

THE MANDELA & SISULU *Centenary*



NEWSLETTER

June 2018

Youth are our greatest treasure, our future

By Nomvula Mokonyane

“There can be no process more important for the future of South Africa than the realisation of the potential of our youth. Freedom will be hollow if it did not bring about the liberation from the heavy weight that restrained their energy, dampened their enthusiasm for life and cast an angry shadow on their self-esteem.”

These are the powerful words of former President Nelson Mandela, who belonged to the generation of youth that was at the forefront of the Struggle to liberate our country from apartheid rule. His generation stood up to take the baton of leadership and build on the foundations of those who had gone before them.

They were taught that our history is littered with inspiring stories of young people who were at the forefront of driving political change. For instance, it was the young visionary leader Pixley ka Isaka Seme who united black people in 1912 to form an organisation now known as the African National Congress (ANC) and fight for their freedom.

It was the generation of Muziwakhe Lembede, Oliver Tambo, Nelson Mandela, Albertina Sisulu and many others whose ideas led to the formation of the ANC Youth League

in 1944. From 1949 onwards, their Programme of Action (PoA) was instrumental in shaping the direction of the ANC. The leaders were at the forefront of rebuilding and changing the course of history when they radicalised the ANC and made sure that it became a mass militant organisation with popular support.

It was also through this generation that the ANC adopted a militant PoA and embarked on the Defiance Campaign against all unjust apartheid laws. This led to the conceptualisation of the blueprint of our liberation struggle – the Freedom Charter – which defined what type of society we wanted to build in South Africa.

When the apartheid government embarked on a violent crackdown on the liberation movement, the 1944 generation responded by moving from peaceful methods



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REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



of engagement to the armed struggle, which led to the formation of Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK), the armed wing of the ANC. Many young people skipped the country to swell its ranks. The first contact between the apartheid army and MK during the Wankie and Sipolilo campaigns consisted of many young people, including the heroic Chris Thembisile Hani. They were prepared to lay down their lives in order bring about our freedom.

It was also young people under the leadership of Steve Biko who advocated for black consciousness in the 1960s and 1970s. Biko told our people that “black man, you are on your own” and encouraged them to liberate themselves.

The same can be said about the youth of 1976; they learned from the past and made it their duty to challenge the unjust apartheid system. That 16 June 1976 Soweto Youth Uprising against the imposition of Afrikaans as a medium of instruction was led by young people such as Tsietshi Mashinini and Khotso Seatlholo.

This uprising led to our people saying “enough is enough” because the brutality of the apartheid government had been exposed.

Through his lens, the late legendary photographer Sam Nzima recorded the response of heavily armed police opening fire on unarmed students. He will be remembered for capturing the image of Hector Pieterse being carried by Mbuyisa Makhubo after being shot by police.

This year marks 42 years since the Soweto Uprising and five years since the first President of the democratic and non-racial South Africa passed on. Madiba would have turned 100 on 18 July 2018.

In addition, this year also marks the centenary of the birth of another Struggle stalwart, Mama Albertina Nontsikelelo Sisulu. She was part and parcel of the ANC underground and prepared many young people to cross the South African borders in order to join the liberation movement in exile. She was part of the Committee of 10 post the youth uprising.

She fought tirelessly against the injustices of apartheid and played a pivotal role in the founding of the United Democratic Front, and was elected as one of its four presidents.

To mark the 100-year anniversary since the birth of the two Struggle icons, our government commemorated Youth Month in their honour. We call on all South Africans to join in the centenary celebrations in their workplaces, schools, churches and civic organisations to reflect on the immense contribution of these icons.

We have used the Youth Month to remind our youth that the future of this country depends on them. They have a huge role to play in shaping the direction of this country, just like the generation of Madiba and Mama Sisulu. Youth must believe that just as our icons, they have the power to turn their lives around and contribute to the development of the country.

As government, we encourage the youth to follow in the footsteps of Madiba by getting involved in building the country they want to see through the “Send Me – Thuma Mina” campaign. It is a call for our youth to serve the nation and influence the country’s political landscape.

Therefore, we expect our youth to participate in debates on many issues, including the current one on the expropriation of land without compensation. Parliament’s Constitutional Review Committee is currently holding public hearings around the country on the proposed

amendment to Section 25 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa of 1996.

In honour of the sacrifices and contributions of the youth of 1976, our youth should actively participate in such processes because our Struggle was also for the return of the land. Land is not only about agriculture but the creation of wealth, business, social infrastructure and can be used to transform apartheid spatial planning.

We need a generation of youth who will follow in the footsteps of those who have gone before us. They are proof that the youth represent the country’s future and their active citizenry is necessary for it to flourish. “Our children are our greatest treasure. They are our future.”



Ms Nomvula Mokonyane is the Minister of Communications.

Son of Albertina Sisulu

By Max Sisulu

To Thole = My dear mother

In this year which marks your centenary year, we remember you and all you did for us and we continue to miss you.

As our family grows in leaps and bounds, we grapple with how to convey to the new arrivals how you cared for us; how much you loved us. For the grandchildren who were fortunate to grow up under your care, we remind them that it is not enough for them to just remember you. They need to emulate the things you did; not only for your own family but for the neighbours, community and indeed the nation.

We were born under a very repressive regime but despite the trials and tribulations of police harassment, detention, imprisonment and exile, we experienced happiness as a family because you were so caring and generous. You and Tata created a warm and welcoming home for us, one that was full of love and laughter.

I remember the evenings when we used to play cards. And sometimes you did win Thole, and I can hear your shout of joy after winning. I tried to be modest when I won, I would not shout as loud.

It seemed that everyone could come to our house and sometimes they got food before us. Sometimes there were empty pots after the visitors had left, leaving nothing for us. So, obviously, we had a bit of a struggle there. uGogo would save the day by going to buy *amagwinya* (fat cakes) and chips. We learned to understand that sharing was part of being a family and the family included not just blood relatives but also comrades and friends.

Something that I only appreciated much later was how strict you were, so much so that we even nicknamed you *Bhubesi* (lioness). Mlungisi and I used to go on our knees to polish the floors and shine the stoep (veranda). It was one of the longest stoeps in Soweto. And we also did the gardening

and washed the dishes. I remember uTata urging us to "hurry up and finish before your mother comes home!"

I appreciated the value of your strict discipline when I went to boarding school, because at least I knew how to wash and iron my own clothes.



Photo credit: Nelson Mandela Foundation

You taught us to be independent, so that when Tata went underground in 1963, and both you and I were arrested and detained under the 90-day law, the young ones knew how to take care of themselves.

One of the things I always remember is when you called me to the bedroom quietly, not long after you and I were released from prison. Usually when we were called to the bedroom we knew we were in trouble. I quickly realised this was trouble of a different kind when you said, "You know you have to leave the country. It is too dangerous for you to stay."

So I left as a 17 year old, with no idea that it would be decades before I would return. Thankfully, I returned to a mother with arms wide open not only to embrace me, but also a wife and a handful of energetic boys.

On behalf of Lindi, Beryl, Nkuli, Jongi, the children, grandchildren and great grandchildren, I salute you and uTata.

We enjoy the freedom we have today thanks to people like yourselves and all those who went before us.

You were a great mother, grandmother, teacher, friend, comrade and leader. In your centenary year, people all over the world remember you with great fondness and respect.

Hai ke Thole sithi ke, O! Mandlangisa, uGqagqane, uMfingo, uLwandi'aluwelwa luwelwa ziiNkonjane zona zima phiko made. Siya kukhumbula.

PROVINCIAL ACTIVATIONS

Legends Fridays campaign takes off in Graaff-Reinet

By Natasha Peterson: GCIS, Eastern Cape



These local youth said they were excited about the Legends Fridays campaign. They think it is very important for community members to give back and help one another in whichever way possible.

On 18 May 2018, the Government Communication and Information System led the “Legends Fridays” community activation at Graaff-Reinet taxi rank to promote the Nelson Mandela and Albertina Sisulu centenaries.

Legends Fridays, which emanates from the Mandela Fridays, is a government initiative that calls all citizens and organisations to practise the legacy of the two Struggle icons, Madiba and Mama Sisulu, whom we are celebrating their centenaries this year. The initiative will officially be observed every last Friday of the month but individuals or organisations can implement initiatives on any Friday of the month.

People, organisations and businesses can participate by doing acts of selflessness such as:

- promoting the love for education by buying a book for a child or assisting schoolchildren with homework or exam preparations.
- encouraging leadership and active citizenry amongst the youth by mentoring someone.
- protecting children’s rights and well-being by visiting and making donations to children in need.
- helping to reduce poverty by assisting with skills development or assisting with food-garden projects and non-profit organisations.



Luke Jooste said:

“I think it is a good and creative campaign that will inspire and encourage people. It will make us reflect on what our legends did and it will help to improve the state of our country.”



Monique Persensie said:

“Ek help kinders in my huis en in my straat met huiswerk veral in Wiskunde omdat ek goed is daarin maar ek sal graag meer wil doen.”

(I help the children in my home and in our street with their homework, especially Mathematics because I am good at it. I definitely want to do more though.)

- promoting a value-based society by promoting culture and tradition by helping to promote heritage and African history.
- promoting an active and healthy lifestyle through sport by organising sports events or donating sports equipment.

The Legends Fridays campaign can be done by anyone in any area. Simple selflessness include helping a child or elderly person in your neighbourhood.

You can upload photos of your initiatives on social media and use these hashtags: #BeTheLegacy, #Mandela100 and #MaSisulu100.



River Carry said:

"I think it is a great campaign. I will help in the community in sport. I would like to coach rugby and maybe donate my school clothing but I will have to get permission first and wait until after the exams."

Ncome commemorates Youth Day event

By Thandinkosi Zulu: GCIS, KwaZulu-Natal

Ncome Museum, which is one of northern KwaZulu-Natal's greatest tourist destinations, commemorated the annual Youth Day event with Nquthu schools on 15 June 2018. The event was held at Ncome Museum where young people were given a lifetime history lesson to know more about their freedom. This year's event was commemorated under the theme: "Learning from the past legends. The Year of Albertina Sisulu and Nelson Mandela".

Outlining the purpose of the commemoration, Ncome Museum Outreach Officer, Mr Sthembiso Mazibuko, told the gathering that it had been 42 years since South African youth, led by Hector Pieterse, fought for the abolishment of Afrikaans as the medium of instruction in schools. "As the museum, we want to engage in a dialogue that will inspire young people to use the spirit of 1976 to fight the challenges facing the current youth," added Mr Mazibuko.

This was a celebratory and motivational event for the young people who came in numbers to celebrate through artistic performances and poems. Teachers from Nquthu schools – Celumusa Secondary, Ukuphumula High, Spring Lake High, Qequsizi Primary and Kingsley Sivananda Combined – welcomed the Ncome Museum Youth Day commemoration.

Stakeholders who participated felt that the project ought to be well supported so that the history of 1976 could be restored with dignity to educate future generations.

In his address the guest speaker of the day, Mr Laurence Mthombeni, Director of Corporate Services at the Hlabisa Local Municipality, told the young people to be more vigilant about their commitment to education. He told them that education was the only weapon to harness their bright future.



Mr Laurence Mthombeni addressing hundreds of young people during the Youth Day commemoration. Learners listening attentively to the presentations about the 1976 tragedy.



Learners who attended the event.

Mandela historic memories and photostories

By Linda Shilakwe, National Heritage Council (NHC)



Mr Sinethemba Sonjica from the SRSA; Mr Tembile Yako, Executive Manager at the NHC; Ms Joyline Josamu, CEO of Maru Ciberconnect; Vuyo Mhaga from the SRSA; Adv Sonwabile Mancotywa, CEO of the NHC and Ms Ghandi Mdlele, Mayoral Committee Member of the OR Tambo District Municipality.

On Friday, 29 June 2018, the NHC, Department of Sport and Recreation South Africa (SRSA), Nelson Mandela Museum and OR Tambo District Municipality participated in the Mandela Historic Memories and Photostories initiative funded by the National Lotteries Commission.

The event was hosted by the Maru Ciberconnect, which aims to create an opportunity for those who harbour untold stories of Madiba to share them publicly, as part of the

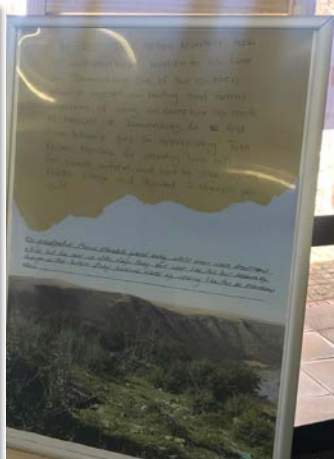
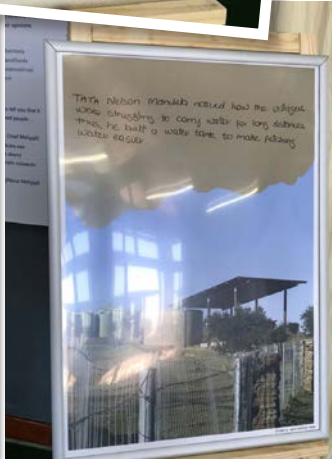
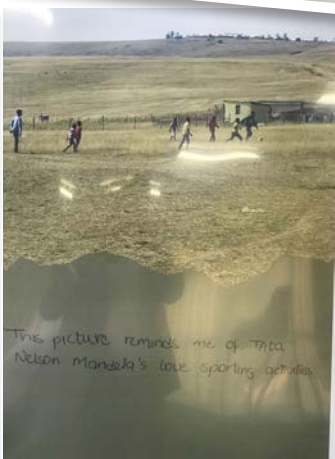
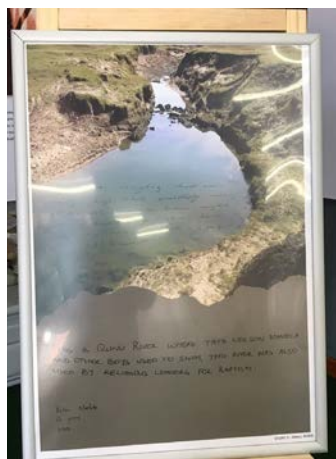
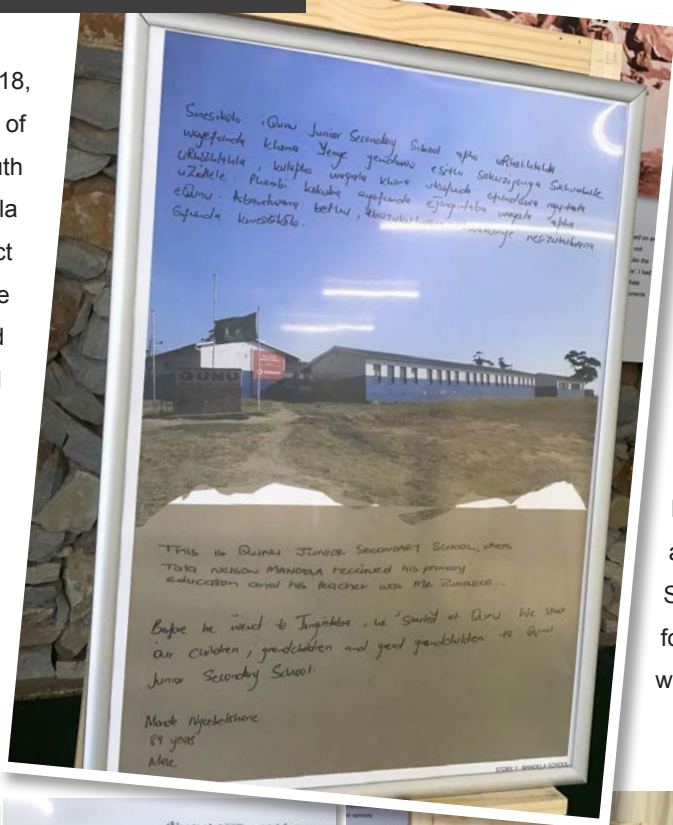
country's oral history and political heritage. The information shared by actual custodians, activists and passive observers is also archived and preserved for scholastic purposes and the benefit of future generations.

The stakeholders celebrated the rich legacy and heritage of former President Nelson Mandela through a community engagement (Imbizo) in Qunu, Eastern Cape under the theme: "Reliving Untold Epic Moments of Our History".

Activities of the day included the launch of the Nelson Mandela Photostories book through an exhibition at the Nelson Mandela Museum, where selected youth from Qunu were equipped with disposable cameras, and tasked to

capture places and things that relate to the Struggle stalwart's heritage and create special photostories with some narration to them. This photostory book will be kept in the Nelson Mandela Museum and other key sites for public access and education.

Tata Madiba's love for sport that he used to unite the nation was remembered through a football and netball tournament held at Tabase village in Mthatha. The SRSA hosted the event, where football and netball equipment was donated to the community.



Centenary Celebrations Highlights



Learners from different schools gathered at the National Heritage Monument, as part of the Youth Educational Dialogue programme organised by the DBE.

Youth educational dialogue reflects on 1976 legacy

On 21 March 2018, the Department of Basic Education (DBE), in partnership with the National Heritage Monument and the 1976 Foundation, held a youth educational dialogue which created an opportunity for the youth to converse, appreciate and acknowledge sacrifices made by the youth of 1976.

Held under the theme: "Live the legacy: Towards a socio-economically empowered youth", the dialogue saw schools from the Free State, North West, Mpumalanga, Limpopo and Gauteng engaging one another on the values left by great heroes and heroines as well as the role they played in bringing about peace, nation-building, democracy, social justice and freedom across the continent.



School choral music promotes nation-building



Learners during their performances dedicated to both Madiba and MaSisulu.

The 2018 South African Schools Choral Eisteddfod, which is in its 18th year, was held from 26 to 29 June 2018 at the Rhema Bible Church in Randburg, Johannesburg. The 2018 edition was held under the theme: “Mandela100 and MaSisulu100”.

The Eisteddfod is one of the DBE’s prestigious events in the annual school calendar. It is a strategic programme of the department’s quest to promote unity in diversity, national reconciliation, social cohesion and a national identity among young South Africans of school-going age.

Competing learners performed specially composed songs dedicated to both former President Nelson Mandela and Mama Albertina Sisulu. One of the songs titled *Nantso-Ke Madiba*, which was entered under the African category, was composed by 53-year-old Bongani Cola, from Papane (Beja) village, Tabankulu.

He started composing and writing songs while still a junior secondary school learner, composing songs for Methodist choir competitions in the village. His gift blossomed to the level

where he started composing for junior and senior secondary schools, and subsequently for big mainstream adult choirs. Some of his compositions include songs and hymns such as *Kwanele*, *Inggaka*, *Afrika*, *Ingoduko*, *Imbudumbudu* and *Bayethe ma Afrika*.

Learners expressed their gratitude to the main sponsor of the Eisteddfod, the Motsepe Foundation, for affording them the opportunity to learn about the two Struggle stalwarts while doing what they love the most – singing. The DBE was also encouraged by the partnership between government and private-sector organisations such as the Motsepe Foundation in commemorating the centenary of both Madiba and Sisulu.



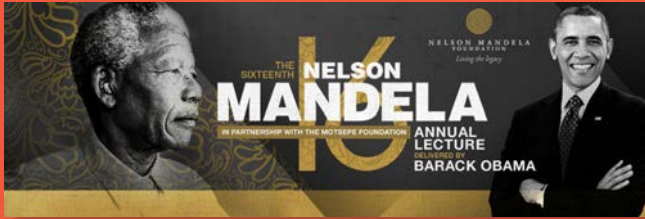
Minister Motshekga on stage joined by Patrice Motsepe as they hand over the trophy to the winning choir from Gauteng.



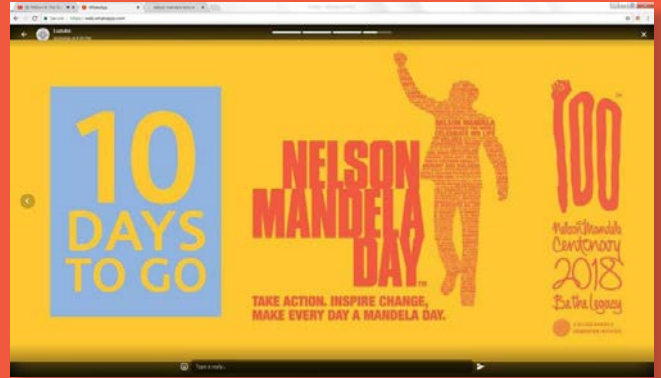
UPCOMING EVENTS

Mandela Month activities to look out for:

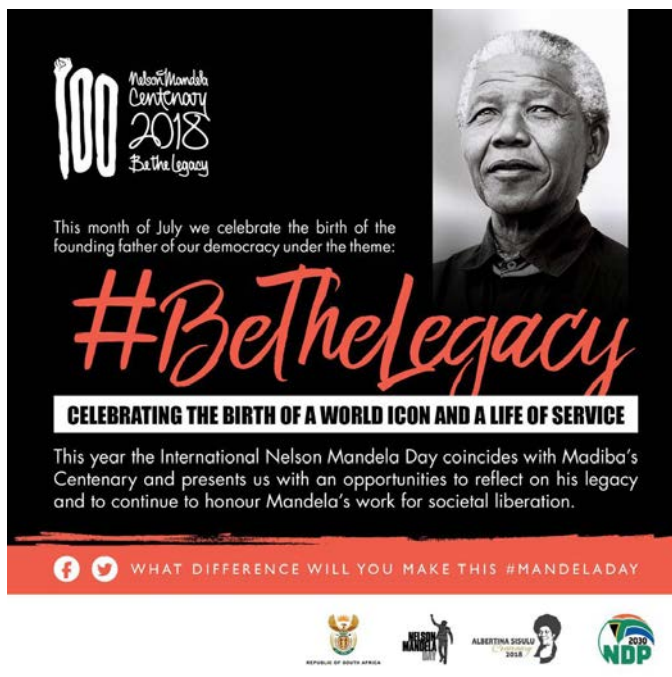
- **17 July:** The NMF will host the 16th Nelson Mandela Annual Lecture at the Wanderers Stadium in Gauteng. Former US President Barack Obama will deliver the lecture, which will focus on honouring the life and legacy of Madiba.



- **25 July:** The Eastern Cape Government will host a Boxing Tournament at Walter Sisulu University, aimed at reflecting on Madiba's love for boxing during his youthful days. World Champion Simphiwe Khonco will be defending the World Mini Flyweight Title against Toto Landero from the Philippines.



- **18 July:** The global community will observe the Nelson Mandela International Day. To make this year's Mandela Day extra special, the South African Government will be declaring the centenary day, a day of national service.



CONTACT US

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