all at the end of the day, regardless of what my dad would say. He seemed to think that mum got paid very well because there was always a meal each evening. When the Indian owner of the house went to lay down, I quickly ran to mum's side. I even had the owner's routine so well planned out in my head, that I even knew her toilet breaks. I overturned the wooden tomato box and helped my mum to sit down. I could see just how swollen her feet were, from all the hand washing that she had been doing, when we arrived at 07h00.



Thalcheemah Govender, fondly known as Rosy – Photo taken in 2007

I raised her feet on another wooden box and asked my brother to slowly rub her feet. I gave her the jam sandwich that I hid earlier on, because, somehow, I knew that a pregnant woman needed to eat regularly. I think that mum looked too thin for her five months of pregnancy. I was six years old at the time, too afraid to ask too many strange questions.

My dad had just lost his job after being involved in a horrific motor vehicle accident and mum still had eight children to feed. Don't even think about State Grants. This was during the Apartheid Era, in the '70, s, when a group of the Indians were shoved to Merebank back then and literally forgotten.

My dad was bedridden after having multiple bodily fractures. He was too embarrassed, not because of his injuries, but because of being unable to take care of mum and us all. I vowed then and there that I would devote my attention and energy into learning. Helping whoever needed my help to get them through their dark times of need.

There were very few nuns nursing back then in 1989, when I started at St. Augustine's Hospital. This was a predominantly white hospital that had started accepting applications from the other race groups. All the nurses in training were checked each morning by the Matron on duty for our dress code and cleanliness. Travelling with public transport and trying to maintain a white uniform was hard work on its own, because somehow, I always ended up with a run in my stockings. I was clever and carried extras because I would change each time before seeing the Matron. When I finally did take my nurse's pledge, in the presence of my mother, I could see the pride well up in her eyes and I knew just how proud she was, that I had pursued my calling.



My beloved late parents, Duncan and Rosy Govender, guiding us all from heaven

I was now officially an Enrolled Nurse or Staff Nurse. I loved a challenge and welcomed the decision to study further. This was my opportunity to enhance my nursing skills. My mother stood so proudly, following me with her gaze at my graduation.

What a beautiful, simple wedding we had because, yet again, my then fiancé, Ivan and I, had to prove that we were responsible, decision- makers, capable of budgeting. We had to ensure that both our parents were not put through any trauma of wedding costs. We knew that they could not cope because we both had taken care of our families until our wedding day. My mother and daddy cried so much that even I didn't want to leave home. Dear me, how would they manage financially without me?

I became ill. After numerous tests and MRI scans, my specialists were still unsure what my diagnosis was. Generally, most Indians had 'sugar ', 'pressure ' or ' heart', but why must I be the one that was different? Already, those that had witnessed me having had a seizure, had labelled me as being ' mad'. Finally, when I explained to my family that I had Neurosarcoidosis- they all looked at me with a blank stare. I did explain that it is an auto- immune disease, where I have benign lesions in my brain.

Each religious group tried to cast out the demons from my head and body. My husband was worried. My mother always lay down next to me, holding my hand, praying that some miracle would stop my seizures.

Oh well, being on medical retirement from work for ten years did take its toll on everyone around me, especially my dear mother. I had to show her that I could come to terms with my illness, regain my memory and return to nursing in my ICU. I know, this seemed too tall an order, even for me, but I had already set my goals. My mother stayed with me almost daily during my pregnancy in 2004. The seizures then were uncontrollable, despite the medication. My doctors had warned Ivan and I on all the ill- effects of this pregnancy. They could not even understand how I did manage to fall pregnant in the first place, what with all the strong medication that I constantly swallowed, just to function. Amazing news from the hospital, a healthy baby boy. My mother told me days later that she had not eaten a thing that Friday, when I went to hospital. She continued to pray and got all of our family members involved, until my delivery. During my stay at home, I had taught myself how to read and write again- after too much of long-term memory loss.

I had helped my sister Vasanthie, open up a Day care in Merebank, called Noah's Ark Daycare Centre. I got my driver's license and went back to work at St. Augustine's Hospital in CICU in 2009. My mother and daddy always told me that I am a very stubborn girl, who does not take 'No ' for an



answer. I told my mum that I knew of a girl just like that, and that she was my mentor, with her ever- ready smile.

My mum was a Christian when she married my dad and that's the reason we have Christian and Hindu names. Since mum was a Christian and dad a Tamil (his ancestral lineage is of South Indian descent) her family opposed the relationship due to his religious beliefs.

Mum with her nine (9) children.

Back row: Standing from left to right: 4th sister Vasanthie (10); 2nd sister Julie (14); 3rd sister Kasturie (11); eldest sister Margaret (16).

Seated: My dearest Mum seated on her lap, my youngest sister Premie – 9 months old

Front row: from left to right: 5th sister Teresa (8), 8th brother Sagaren (2),

Seated: turning towards mum, 7th brother Anand- (4) Right: Me (6)

Maria MaSibiya Mtshali by Mrs. Kholisile Ntsimane

My mother's life had very dramatic turns and twists. Born on a farm in a rural place called Confidence near Piet Retief in Mpumalanga province, she only went as far as primary school as it was the case with her peers at that time. The general practice on the farm was that each family would send at a certain age their children to serve a term either as a seasonal worker during planting, weeding or harvesting. The lucky maidens would be kitchen helps.

The tragedy that changed the life of Maria Sithumane Sibiya was when her father Sibiya passed away. Sithumane and her mother were no longer welcome to live with the Sibiyas. Their real reason is unknown but it is often the case that when a married son lives under the roof of or on the land of his parents, his wife has less say in household matters.



It is likely that the Sibiyas blamed the *makoti* for their son's death or they did not trust her with the inheritance.

MaSibiya is seated between her daughters: Idah (standing) and Kholisile. Standing behind are her grandchildren: Sikhumbuzo and Lebogang (in graduation attire).

My grandmother MaNkwanyana had to leave her marital home and moved to Driefontein to find a place with her sister who was married to a Zungu. My mother grew up in the home of the Zungus whose children treated her as their sister.

When Sithumane was old enough she got married to Thomas Mtshali my father. Their children are: Idah Velephi, Samuel Mphangwa, Tobias Mfanampela, Maria Sibongile, Dorah Ntombizodwa, Kholisile Florence and Bhokinkosi Saul. Before Mrs. Mtshali's *umabo* ceremony [a pre-wedding event where the bride hands over gifts to her parents-in-law], gifts she had prepared to hand over to her in-laws burnt along with the hut they were kept in. The wedding took place anyway and the *umabo* happened over twenty years after her husband had passed away. A stand-in bridegroom came from among her grandsons, Mthokozisi. MaSibiya is a very devoted Christian who seldom, if ever, would go to bed without saying a prayer. She belongs to the Prayer Women's League and can be identified by her white and black uniform. Her staunch devotion may have propelled our late father to do evangelist training in the Lutheran Seminary.

My siblings will agree that our mother wanted only the best for us. She insisted that we go to school and get education. She may have observed that the families that we making it out above the poverty level were those whose children were getting an education. When she stopped being a domestic worker she continued to have a productive garden that she wakes up every morning to tend. She continues to raise chicken at her ripe age. While she is a quiet person who is slow to get angry, she does not suffer fools. No single decision about her family, however small it may be, is taken without her contribution and guidance. The best moment of our lives is when we gather at her house to celebrate her birthday on 30 December. She is a real matriarch at 87 years' old who continues to raise her great grandchildren.

My Story, I was born on 29 July 1956, in Tea Estate, Inanda by Mrs. Devi Munien

I was born on 29 July 1956 in Tea Estate Inanda (7km outside of the town of Verulam) to parents Athimoolam and Perumalamah. Athimoolam was the son of indentured labourer Venkatachellam Pillay that arrived from India in the early 1900's. Venkatachellam hailed from the village of Royapettah, within the town of Madras, now known as Chennai. At the time of travel to South Africa, Athimoolam was 9 months old and was carried through the hazardous journey by his eldest sister, Thangammah, who later became the matriarch of the Athimoolam family.

When the period of indenture was served in 1915, Venkatachellam was allowed to go back to India. He chose to return and after a short while made a decision to permanently settle in South Africa. At the time, the Armstrong's, wealthy sugar farmers, employed him as well as many of the Indian labourers. The Armstrong's, while holding large farms in ownership as part of the British takeover of land, decided to share parts of the land with their labourers. While many of the labourers were ambitious and chose bigger farms with a view to future prosperity, Venkatachellam decided to take up a small piece of land (13 hectares) to farm and provide for his children. This was later handed to Athimoolam to farm sugar and grow vegetables. Athimoolam was the only son of Venkatachellam growing up with 5 sisters on the farm.

Athimoolam and Perumalamah had 8 children. Perumalamah was born in Port Shepstone on the South Coast of Kwa-Zulu Natal, the eldest daughter to her parents who worked on white owned farms. From the age of five, she joined her mother while serving as a domestic servant to white families. She recalled her time as a young child, polishing cutlery as her mother worked cleaning houses and washing laundry.

Devanamah (or Devi as I am known) is the middle child of 8 siblings (3 brothers and 5 sisters). My two elder brothers, Shunmugam and Narainsamy chose the teaching profession as at the time it was about education and security. These brothers would later become the heads of the family after my dad's death in 1969 at the age of 57. My eldest sister, Subammah decided to join the nursing profession. She later married and had 3 children. She died from breast cancer at the age of 43. One elder sibling, Parvathy is an attorney that lived in the United Kingdom for 23 years, returned to South Africa and now practices as a magistrate in the High Court dealing with family law. My younger siblings; Kamalavelli is a bank employee; Dhanalutchmee is a Vice-principal at a high school and my youngest brother Karunakaran is a Manager at serving at Telkom

Life on the farm was wholesome and carefree while growing up. Every day was a new adventure having elder siblings that gave us the freedom to explore and learn. We enjoyed being free-spirited and our life experiences extended to enjoying the time working with labourers, harvesting fruit and vegetables for sale and riding on my dad's large truck delivering sugar cane to the Mount Edgecombe Sugar Mill. The sense of cultural freedom and community was the most cherished memories from life on the farm with an extended farming community.

Our greatest role models in life were our dad, mum, brothers, aunts and sisters-in Law. Peer pressure was virtually non-existent, as it was not identified as such in those days. There was more a degree of self-limiting beliefs imposed by a perceived caste system. The sense of right and wrong came from strong family values and by observing those around us. With no education and no wealth, grandparents taught us the value of education and planned for a better life for their children and grandchildren.

The stories told to us around night fires and family gatherings stay with us and we have shared with our children and grandchildren. The old tales of ancestral spirits, ghost stories and family graveyards are etched in our minds, so real at the time but now more like figments of our imagination.

My life in some way mirrored the struggles of our parents and grandparents. Born into a colonial era and then into apartheid, we did not know emancipation as a race of people that were “slaves” to the British and then oppressed by an apartheid regime. The struggle heroes made it possible for us to have facilities for tertiary education and create access for us within the South African employment system. Racial segregation and discrimination was rife and post 1990 heralded the dawn of a new era where opportunities for inclusion into jobs previously reserved for whites. It has been a long road and hopefully our children and grandchildren will reap the benefits of a post-apartheid society.

My personal successes are underscored by the support I received from my family and friends. The ability to continue studies while working means I needed a strong support structure of family and in-laws. This support ensured I was able to achieve my goals. Career success came in the past 15 years of a long journey of 40 years in the corporate world. Progressing to executive level brought its own challenges where white males in an egotistical and ruthlessly ambitious business environment dominate boardrooms. Through strongly embedded personal values, I was able to survive and grow and become more resilient. The person I am today is reflective of my professional trajectory of life coupled with the personal experiences on my journey.

Equal pay for equal work was not evident or practiced. Only in recent years has this become a reality in the corporate world. To get to this status, women had to work twice as hard to prove that they were up to the job. I was fortunate that my self-belief had me challenging the status quo and came up winning. There was a huge risk to my career as victimization for challenging top management was a feature of the organization’s informal policies, which led to fear and insecurity in the workplace.

The Athimoolam/Venkatachellam extended family



Back row: Neelavathi Mariemoothoo (Paternal cousin) holding Lorraine Chengelroyen (Niece); Narainsamy Athimoolam (Brother); Lutchmee Venkatachellam (Aunt); Gopaul Mariemoothoo (Paternal cousin); Perumalamah Athimoolam (Mother) holding Dhanalutchmee Athimoolam (Youngest sibling); Goonie Munien (Cousin); Govindammah Athimoolam (Sister-in Law); Marie Pungan (Maternal Uncle); Shunmugam Athimoolam (Brother); Subammah Athimoolam (Sister)

Seated: Chinnamah Marimuthoo (Paternal Aunt); Athimoolam Venkatachellam (Father); Woolaganathan Athimoolam (Nephew); Thangammah Venkatachellam (Paternal Aunt); Front: Parvathy Athimoolam (Sister); Kamalavelli Athimoolam (Sister); Karunagaran Athimoolam (Brother), Aungammah Chengelroyen (Niece); Devi Athimoolam

Athimoolam with his brothers'-in law: From left to right: Marie Pungan (Maternal Uncle); Narainsamy Pungan (Maternal Uncle); Athimoolam Venkatachellam (Father); Moonsamy Pungan (Maternal Uncle)



My Family today

From left to right: Roustom Maharaj (elder son-in-law), (back) Thumba Munien, youngest brother-in-law), Mineshree Munien (eldest daughter) holding Laranya Maharaj (granddaughter), Devi Munien, Johnny Munien (husband), Thameshni Narsigan (youngest daughter), Neilan Narsigan (younger son-in-law)



Managing people and teams was the most fulfilling role I undertook in my professional role. Seeing the success of people working together to achieve a common goal was the most rewarding experience of my life. The diverse roles I adopted in my career meant meeting many people, some of them contributing to my success in all the positions I was placed in. Having retired early from a formal job, I have been involved in community projects and set up my own consulting company focusing on leadership development and business improvement with a strong emphasis on mentoring and coaching black small business owners of to become competent and active players in the South African economy. Empowering people to create a better life for themselves and their families is the end goal and this has allowed me to use all my knowledge, experience and skills in every sphere of my life. In conclusion, I am grateful for my upbringing, the role models that are an influential part of my life and the professional support I have had through my career to allow me to arrive at my current destination.

Tante Karin Weber nee Ziegenhagen

By Radikobo Ntsimane

All seminarians trained during the rectorate of Dr. Wilhelm Weber at Enhlanhleni Seminary near Pomeroy in KwaZulu-Natal can agree that this submission is in order. I am taking the initiative to write on behalf of all the former Enhlanhleni students who were served by Mrs. Weber. Mrs. Weber was born on 29 September 1940 in a town called Latzig in Germany. While some may argue that in fact the motherhood of Mrs. Karin went far beyond the borders of the mission station, I am confining this brief article to the seminarians who lived in the students' hostel. During the period I was a student at the seminary (1984 – 1988) Mrs. Weber bought groceries and did elaborate cooking for the students. Different students may have enjoyed different dishes coming from the Weber's kitchen. Most of the former students who are now pastors in the Lutheran Church in Southern Africa (LCSA) attest that goulash and rice made our days.



Tante Karin and her husband (photo).

Sunday lunches and dinners came along with chicken so delicious in a way that only Tante Karin could prepare. I need to add that above others, coleslaw with raisins salad did wonders for me. Mrs. Weber had little contact with seminarians. Those students who did have a chance to spend time with her understood that she was a strong but loving mother. We all observed how she raised her children and interacted with neighbours. The seminary compound when I was a student there had more German-speaking residents than other languages. Tante Karin interacted with the Schulzens, Schroeders, Dammanns, Kerles, Niebuhrs, Rehms and Pranges. When there were events that needed collaboration in catering, Tante Karin was involved. Having come from Germany and dedicated her life to the service of the church next to her husband in the rural areas is not a small thing to do. Her kindness, for which my former classmates will attest, humbled us all when having complaints with the meals. Tante Karin did not dismiss us as unthankful. She continued to prepare food for us and ensured that we completed our studies. The wonderful lessons we learn from Mrs. Weber via her husband continue to guide us in our lives today. In Tante Karin we had at the seminary, a mother, away from our parents.

There were times when supplies ran out and one had to walk down to the Weber's house to ask for replenishments. When Tante Karin did not have in stock what the students needed at the hostel she would give an alternative to save the day. Similarly, when any of the students fell ill from colds and minor aches, Tante Karin would have remedies of all sorts to prescribe and dispense. Having had to raise nine children of her own, she was almost always ready to step in when the students could not cope. One of the best lessons I learnt from Tante Karin through her husband which I hope other students embraced it was about the relationship with money: taste we have, money we don't. Dr. Weber thought this lesson was imperative for anyone who desired to be a pastor.

My Story_Marcelle Abrahams

How apt for me to pen my story in South Africa's 22nd Heritage Month since democracy. A month of reflection of where I've been, how far I've come and the journey in between. Half a century in the making and still looking forward to so much more. The Tao teaches us

"What is well planted cannot be uprooted

What is well embraced cannot slip away

How do we know about the world?

By what is within me".¹

This begs the question "What is within me?"

As mindful as I am of always being forward looking, I often need to look back at history not to find comfort but rather to gain understanding of what is within me. A journey that takes me to the yester years of my youth so that I can revisit my dreams and see what and who has shaped the person and understand the person that I am today. The process evokes many memories and emotions but more importantly acknowledgment of what was good amidst the tumultuous years of my childhood (1963-1982) in apartheid South Africa. It was a childhood steeped in being acutely aware of an unjust society.

There are numerous pivotal moments that are etched in my memory. These pivotal moments often influence the path forward. As I look back on my life I have a profound sense that my mother, Marina Brownridge-Brinkhuis, has been the most influencing factor in my life. I often do not want to admit it, but one cannot argue with the facts.

Today I choose to linger on a significantly pivotal moment in my life. It was in my senior primary years. I cannot recall the year exactly but possibly at the age of 10(1973). Having grown up in a segregated South Africa in Vanguard Estate in Cape Town, a coloured residential area situated along the Klipfontein Corridor in Athlone, smack bang in the centre of the 1976 school riots. Klipfontein Road was one of the main corridors of revolt and protest against Apartheid on the Cape Flats in Cape Town.² My thoughts and feelings about the word "coloured" is a topic for another day. For now, let's concentrate on the pivotal moment.

Despite the turmoil and being prejudiced by an unjust society whereby people of colour were denied access to quality education, freedom of movement, restrictive and unfair laws, curtailment of choices, etc., I had a rich life metaphorically speaking. With parents of modest means enriching me with priceless experiences and sound teachings that emanated from the home. One particular incident, the crux of this story, is a fancy-dress contest that my mother encouraged me to enter. This contest was hosted by the Surrey Estate Methodist Church of SA considered a leading institution fighting the good fight against apartheid.

My mother, a socially conscious intelligent career woman was a qualified midwife, who retired as a matron of the Peninsula Maternity Hospital, a maternity hospital situated in District Six, Cape Town, that provided maternal health care to all people of colour. She encouraged me to enter this contest and the only item that her creative resourceful genius could come up with was a Sari, a simple garment draped from a simple rectangle piece of cloth. It was an item borrowed so there was no dent in the pocket. True to her nature, no daughter of hers would participate in any frivolous activity and my involvement needed to serve a purpose.

Brains before beauty and always with a purpose were her mottos. Now what? We have the sari but who will I be and what will my message be? Not sure exactly of the detail of the conversation, but I recall her telling me you can either go as Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi's wife or Indira Gandhi, the first female Prime Minister of India and fourth female head of state globally.

Bearing in mind that the film Gandhi only hit the big screens in 1982, a good 9 years later and me, not knowing who these people were, asked her for more information. I recall her, a working mom, being totally exhausted and irritable and her response was: - "Go to the library, ask the librarians to help you, read the newspapers, etc..." So off I went, scavenging for information on these two Gandhi's. And I say scavenging because information on these two radical leaders was hard to come by in the apartheid era South Africa.

Nevertheless, with the help of many people who were all too eager to help this young curious girl child who had an appetite for knowledge, I managed to get enough information to make a decision. The bossy indignant self that I was at the time emphatically responded "Hmph I am not going to be anybody's wife or walk in any man's shadow. So, Indira Gandhi it will be". I don't even think that I fully understood the complexity of the social issues at the time and that it was more a case of me feeding my ego that informed my decision. Despite what informed my decision then I now, with understanding, realise that through the process an important seed was planted. A seed of wanting to make a difference in this world and be an advocate for the disempowered and for what is right.

The memory of the actual fancy dress competition is a blur, but I remember distinctly that the outcome was such a disappointment and devastation to my impressionable fragile self. Competing against the likes of blue eyed princesses, Goldilocks, fairies, Cinderellas and all things pretty, I failed to clinch any prize. Heartbroken and dejected I walked away with a meagre consolation prize of a paper doll set. My reassuring mother hugged me and said "What do the judges know? They are all dim wits because you were the most intelligent girl in that room". And of course, I shrugged it off and thought that she is just doing what mothers are supposed to do. Right? I eventually got over the incident. That's life. Many years have passed, and I wonder what did those fairies and princesses learn from this experience? The gift that my mother gave me was priceless - the gift of learning and knowing what is embedded inside of me.

Today I still revere the ideals of the two Gandhis, especially Indira Gandhi who was an advocate for so many things. The principal of equal pay for equal work for both men and women was enshrined in the Indian Constitution under the Gandhi administration. Look at me now. Based in Durban, participating in the sari walks, working to empower the poor, challenging the financial sector when they fail to facilitate access to financial markets, constantly seeking pro-poor financial models that will help and empower people rise above the murky circumstances that they find themselves in. What a journey!!

Now with hindsight I say, "Mommy, you were wrong then because it was not me who was the most intelligent person in the room but rather I was accompanied by the most courageous, smartest, fairest and most beautiful person in the room. You!! You were certainly a woman ahead of her times. A woman who socialised her daughter differently to what was expected of her. The mother who opened my eyes to a world beyond the confines of what others are thinking, for instilling in me the love of exploration, expanding my territory and most importantly for teaching me to take responsibility for my own learning. You Marina Brownridge-Brinkhuis have planted the seed deep within me, a seed that cannot slip away. You are the giant on whose shoulders I stand. And for the rest if you want to know about the values of these two Gandhis and especially the lesser known Ms. Indira Gandhi then, please go and do your own research and you will be enriched beyond measure like I have been by my Mom.



My Mom holding me (1963)
In Sir Lowry's Pass Mission
Grounds, Somerset West



Mom and I with a
magazine in my
hand while camping



Me reading a book late at
night, Vanguard Estate,
Athlone



Me all dressed up as Indira Gandhi in
our front yard ready for the Fancy Dress
Contest, Blyvoor Street, Vanguard
Estate, Athlone.



My Mom and youngest brother in the lounge of our home in Vanguard Estate, Athlone. Possibly taken just after arriving home from work as a midwife from Peninsula Maternity HOSPITAL, District Six, Cape Town.



My Mom and two nursing colleagues attending a symposium in Johannesburg in the 1980s.



Me participating in the 2017 Durban Sari Stroll. Durban Beach front 6/8/2017.

The purpose of the Sari Stroll is to promote social cohesion, celebrate diversity and highlighting the various issues that affect women in society today.

Marcelle Brinkhuis-Abrahams, 25/9/2017

1. Dowrick, S, 2003. *The Universal Heart* (3rd Edition) London: Penguin Books Ltd.
2. www.worldcat.org/title/soweto-and-then-we-caught-the-fever. 2007. Centre for Popular Memory (UCT): *Street Stories*

My Story by Sumanthra Folly

I, Sumanthra Folly, am part of the second generation of Indians that came to South Africa and this is my story. My parents, Sidhan and Budhoo were born in India. They arrived in South Africa in 1904. They had four daughters, Jasodha, Ramdasi, Mutko, and Sumanthra and one son named Laloo. I, Sumanthra, was the youngest, born in Charnwood, Verulam, KZN, South Africa, on 29 September 1944. My parents were very poor and my mum had to work as a house nurse. I was very young when we moved to another house in Temple Valley, Verulam, Kwa-Zulu Natal. When we couldn't afford the rent, we had to shift to another house nearby. My Dad worked as a care-taker of the temple.



Bride to be. Sumanthra Budhoo, 1972

I attended Talwantsingh Primary school until Standard 5 (today's grade 7). I was forced to stop attending school because my parents could not afford the school fees. I studied Hindi under the late Mr. S.M. Maharaj. I could read and write Hindi fluently as well as read the Ramayan. I soon taught Hindi to a group of 40 children. Medical treatment was poor in those days and I lost my mum to illness. I married at the age of 22 in 1966. My dad died soon afterwards. My marriage was arranged with Balram Dewdutt Folly.

After marriage we lived with my husbands' brother. Things did not work out and we were forced to relocate to Sea Cow Lake, in Durban. The house was made with wood and iron.

Soon afterwards in 1968, I gave birth to a child who died immediately after birth, in hospital. This was very tragic for my husband and I. My husband worked very hard as a carpenter and builder. He always attended to the needs of the family before his own. Raising four children was not easy, but Durban was much safer in those days. My children walked about a kilometre to school and I could safely take a bus to Durban City to pay accounts and do shopping. In Sea Cow Lake we had very caring neighbours, and I have fond memories of them.

I had four healthy sons in Sea Cow Lake.

My mother-in-law stayed with us and she helped take care of the children. She died in 1987, and in 1988 we moved to Verulam, which was a turning point in our lives.



Sumanthra, (In traditional dress, known as a sarie) and her four sons, Sharm, Vinesh, Deepak, Vishal in the 1970's.

There was a greater Indian culture in Verulam. My children attended school and music lessons there. They furthered their studies at the local universities. My children were not demanding and things were a little easier. We did not have excessive money, but enough to live.

As soon as the elder children began working, my husband was forced to retire

The Folly Family at their home in Temple Valley, Verulam. 2nd born, Vinesh, youngest Vishal, Balram, Sumanthra, 3rd born Deepak and eldest son, Sharm



My eldest son Sharm, currently runs his own decor business. My second son Vinesh, is a chemical engineer. My third son Deepak, is an electronic engineer, and my youngest son Vishal, is a software manager. My husband is a Trustee at the Shree Gopal Lal Temple, and my two eldest sons are the President and Vice President of the Management Committee. Two of my sons belong to the Gayathri Peedam, as well. Sharm is married to Karishma with three children. Vinesh is married to Avisha with three children. Deepak is married to Prathna with two children, and Vishal is married to Nerisha with one child. Children bring happiness and laughter, and my day is filled with joy, with them being around.



4 April 2010, Sumanthra (Centre in pink sarie) Husband, Balram Folly, 4 Sons, 4 Daughters-in-law and Grandchildren.

A TRIBUTE TO MY MOTHER AND OTHER WOMEN IN MY FAMILY

BAFITI MOPAKI “PAKIS” BARBARA MAPOGO BY MANDY GILDER

My late mother was born on the 24th November 1933. She got married to my late father Benjamin Segokgo Matsu-a-Tselayakgosi in 1952. By the time she passed on in 2004 she had been married to my father for 52 years. My father passed away 3 years after his wife, in 2007. She bore 9 children in total. The first borns were twin girls, who passed on a few weeks after being born in 1953, due to some complications. They were followed by sons, Aupa and Lesedi who were born in 1954 and 1957 respectively. I'm in the middle, born in 1959, then followed my late brother Malachi (we



called him “Lucky Man”) in 1962, and another named Sentsho, born in 1964, and finally two girls, Tuduetso (aka Tota) and Lapologang (aka Pona) born in 1965 and 1967, respectively.

My late Mother, Bafiti Barbara Tselayakgosi [née Mapogo] and my late Father, Benjamin Tselayakgosi. This photo was taken in Midrand in April 2000, during the 10th wedding anniversary of Mandy and Barry Gilder

My mother was a woman of substance in many respects. She had a caring and nurturing element about her. She was a very peaceful person and the greatest virtue that she taught us is to have respect for elders and to never lie, no matter the situation. She was a teacher in both a conventional school and in the Sunday school, and she raised us to be the believers that we are today. She was a Deacon in her church - the United Congregational Church of Southern Africa



(UCCSA), aka the Trinity Church. One of her granddaughters, Warona completed her studies to become a Pastor at the Rivers Bible Institute in East London, and she got married to a pastor (April 2016). ***Mandy and daughter, Molly attending our niece/cousin, Warona's wedding in East London in April 2016.***

Although my mother did not grow up in South Africa, she understood the politics of the country very well since her father, and later her brother both worked in the mines in SA at one stage or another. My father, her husband, schooled here in SA, worked in the present day North West in the British colonial administration. This must have been in the Resident Commissioner's Office for Bechuanaland in Mafeking before he went to

Botswana (then Bechuanaland Protectorate to work in the Public Service). One of the many messages she always gave us was that South Africa will be liberated one day and we will all look at where we have come from and rejoice in everything that God has allowed to happen in South Africa. I remember the day when Nelson Mandela was released from prison, I watched TV with my mother, and as he stepped into freedom my mother cried out and said: “I can't believe how the man looks like my father Shadrack”; that is, my grandfather! Indeed, Mandela was a spitting image of my grandfather! At some stage we had a project in the DAC that was about paying tribute to the women of South Africa and I was presented with a black and gold scarf with the following words inscribed on it: “A woman of substance... Mosadi Wa Konokono”. This scarf is hanging on the wall in my house and I feel that the statement is also an embodiment of my life and the lives of my daughters, so I look at the wall hanging everyday with pride.

Molly Ugamah (née Gilder)

Molly and Jones on their traditional wedding day in December 2014 at our home in Midrand

Molly is my first born child. She was born on the 9th February 1987. She is so grateful for having my mother as her grandmother. She talks about “Mme” (Mother), as she is affectionately known, all the time. She also understands where my love for oral history comes from because she can recall sitting with me, my parents and her great grandparents and talking about our roots all from an early age. Just before he passed on, my father related the story of his life (his obituary) to me and Molly. This was huge for me because the obituary was read exactly as he had conveyed it to us. Of importance is the fact that my father gave the obituary to his “Archivist child” for a reason - immediately after he passed on my siblings depended on me for information about our father because none of our living relatives would have known the information that he gave about himself.



When my husband, Barry Gilder and I went into exile, Molly came with us. She was “forced” into the life of exile as a child. There are no regrets because she met so many prolific people as she was growing up and came to learn so much about the struggle waged onto the African National Congress against the apartheid regime from an early age. I met Barry in Botswana, where he was a refugee fighting against the apartheid regime. Due to the fact that interracial marriages were outlawed at the time, we decided to move to Zimbabwe and we got married there. A very significant aspect to note is that among our wedding guests who took pictures with us on that day, the late stalwart, Chris Hani was also in attendance. We returned to South Africa in 1991 under the African National Congress Returnees Programme, and were sustained by the African National Congress until we got employment in governmental parastatals. Molly displays what my mother taught her in that she prays to God for guidance and wisdom before she takes any decisions concerning her life. She had to learn firsthand what oppression looked like when we came to South Africa, but also that change is very possible and inevitable.

Molly is a highly spiritual, innately strong and very smart young woman with a BA (Human and Social Studies) degree, majoring in History and Sociology (this was also my field of study, which we only realised after Molly completed her studies!) and a confirmation of that is the fact that her sister, Neo and some of her cousins have given her the nickname “Mollypedia” - that to them means that come to Molly with any general question on anything and Molly is likely to give you an answer for that! Isn’t that just amazing? She got married to a Nigerian national named Chukwuemeka Jones Junior Ugamah and they both reside in SA after having their traditional wedding in December 2014, and registered their marriage at Home Affairs on the 11th February 2015 (Note that the 11th February is the day Nelson Mandela was released from jail in 1990!). Molly and Jones recently established their own company and are also working in other organisations individually. I see a great future for them together and know that God will elevate them to new heights. Jones has family in Nigeria and Canada, and most importantly he comes from a close-knit Christian family. Molly and Jones’s traditional wedding was very colourful, with Nigerian and Botswana attires shining through and the message that was clearly shown on the day is that love has no borders.

Neo Natalie Gilder

Neo is my last born child, born on the 03 December 1992. She is named after her paternal grandfather Nathaniel Gilder, who passed on in 1993. She is someone that might be called a “born free” South African, a joy to her family and very highly spirited. Even on the day she was born there was drama! Her dad who had witnessed her birth got stuck in an elevator in the clinic where she was born, for more than 4 hours! She holds dearly both the Jewish traditions of her Dad and the Christian traditions of her Mum. She is a very strong individual with an adventurous spirit, and was quite



sporty when she was growing up. I remember how I would get upset with her because she would be participating in all the sport codes in her high school, for example, netball, soccer, athletics, ballet etc. Most of the time I would have to wait for her team to arrive from other schools in Gauteng Province. She also was the Head Girl at a private school in Midrand where she completed her matric. That on its own demonstrated her leadership qualities. **Neo at her BA [Honours] in Photography degree graduation ceremony at Anglia Ruskin University, Cambridge - 2017**

She decided to drop out of the University of Pretoria without the knowledge of her parents, because according to her what she was enlisted to study was not for her and she couldn't even imagine the kind of a job she could possibly ended up with in future. She secretly started applying to universities in the United Kingdom (after having spent a month in the UK visiting her half-sister, Thandi, who is a Psychology Lecturer at the University of Bangor in Wales). Three universities accepted Neo straight away, and she had the liberty of choosing the one she wanted. The rest is history as they say. Neo has now completed her studies and has obtained a BA Honours Degree in Photography at the Anglia Ruskin University in Cambridge. During her first year she made history when one of the photos she took got shortlisted into the Eaton Portrait Prize competition and made it to the top 30, later ending in the top 10. She managed to enter the mentioned competition throughout her schooling career and even made it to the top 3 during her schooling career.

Although she did not win this is indeed a great achievement. She is a hardworking and very creative person, and as her parents we have always encouraged her to be the best she can be, and above everything else to put God first, to seek Him and to follow His commandments as spelt out in the Torah and in the Old Testament (Holy Bible). We know that Neo will always be a blessing to others, as she understands this teaching very well. With the current unfortunate situation of high unemployment rate in SA, we have encouraged her to get a job in the UK after completing her studies, which she has been able to do. She has an ancestral visa because her paternal grandfather was born and bred in the UK before his family emigrated to SA.

Mandy with Neo and Molly at their home in Midrand



Mandy Boatametse Gilder (née Tselayakgosi)

I am in the process of embarking on a more detailed memoir of myself, with the assistance of the president of OHASA, who kindly agreed to assist me in this regard. This will be a “window” into the life and times of Mandy Gilder. It has been a bumpy road for me to get to where I am today. Born in Botswana, starting out in a relatively unknown profession of Archiving, studying at the School of Archival Science in New Delhi, India.



Mandy (2018) in her Pretoria

office

I worked in various levels as an Archivist in the Botswana National Archives before going into exile with my family to Zimbabwe, returning to SA, and later getting a job as a Group Archivist of an armament company, until ending in the National Archives of South Africa in October 1996. I am grateful for having been part of the consultative process on the White Paper on Arts and Culture. Zoom to 20 years later, I am part of the current process to review the White Paper on Arts, Culture [and heritage] and being part of history in the making. All in all, I have been in the profession for 34 years, and in the Department of Arts and Culture for 20 years. I can safely say that I am comfortable in the space that I am in.



Graduation ceremony picture of Mandy Gilder [née Tselayakgosi], held at the Swaziland Campus of the then University of Botswana and Swaziland in 1982. Mandy graduated in BA Sociology and History

The beauty of it all is that I don't have to prove myself to anybody about my abilities regarding the Archives profession. I have gained respect amongst colleagues both on the continent and internationally. This is evidenced by the committees I have been part of, which include EXCO of the Eastern and Southern Africa regional branch of the International Council on Archives [Esarbica]; Deputy President of UNESCO's bureau of the Memory of the World programme [2003-2007]; Former chairperson of the ICA's committee on Oral Traditions [COT], President of the Africa Regional Committee of the Memory of the World [ARCMOW], Chairperson of the SA National Committee of the Memory of the World, acted as National Archivist of SA from 2010-2015, currently Deputy National Archivist, Project Manager and OHASA member.



Mandy attending UNESCO Memory of the World conference in South Korea in 2005

I was the first Project Leader for the National Oral History Programme for SA, which led to the establishment of OHASA, amongst other oral history initiatives in the country, etc. I have about 6 more years in the public service before I hang my boots and go into retirement after a shining career in the archives sector!! My plan is to actively empower those who will take over from me when I leave. I am privileged to have been part of the changes that have taken place in SA. Having grown up in Botswana, and experiencing the brutalities of apartheid first hand, having lived amongst the SA exiles in Zimbabwe, a country that at one stage or another was the bread-basket of the SADC region and seeing the suffering that Zimbabweans are experiencing today, is a bitter pill to swallow. Finally, being in SA, experiencing active racism in the early years of the dawn of democracy, the general transformation that has taken place and is still taking place, and above everything else voting for the first time in my life in 1994 - this is an experience I will cherish for the rest of my life. In conclusion, I would like to pay tribute to all the amazing women in my life, in Botswana [my sisters and their daughters, my sisters-in-law and their daughters]; my sisters in SA and their daughters, the late paternal granny of my



daughters; women relatives in Israel, Nigeria and the UK, alive and departed. You all moulded me to be the woman that I am today, and for that I will forever remain grateful!!!

My Amma - Devagi Gounden by Dr. Dhana Sagree Govender

Historically, 1945 is the year that marks the end of World War 2 and the beginning of a new era. In this same year, a beautiful baby girl was born on 4 September to parents, Gopal and Parpathy Gokal in Jacobs, Durban. Although her registered name was Devagi, her parents called her “Dolly” because of her beauty. She was their second born. Her elder brother Krishna was born on 5 May 1943.



Devagi as a child.

Little did this loving young family realise that their lives would be shattered. They struggled financially because Devagi’s father was ill and could only manage to work for a few days in a week in a blanket factory. Her mother’s health deteriorated and she passed on when Devagi was just four years old. Devagi did not know her mother. She learnt about her mother’s beauty and kind-hearted nature from the people around her. Her father, however, compensated by showering her with love- he doted on his precious daughter. He continued to care for his children even after he re-married and had four children with his second wife.

The living conditions in those times were not as they are today. The family leased a small piece of land where they built a house made up of wood and iron. Devagi and Krishna had to walk long distances to fetch water. In those early days, they did not have electricity. They cooked on a fire on the floor which was called a “down fire”. With little money, her father ensured that his children had at least a small bowl of porridge to eat before he went to work. Despite these hardships, they had a happy home because the love and care that her father gave to his children was perceived by them. Devagi and her brother remembered with gratitude that “our father never left us.”

Devagi, like her brother Krishna, had only completed her education at a standard three level. Growing up without her biological mother left a void in her life- an emptiness that was hard to fill - a search for possibilities and an endless lament of “if my mother was here.”

The age fourteen is a critical age of transitioning from childhood to adolescence. While many youngsters at that age are grappling with their identity, Devagi was married when she was just 14 years old to Moonsamy Gounden. Before she reached the age of 21, she became a mother to three children. Devagi was my mother.

I am the third child born to my parents. To tell the story of my mother authentically, is to unearth the many

challenges that she endured in her life-time. To break the silence of those memories is to cut open scars of immense suffering. Rather than focus on the many challenges that she experienced, this story focuses on my mother's strength and resilience.

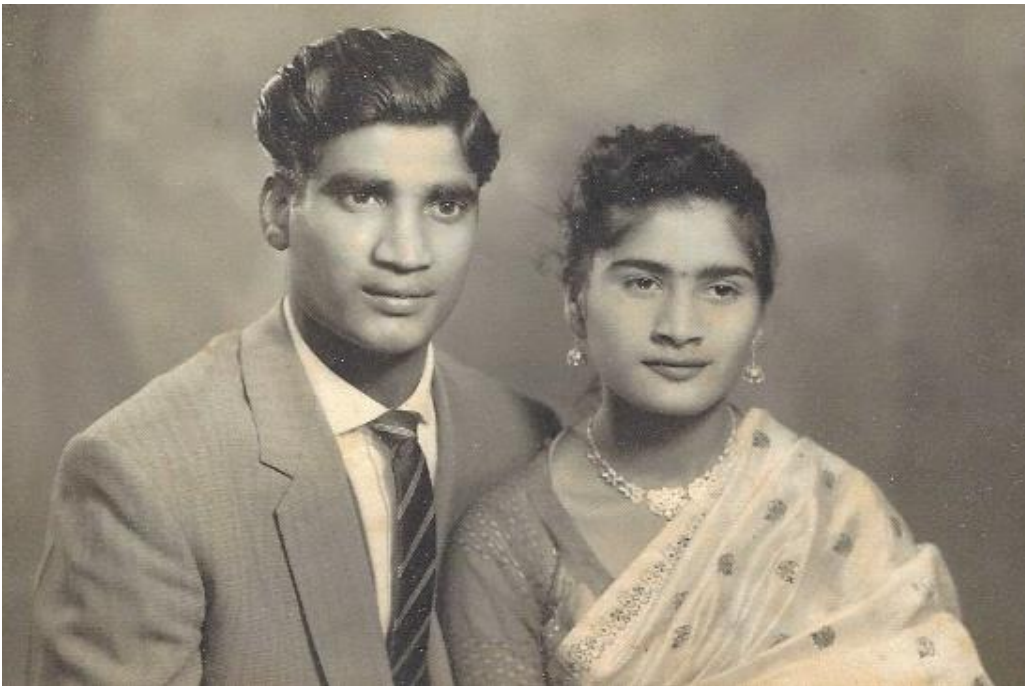
My mother lived in the days of apartheid where resources and opportunities to build wealth were limited and we had very little money. My mother's wedding jewellery had to be sold to survive in those times. Although my father worked very hard, there was never enough money. My father supplemented his meagre income by growing vegetables like mealies and madumbies (yam) to sell to others and feed our family.

My mother, however, took her role of motherhood very seriously. She cared for us in ways that ensured that our daily needs were met. She cooked a delicious meal each day comprising either fish, sugar beans, vegetables, chicken, mutton or sheep's trotters. The day that we waited for was Sunday, when we would eat delicious sausages and freshly buttered bread.

Food was my mother's emotional comfort. She showed her love and affection through food. She respected through food, ensuring that my father's meal was reserved before serving the rest of the family. She waited for my father's validation of each meal that she prepared. With an age gap of fifteen years between my parents, my father established himself as the key decision-maker and patriarchal order prevailed. My father was given a cup of tea before he got out of bed each morning and that privilege was extended to me. Every day, when we came home from school, we would have hot tea and sandwiches. My mother took this task of feeding her family very seriously and became an expert cook.

For this, I would nominate her to one of the highest positions of work and service. With little formal education, she was my greatest teacher. I would nominate her for a Ph.D. She had Profound Household Dedication. She led by example teaching us the art of self-government, by exemplifying values of discipline and dedication to serve her family. She taught us that a mother is the glue that holds the family together. Her skill in economics was exceptional since she took a small amount of money and stretched that to

ensure that her children were provided with nourishment. My mother worked tirelessly to support her family. Her strength and resilience ensured stability for all her children who completed their schooling. Together with my father, the support that my mother gave to all three of her children enabled us to break the cycle of poverty, to study to become teachers and postgraduates living extra-ordinary lives.



My parents, Moonsamy and Devagi in earlier years

There were many significant events in my mother's life. The arrival of her grandchildren altered her life in

many ways. My mother cherished her role as grandmother to her four grandsons and three granddaughters. She loved to cook for her grandchildren and they enjoyed the delicious treats such as pancakes and pickles she made for them.

There were many things that my mother enjoyed. She liked songs by Elvis Presley and Cliff Richard. She loved pretty clothes, frizzy hair and fashionable accessories. My mother liked coffee in a dainty cup. She had a very special love for her cats and dogs. She would visit her family when they adopted a new cat. She would change her voice to talk to her pets.

It was the light that my mother brought to our home that resulted in prosperity. When my parents were in a

better position financially, they travelled to the UK, Europe and to countries in the Far East for a holiday of a life time.

Devagi and Moonsamy in later years.

My mother was happy when her family was around her and when my father was happy. Despite her circumstances, my mother had many goals that involved caring for her family to ensure their happiness.

Her goals were thwarted because of ill- health and her leg was amputated as a result of diabetes complications. Despite the psychological and physical trauma of the amputation, she persevered to make a difference. Even though she was in a wheelchair, she would still cook the meals. When her second leg became infected, she was hospitalised once again and she took her last breath on 19



January 2005. She was 59 years old. Within that year my father being unable to bear the loneliness of life without my mother, had passed on too.

While our friends called their mothers “mummy”, I called our mother “Ma”. When I spoke of her, I referred to her as “Amma.” This is a salute to a courageous woman who survived incredible suffering and challenges to raise her children to live the life she dreamed of. I remember her as our “Amma” who “never left us.”

STUDENT 01

MRS TAKURINE MAHESH SINGH (1872- 1959): BY MR. JAISINGH SURUJBULLEE SINGH (1930), HER GRANDSON

My beloved grandmother, Mrs. Takurine Mahesh Singh was the wife of Mahesh Jawahir Singh. His Indenture number was 58575 of Raipur, Purwajagapur, Sultanpur, India. She arrived, age 23, on the sailing ship Pongola XIX in April 1895. She was employed as a labourer on a sugar farm owned by Michael A. La Lucia and Muckleneneuk Sugar in Mt. Moreland almost north-east of Verulam, a small village in the then Colony of Natal, which today is home to sugar cane fields only.



After five years of indenture they lived in a hut in Mt Moreland. They lost all their earthly possessions when the Umhloti River came down in flood but managed to save her holy Ramayan, which is the scripture of Hindus that offers guidance in life.

Mahesh Singh my paternal grandfather and his wife Takurine bought a piece of land described as Lot 206 c: 2 Ireland Street, Verulam. This property in Verulam was bounded by white families; the resident priests



of the Methodist Church and Anglican Church and a Mr. Henry Francis, a land and estate agent. The property was bought around 1900. Mahesh Singh died at the age of 38 in the year 1908.

After my grandfather's death, my grandmother also occupied the adjoining property Lot 206 (Verulam Township) on a monthly tenancy to do vegetable gardening up to 1950 when the property was sold to a white member of the Verulam Town Board, Henry Francis.

My grandmother also maintained a small dairy (2 cows) and was contracted to supply milk to the local jail. With these earnings she was able to meet the basic needs to maintain her minor daughter Chanderpathee and son Surujbullee. She continued to complete the house she and her late husband had started to build in 2 Ireland street, Verulam. The pride of the house was her prayer room viz. The Ramayan (Prayer Room). She also slept in this room and stored her well known mango pickles.

Takurine was a great exponent of the Hindu religion-particularly the reciting of the Holy Ramayan. She was highly respected as a religious leader and counsellor in spite of being a woman in a traditional male-dominated society. She was very endearing and comforting by nature.

During her period of religious guidance and presiding over Hindu rituals, there were several Hindu male priests in the community who were exclusive choices by custom and tradition to be engaged by families for religious/cultural functions and were paid Dakshina (voluntary fee). Takurine who was not of a Brahman (priest) caste was not entitled to any remuneration for religious services rendered to a family.

Women during this period were very conservative and did not challenge the role of religiously accepted male pundits(priests). Male priests only discussed family functions with male members of a family, who in turn made all decisions. Takurine was thus most welcome in homes to discuss functions with female members of the family and

take joint decisions with the males. Hindu women however, were not inspired by the role of Takurine during this period and meekly accepted prevailing norms and values of the time. They married young, took care of the home and raised children.

Takurine nurtured everyone before herself. The diary of the late Pundit S.M. Maharaj of Verulam reveals "Takurine was a very religious person and the Shree Gopal Lal Temple was her second home, organising recitals, discourses on the Ramayan at the Temple."

She often single-handed provided meals for the devotees of the Temple during Religious functions. Takurine was able to cross the threshold of home into the broader world of the prevailing society.

Takurine's only daughter Chanderpathee died in 1935 at age of 34 (in child birth) and she was now faced with caring for her 5 children also. Her only son Surujbullee who was 8 years old when his father died, helped his widowed mother tending to the family cows and selling vegetables grown by them and delivering milk from house to house. At the same time, he had a passion for learning and was self-educated to retire as a school principal and a legendary community leader. Surujbullee rose in the academic field to retire as a school principal. His son Jaisingh also retired as a school principal and his grandson is now a school principal. Thus 3 generations of Takurine's descendants rose to the rank of school principals.

The family home still stands on the same property and Takurine's surviving four grandchildren were born there: 2 Ireland street, Verulam, including myself, Jaisingh S Singh, age 87 at the time of writing this article.

They had the honour of meeting Swami Sivananda (Founder of Divine Life Society) in Rishikesh in 1962.



Marriage in 1927

My father, Surujbullee married my mother on the 4th May 1927 in Umzinto.



My parents had five children. My sisters are Thara Devi Maharaj (89), Champawathee Singh (83), Manorama Devi Somers (81) and my late brother Ajith Kumar (21) passed on in 1962.

Amongst my siblings, three of us were involved in education and I eventually retired as a principal in 1991. My wife Savithree Devi, of 54 years, and the mother of my three sons, Nash, Bimal and Ujen, passed on in 2013 was also a pre-school teacher who had a great interest in music and was an exceptional singer. The descendants of Takurine and Mahesh Singh have followed in her footsteps of giving back to the community, by choosing to serve in the noble profession of education and other fields as well.

She passed away in 1959 age +-90. The north local council in September 2000 named the road between the present BP Garage and the old cemetery in Verulam as Mahas Singh Road in honour of Takurine. Takurine's sense of service to the community has passed on to her fourth successive generation.

Takurine's dictum in life was "not about waiting for the storm to pass, it is about learning to dance in the rain."

STUDENT 02

A LEADER IN THE VERULAM COMMUNITY, MRS. MAGGIE ARCHARY BY KESHVIR PRUSHOTAM PARTHAB

My grandmother Mrs. Maggie Achary was born in Clairwood, an Indian designated area, on 16th January 1941. Her parents were Soobramoney and Dhanalutchmie Pillay. Maggie Ma as we call her was the eldest of 7 children and I heard from my mum that Maggie Ma was favoured by her parents as she held pride of place amongst her siblings. When she was 7 years old, her parents moved to Verulam where she commenced her schooling at Verulam Primary school which was situated in Russom Street. She walked to school, a distance of three kilometres. She was interested in sport and played netball, as centre position up to High School level, where she represented Verulam High at the Durban and districts level. She was a keen sportswoman having participated in various sporting events and being appointed captain of the Verulam High netball team. Maggie Ma also took part in school plays and really enjoyed her school days and finally completed her schooling at Verulam Secondary.

Netball Photo

Following her schooling career, she took up employment in December, 1956 at a family owned business, named Pakco (Pty) Ltd.

Gold Dish Award PMB
PAKCO

Mum had a number of positions at Pakco starting off as a marketing assistant and then becoming the Public Relations Officer, finally working as a wage clerk. One of her achievements was receiving the Gold Medal Certificate for marketing of Pakco products at the prestigious Royal Agricultural Show held in Pietermaritzburg, in 1961. Whilst she was unmarried Maggie Ma passed her driver's license in 1963. She could drive the equivalent of a Code 10 truck. Imagine that in 1963!

Via an arranged marriage, Maggie Ma married Jayapragasen Achary in 1964. It was a marriage that lasted for 33 years until August 1997 when Jay Thatha passed on from a heart attack whilst having dialysis. My brothers

and I never knew our maternal grandfather as Mum only married in February 1997, six months before he passed on. Maggie Ma had four children, two sons and two daughters. Her greatest joy was perhaps giving birth to a healthy son, Thavapragasen on the 16th October 1966 and her greatest loss was perhaps the untimely passing away of her son on the 27th November 1975 when he was a mere 9 years old. He drowned whilst on his way from school. Maggie Ma's life changed after that. In June of 1976, she went back to work at Pakco as the family now lived in Verulam. Maggie Ma now became the sole breadwinner as Jay Thatha experienced many difficulties and was not able to work full time. His inability to provide for the family due to various reasons meant that Maggie Ma now had to walk to work... as she did not have a car.

My mum tells me that when she used to notice Maggie Ma walking at the top of the hill that leads to South Ridge, she would leave whatever she was doing and start walking towards her mother, to give her company on the last stretch of the road before Maggie

Ma came home from work. Both of them tired, but Maggie would begin preparing the supper as my mother would have cut up the items needed to cook the curry and she would have made the rice as well.

Mum says that Maggie was a great cook and mum's favourite was Mutton lamb stew which was a Sunday morning favourite. Maggie ma was also excellent at making sweetmeats which are Indian desserts and savouries such channa makkaj, burfee, goolab jamum, halwa and off course her Christmas pudding. Apparently, after Uncle Peggie passed on, Maggie Ma stopped celebrating Deepavalli, as she was too distraught and so she created her own new tradition for the family, which was at every anniversary of uncle Peggie's death, to make the sweetmeats single handedly. And this she then handed out to the neighbours, family and friends. Although after their marriages, Mum, Uncle Prusho and Aunt Vani's families have celebrated the Festival of Lights, the tradition remains at Primrose Drive, South Ridge, where Maggie Ma lived since April 1982, a home built by her father for her and her family. It was a challenging time for my grandmother as she had many responsibilities as a mother, a wife and a worker but I am told by my mother, that Maggie Ma was the best mother one could ever have as she continually encouraged her children to do well in terms of education and was the greatest support to them over the decades. During their youth, Maggie Ma took her children to service, where they learnt to sing songs from the Thevaram, book of Tamil songs.

Maggie Ma worked at Pakco from June 1976 until June 1996 and prior to retiring from full time employment, she held the position of payroll administrator. And it is whilst she worked here that she was able to maintain her family, provide for them and ensured that they were educated and eventually also enjoyed great celebrations around their wedding times and child births, well just the elder two, her granddaughters. Immediately after retiring, Jay Thatha became ill with renal and liver complications and so she now had her hands full with taking care of him. She had to refresh her driving skills as she had not driven since getting married in 1964 and so took to the steering wheel again in 1996. What a remarkable achievement as she was now 55 years of age. Maggie Ma nursed him conscientiously until his death in August 1997. Maggie Ma's four grandsons were born thereafter. After Jay Thatha's death, Maggie Ma, being the energetic person that she is, dedicated her time towards supporting the local community in various activities. Some of the volunteer activities that she participates in, includes: Chairperson for the Verulam Regional Blind and Deaf Committee, Vice-chairperson of the Verulam Shri Siva Subramanian Temple, Deputy-chairperson of the 1860 Indentured Labourers Foundation Verulam, Member of the Verulam Day Care Centre; Member of the Verulam Child and Family Welfare and Member of the Verulam Maather Sangam Women's Group. As a pensioner, a mother of three and a grandmother to six, it seems unlikely that one would take time out of her busy schedule to volunteer, but Maggie Ma believes that volunteering is a part of her civic duty. She says that volunteer work may seem simple to one but means so much to those for who it is intended. Maggie Ma's other interests include playing the Veena, which is an authentic Indian musical instrument. In addition to this, she enjoys travelling locally and abroad. It is Mum's wish to take her mother to London for a short holiday. I hope this materialises as Maggie Ma has been a great mother and a grandmother that has lead the way for us as grandchildren to build upon her legacy. During her leisure time she loves reading the newspaper, watching sports on TV and most of all, spending time with her children and grandchildren. What stands out for Maggie Ma as a fond memory was that she was the only grandmother that participated in a Fun Walk arranged by Lotusville Primary School in the year 2001. Her children, only son Prushotam and daughters Kogie and Vanie are extremely proud of their mother as they view her as the ultimate role model. She has always been a pillar of strength to them and a shoulder to lean on. Maggie Ma also

had four sisters and two brothers. Two of her sisters, Senba and Vasugie have passed on. Pullen lives in Australia and Selva has retired from Pakco. The reason I have decided to interview Maggie Ma and tell her story is that when I was born in 2004, she took care of me for a few months as my mother continued with her entrepreneurial career.

My sister Yesavani Aveyan, by Kogie Parthab with notes from Kim Aveyan, her daughter

I was five years old, when my sister Vani was born. At that stage I was already an elder sister to two brothers and we lived in Verulam. In 1972 our parents moved to a large house in Clare Road, Clare Estate, which is near Sydenham. This house, built on stilts, was on a large property that boasted two drive ways. It was on this large property that I used to play with my younger siblings and take care of them whilst our mother was busy with evening meal preparations. I clearly remember carrying Vani on my hip and ensuring that she never got hurt whilst we played outside.

In August of 1975 we moved to Johannesburg but, sadly returned that November after the loss of our brother Peggie. Vani started class one in 1977 at the Everest Heights Primary School in Verulam. And I suppose what entrenched my love for my sister was plaiting her hair for school, doing her laces and ensuring that she took her lunch to school. We shared a room and so were always in each other's company with me being the older sister always hovering over her and making sure that she was alright. She went to the local primary and high schools in Verulam. Co-incidentally her daughter Kimenthri, born in 1995, also attended some of the schools that her mother attended, namely Lotusville Primary and Glenhaven Seondary. Vani did not go on to tertiary studies as she suffered Epilepsy from the young age of seven. This was the time during which our sisterhood was deeply rooted as she looked for me when she had these hallucinations and seizures. Without any hesitation I would stop whatever I was doing to take care of her if she became unwell. During the 1970s and 80s, when Apartheid was at its highest and worst oppression, minimal support was provided by social welfare departments, doctors and hospitals to patients with epilepsy. Whenever, she became ill in school, as a result of the epilepsy, she was transported home by a teacher, my friend's father, Mr. MV Moodley to our home as she needed to recover. She had frequent attacks and this made learning difficult as she missed many lessons from school. However, she progressed from class to class and eventually was a pupil at Glenhaven Secondary. Upon leaving school she learnt craftwork and went on to take weaving lessons eg making mats and other accessories for various household purposes. In 1988, Vani and I took on flower arrangement classes that were held in the evenings. In 1993, Vani was introduced to Ron Aveyan and an arranged marriage took place in 1994, a historic year in our country as we became a democratic nation and were allowed to vote for our freedom. After her marriage, Vani settled into a household routine in Redcliffe, a farming area on the outskirts of Verulam. After their daughter was born Vani ensured that Kim was well taken care of, by making it possible for her to go to Bharatha Natyam classes, swimming classes and also celebrating every birthday with family and friends in attendance. Kim travelled to the Lotusville School every morning with her father. During this time Vani worked briefly at a Creche. In 2004 Vani began fulltime work at the Verulam Party Shop. She advised families on birthday parties and other functions and manned the shop daily. The Party Shop ran for seven years. And as a result of the economic crises and poor sales, the shop finally closed in 2011. She would like to work again, however, jobs are hard to come by and so is thinking about doing voluntary work. Since then Vani has been spending time with our Mum and they enjoy visiting the La Lucia Mall, Gateway Theatre of Shopping and the local village of Verulam. In her role as Mother to Kim, Vani has been supportive of her daughter and is also a proud Mum as Kim has studied post school and is in the process of completing her B. Com degree. Vani likes to exercise every day and I suppose that is the reason she is slim and trim. She is also conscientious regarding what she eats and is a vegetarian.

Whenever possible, she goes to the gym and spends quality time there. Vani's hobbies include Dancing and Watching TV. Vani would love to be able to drive, but unfortunately as a result of her epilepsy, she is not able to. Vani once told me that she mainly wears jeans as she is not sure when she can actually have an epileptic seizure and because of the uncertainty and discomfort she wears jeans when she goes out. Vani keeps her shoulder length hair as it thinning which could be as a result of her strong medication. My observation as well is that my sister loves and possesses many ear ring and chain sets which matches her clothing impeccably. I

suppose this sense of dress style and attention to detail probably comes from my father. She probably also inherited the habit of ironing her outfits without a crease from our father, as he too was a well - dressed man. From my mother, she has seen the love my mother has for her children and she also has this fierce love for her daughter whom she is immensely protective of. I suppose she inherited a love for sport from our Mum.

Vani also tells me that she doesn't like it when people make promise and are not able to fulfil them. Recently, she mentioned to me in conversation that our brother Prusho had wanted to take her to India on a family trip in December 2016. However, since she did not go on that trip, Prusho made sure he kept to his word and made it possible for Vani and I to travel to India in 2017, where we visited Chennai, Mumbai, Agra, Delhi and Jaipur. She has also been on numerous trips to Drakensburg, Midlands, Cape Town with our brother and his family. I suppose one of her highlights in terms of travelling is the MSC ship cruise that she, Ron and Kim undertook with the extended Aveyan family. Vani has been a loving sister to me and my brother and I thank God for her as it is because of her that I know, understand and value the principles of simplicity, humility, consideration, care and have an appreciation for life. I have learnt that Life is never easy and we must be thankful for what we have and show gratitude every step of the way. Vani's life has been hampered as a result of the Epilepsy, however, through the difficulties, trials and tribulations, my younger sister, Yesavani, has tried to make the most of her existence and it is through this lived experience that I have learnt the art of forgiveness, kindness is the answer to any difficulty and being empathetic is more important than being sanctimonious.

My "Aji" (Grandmother) Saras Bugwanthee Harrinarain by Deshaj Parthab

My paternal grandmother was born on the 13 May 1946 to Ramouthar and Ma..... in Glendale, which is not far from Stanger. She was the 4th born of 14 children. Her mother had four daughters and ten sons. Aji's great grandparents came from India as part of the Indentured labourers who travelled to the then Colony of Natal to work on the sugar farms. After their period of indenture was over, her great grandparents and their families remained behind as they were able to continue with their farming lifestyle in their adopted land as this was a skill that they had mastered. They could not own the farm lands and so leased that prime property and were able to sustain themselves. Aji's grandfather, her Aja, continued with farming because as a family that was what they knew well and it was farming that sustained their existence in this country, an opportunity that was not enjoyed back in India. After Aji's grandparents married they had.... Children. Aji was born to Son number...

Aji did not have much opportunity to complete primary schooling and thus completed until the equivalent of grade four. Her elder and younger siblings went to higher standards, but she stayed at home and tendered to the household chores and the nine siblings that followed her. At the tender age of 10 or thereabouts, she began learning to cook. This early learning has resulted in my Aji being one of the finest and talented cooks around. Her culinary skill, in fact, her ability to cook up a storm is absolutely amazing. She can cook crab, chicken, tripe, trotters, prawn, crayfish, lamb, fish and vegetables in curry form. She made great tasting breyanis as well. Dad's favourite is mealie meal with dried fish, something that my mother cannot cook. So going into Aji's kitchen and seeing that on the stove, brings back beautiful and unforgettable childhood memories for Dad who is now well past 50! Mum confesses to also enjoying Aji's cooking as she was introduced to it during her courting days, when Dad brought her freshly cooked Lamb chops and rice in a container, spoon included! Who knows, maybe that's how Dad got Mum to say yes...after tasting Aji's delectable dishes. And of course, my favourite is anything that Aji makes. Thank you Aji, for always being such a star and always making sure that we never leave your home, satiated and loved.

Aji's life was never easy, always full of happenings and a busyness about it. She was a mother to three sons and a daughter. Whilst they were young, Aji ran a successful farm in Redcliffe, Verulam, and held a stall at the Verulam Market. That meant getting up at 3

and being at the market by 4 to start trading before dawn break! Aja was there to assist her even though he had a full time job as professional driver for Clover Dairies. When she worked on the farm, Aji controlled the labour force and thus many homes had a light because of her contribution to the economy. Because she could not drive, she had a designated driver who was a neighbour as well. When she was on the farm, her father accompanied her and thus her safety was guaranteed all the time. During this time, the family lived in a semi-detached single story three bedroomed house in Mt View, a housing scheme provided by the Apartheid government which catered for Indian families. Whilst living here Dad and his siblings, learnt a lot in terms of household chores, assisting on the farm, eg. Grading mangoes and sorting them, learning how to handle cash flow at the market stall, etc and most of all responsibility and I believe that it is this learning that has held dad in good stead as he is an excellent dad, thanks to Aji and Aja. When Mum married, she was warmly accepted by Aji and over the years they have developed a strong bond and a great understanding of each other. Mum always ensured that my brothers and I always visited Aji and on many occasions we stayed over and were draped in an abundant love from both our grandparents. Spending this time with her has made me appreciate Aji and I love her for the grandmother that she is. A kind, loving and caring grandmother whose love I shall always cherish.

My Mum Kogie, born on 11th August 1965 by Haren Archary Parthab

My mum was born on the 11th August 1965 at the St Aidan's Mission hospital in Durban to Jay and Maggie Achary. She was the eldest of four children. The Achary family lived in Riverside Road, Durban North, but due to the Group Areas Act, they were forcibly removed and then moved to Clare Estate. Her dad held many jobs, but her paternal grandfather, Mr. VM Achary was a principal serving many schools until his untimely death in 1967. Her maternal grandfather, Mr. SP Pillay, was the co-founder and production director of Pakco, a food manufacturing plant based in Verulam on the then Natal North Coast. Mum went to Hillview Primary School in Reservoir Hills, where her parents rented in Dunstable Road. Thereafter mum went to SM Jhavery school in the Clare Estate area. The family moved to Johannesburg in August 1975 when Mum was in standard 2. They returned to Verulam on the night of 27th and early hours of 28th November 1975 upon the death of her brother, second born Thavapragasen Peggie, around 4pm on the 27th November 1975. Her brother Prushotam, was the last member to see Peggie alive as they were playing soccer on the way home when Peggie drowned by falling in to a road construction trench with water up to almost 2 metres in height. Her mum went back to work in 1976, June after resigning in 1964. When our grandmother went back to work, our Mum had to take on extra responsibilities at home such as caring for her younger siblings Prusho and Vani after school and performing chores on the weekends and holidays. Mum says she has done her fair share of house work! In 1983 Mum passed Matric with an Exemption from Mount View Secondary. Thereafter, in 1987, she completed the Bachelor of Paedagogics, with a focus on History (which she is passionate about) and Education (which was her calling as she had a love for teaching as a young girl or 8 years old), but being given no choice or option in taking Afrikaans as a major subject from the University of Durban-Westville. In 1992 she graduated with Bachelor of Arts (HONS-Afrikaans-Netherlands) from University of South Africa as she was an Afrikaans teacher. The following year, 1993 saw her graduating with an inter-disciplinary MA degree (Orality-Literacy Studies) from Natal University which was a historically white student campus. She was able to articulate to the general Masters as the political dispensation was changing in the country and universities were required to meet the changing needs and demands of students who could then add a voice to the new South Africa in the making. In 1996 she completed a course in Human Resources Management from Natal Technikon. Mum loved to study and I suppose she engaged well with her studies as she was a single person and perhaps waited for Mr. Right to come alone! And he did, rather late in life as our Dad Sharm Dharamduth Parthab. However, I suppose her achievement was the PhD in 2002 from the University of Natal as two of her sons were born after she registered for the PhD, Deshaj in 1997 and I, Haren in 1999. We were four and a half and three years of age when Mum graduated. Not content with this and a decade later she pursued further studies and in 2015 she completed the Master of Business Administration. Mum works as a lecturer now and supervises student at the University of Kwa-Zulu Natal. Our youngest brother Keshvir was just eight years of age when Mum commenced with this prestigious degree. At one stage all of us were studying for exams except our Dad, who mum describes as the Best Person ever! Over time Mum has always engaged in developing herself by completing various activities such as the Estate Agency Board Exam, attending CCMA workshops, completing a Certified Microsoft Course, attending Women in Construction & Development Seminar and many more interesting things. Community development is also significant to Mum as she is involved in the following organisations: EXCO member: Oral History Association of SA (NPO), PRO of 1860 Indentured Labourer's Foundation Verulam (NGO), Founder/ Chairperson of The South African Reach-out Initiative Foundation (NGO) and many more.

Primarily, Mum is an academic, researcher and oral historian who presents papers, conducts interviews and compiles historiographies and coffee table publications. She also has a keen interest in labour issues and based her MBA dissertation on the N2 / Umgeni Road Interchange

Construction Site. This is perhaps, the first dissertation to investigate the labour struggles at the construction site. Mum also presented a paper on Comrade OR Tambo in the EASTERN CAPE at the 14TH National Oral History Conference, held in Mthatha. She has attended conferences in Limpopo, Durban, Sandton, Kimberly, eastern Cape and Bloemfontein. She also presented at other forums as well. We are normally left to fend for ourselves when she travels around the country doing the work that she is passionate about.

Mum has led an interesting life. When she was 16 years old she accompanied her maternal grandparents to India which firmly entrenched her love for travel and her particular love for India. As a teacher, during the school holidays, she travelled widely to America, United Kingdom and Mauritius. When she met and married our father, they continued with travelling and as a result we as a family have made six trips to India. Mum and Dad also travelled to London, Europe, Dubai, Abu Dhabi and Mauritius. Our maternal grandmother Maggie-Ma travelled with our family in 2005 to India. We visited the Golden Triangle, Chennai, Mumbai, Bangalore, with an emphasis on South India as Mum is of South Indian descent. Keshvir was just 18 months old at the time. In 2007, our Aji and Aja accompanied us to India when we travelled more to the North, as Dad is of North Indian descent, again visiting the Golden Triangle, Mumbai, Rishikesh, Haridwar and Chennai. During later trips we visited Goa, Porbandar, Sri Nagar, Kashmir, Puttarpathi, Kolkatta, Kerala, and many other places. It is clear that Mum really loves India as we have covered many parts of India. Most recently, she travelled with her sister Vanie to India in 2017. Mum also plays the Veena, a South Indian Musical instrument. In 2004, she passed her Code 14 license which is an articulated Horse and Trailer Drivers permit. Further to this, she is pursuing a Motorbike license as she has purchased a Harley Davidson 883 as a 50th birthday gift to herself. During our childhood, Mum unfortunately resigned from teaching in 2001 and henceforth as a result of her diabetes and other related complications dabbled in food research, yoga, Pilates and aqua sports to improve her health. She has been involved in many entrepreneurial activities as well. She opened a Party Shop in 2004, ran her own Consulting Company where she placed employees in blue chip and smaller companies. For a while, she worked flexi hours as an estate agent in order that she could drop and fetch us from school and be present at school meetings, sports and extra mural activities. Mum was there every day, on time, all the time, despite being involved in the family business. Mum has ultimate faith in Lord Hanuman and is a staunch devotee, attending service on Tuesdays at the Avoca Shree Lutchmee Narain Temple. Mum's saddest memory is the loss of her brother as she often wonders how life would have been if he was around as she sometimes had to carry burdens beyond her years, however, as she says, it has all made her a strong, focused and tolerant person who is often called upon by many to be a part of their lives.

Over the years, Mum has tried to groom my brothers and I into being good young lads, who would one day take our place in society, however at times, she was harsh, as my brothers and I were at the receiving end of a hiding with a belt for whatever we did that Mum thought was not acceptable, especially when it came to studying and homework. She has mentioned to me that she is sorry for that and therein lies the sadness, both for her and us, as it is the past and it cannot be undone. Mum loves us unconditionally and over the years she has made many sacrifices that have favoured us. She often says, she loves being a mother to boys!

The one tradition that Mum has evolved over the years, is on our birthdays to always light candles and cut a cake. She sees it as a way of giving thanks for yet another birthday and to be grateful for what we have. For Aji and Aja's 70th birthdays, my brothers, Mum and I stayed over at Broadlands (where my paternal grandparents live) the night before so we could do the same for them as well.

MAP

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Detailed REVIEW

BACKGROUND to the PROJECT

I was tasked with fundraising for OHASA, which proved to be an extremely challenging task. I tried to be as innovative as possible by promoting the OHASA brand in terms of sourcing t-shirts, mugs and other items. This proved rather challenging. Thereafter, a Gala Dinner was hosted, followed by Fundraising Business Breakfasts which were graced by leading and prominent individuals from our society. After much deliberation, I got the nod to go ahead with the Coffee Table Publication. This has been an interesting project as I have received stories from various locations, however, there has been a strong presence from Kwa-Zulu Natal. The advertorial below is taken directly from the OHASA website.

ORAL HISTORY ASSOCIATION OF SOUTH AFRICA (OHASA)- Coffee Table Publication

(CTP): Stories of South African Women: 2017_ A Tribute to Women of Africa.... sharing their stories_ Edition 1

Dear Colleagues, I make an earnest appeal to you to please write for our publication. Your participation will ensure that South African Women of all races, places and spaces will be applauded, appreciated and acknowledged because of your engagement, enlightenment and empowerment. You are encouraged to please write an article that Tells your Story (if you are a woman) OR Your Mother's (or any other female that has influenced you) Story. It should be Arial size 10, single line spacing. You could write in paragraphs, using sub-headings. Pictures also make for interesting reading and captures the moment. The following information or format could be used in your write up. However, there is ample room for creativity. Please note that you are not restricted to sticking to this format. You may even use a combination of the options.



DATE OF SUBMISSION: Before 31 MARCH 2019

OPTION 1: Written in paragraphs by answering the following questions

	Stages in life	Experiences	Content
1	Birth to two years:	Where were you born? Year?	Parents: Explain family background. Extended family.
2	Early life	School, friends, family, life in general under apartheid	What was your life like while growing up? Who were the important role players in your life? What did you enjoy most while growing up?
3	Teenage years	Difficulties / cultural disputes/ moral challenges	Did you face peer pressure? What influence did your culture / belief system have on you? Any memory of superstition / old wives tales/ folk tales / storytelling that shaped you?
4	Young adult life under apartheid	Trials / struggles / successes	Success to include family, children, spouse etc. influence of adult friends / civic groups etc
5	Marriage / children / extended family life	What experiences can you share? Economic difficulties? Social issues? Political strife? The environment?	Did you work? Were you protected at the workplace? Remuneration? Uniforms? Travelling?
6	Mature adult	Changes in the country? Your contribution.	Were you active in movements that led to change? Other experiences that you may have had.
7	At present	Share your thoughts... hope for the future? Sadness?	If you could change anything what would it be and why?

OPTION 2

- Brief biography

This should cover birth, early childhood, schooling and life after schooling.

- A memorable moment in your life or mother's life under apartheid.

It is almost given that when you request people to write about their lives under apartheid they would focus on the hardships and their resistance to apartheid, i.e. political activism. This is true for many people, and women in particular who, regrettably their histories still remain 'hidden'. Contributors are urged to write about this. Colleagues are strongly urged to begin to document about other aspects of their lives that remain dormant. Contributors are also encouraged to write about any aspect of their life or their mother's life that they feel is pertinent and deserves to be documented. These could range from challenges unmarried women, especially black women, faced in acquiring accommodation in the urban areas; how they managed to survive and raise children, sometimes single-handedly through what the then government perceived as illegal means (e.g. beer brewing or street hawking); entertainment careers (Contributors must write about their memories or that of their mothers who were aspiring musicians, artists, sport enthusiasts, etc, in their communities); community developers, but due to apartheid laws, which restricted the advancement of black people, they struggled to achieve their dreams.

- View about post-apartheid South Africa: Hope/Dream for the future? Sadness? Achievements, etc.

OPTION 3

Writers are also encouraged to tell community stories. Perhaps an individual wants to pay for the page that pays homage to his / her crèche / sporting club etc. Then the story / page could revolve around the women that played the pivotal role in the formative years.

In Conclusion, remember to be creative. You can write as family or as a group. We are looking for stories that cover the length and breadth of our country. We are looking for women's tales from all provinces, the plaas, the plush neighbourhoods and townships. Join me in telling women's stories. This is a great initiative. Please be involved.

BANKING DETAILS: R 250 per page / 500 Words and a Picture / OHASA, ABSA Bank, Pretoria / Account No: 4067826673

Please include a payment reference which must reflect your "Name, Surname and CTP". This will help us in identifying the contributors. Unidentified payments will be put into a suspense account and will result in the suspension on your subscription. P.S.- There is no restriction on the number of pages per story, although, each page has to be paid for. Should you require any further information, please email: ohasafundraising@gmail.com. Regards, Dr. Kogie Archary



EVIEWERS

