MASIBUMBANE

A PROJECT BY THE DURBAN CENTRE FOR PHOTOGRAPHY

Masibumbane

Masibumbane

A project by the Durban Centre for Photography

KZNSA KWAZULU NATAL SOCIETY OF ARTS

DURBAN CENTRE FOR PHOTOGRAPHY

Arts & Culture

Department: Arts and Culture
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Durban Centre for Photography
Bat Centre
45 Maritime Place, Victoria Embankment
Durban 4001

First published May 2016

ISBN 978-1-928341-21-5

Published by Real African Publishers
on behalf of the Durban Centre for Photography

PO Box 3317
Houghton
Johannesburg 2041

Dedicated to the
community of Chesterville
for sharing their stories

As we have reached this milestone, we must appreciate that cultural self-determination occurs when people use their imagination to create positive images that portray their true selves. Over the past 3 centuries the African's entire way of looking at the world was determined by colonialists.

We have to develop new ways of looking at – and seeing – ourselves. This we will do when we all tell our stories, to say our heritage should belong to us all.
— Nathi Mtehthwa. Minister of Arts and Culture, September 2014

FOREWORD

Recount, Recall and Response

The Ancestors are always with us. — Malian Bambara saying.

Their reach into the present, alongside the photograph's tenuous relationship with reality, assumes an onerous responsibility in the present as the image offers insights into history. The multiplicity of histories has been subsumed by a dominant struggle narrative at the expense of parallel narratives that nurture and contextualise history; that are the sub-text of experience, the dignity of existence and strategies of personal survival. These reach into the present, informing and asking: sustenance for the shifting sands of hope and expectation and the consolidation of identities and nation.

The diversity of lives lived under oppression were sustained by reclamations of humanity denied in the white man's world: moments of sustenance to troubled spirits, the chance to control self-image for the fleeting moment that the camera brings and then takes away. The illusion of escape that maybe, just for this one moment, I can offer this window into my life to create a conversation with contemporary existence.

These conversations between image and word, interrogating each other for validity, memory's many narratives, enlightening the dialogue, the content gnawing at the constraints of the frame to get up close for an encounter with the image, engaging vigorously for multiple truths.

Perceptions of reality shaped by content, the elements in the frame speaking to each other, plotting illusive meaning, nourishing readings, informing retrospectives, liberating other histories and inducing synergies with the present adding vital components to shifting identities, the voices of history affirming their heft.

The images complicate and defy known narratives of struggle betrayal and violence. They unsettle accepted historical evidence and process adding lost facets of the past for scrutiny and insertion into the here and now. These still moments as departures from the amorphous mass, oppressed and downtrodden, to reveal the individual, the personal, bringing the ability to claim the frame's space, their humanity and personal nuance.

The subjects making visible, made visible, resuscitating, reinstating, reclaiming, confronting the viewer with a gaze that indicts the present for 'dreams deferred' and asking if they were in vain.

Peter McKenzie – DCP Project Director

PREFACE

The loss of history is a loss of identity. The Chesterville community has been privileged to share their stories of where the township comes from and where they are today. Indigenous stories are important, and stories of the fallen heroes are worth telling: getting them straight from the horse's mouth and preserving them for future generations. African history has long not been documented. Now it is time to start, through photographs, chronologically dating and making sense of past events and celebrating good memories; remembering fallen heroes and writing about their contribution to who and what we are today; keeping accurate records as word-of-mouth distorts the story.

This book is a healing journey that has allowed people to tell their stories, share their experiences, and somehow engage with what has been long forgotten or kept inside. It is a therapeutic journey of various individuals telling their stories of the past to heal, and to revive the memories of where they come from as a community, and what they went through to arrive at the present.

We interviewed more than 50 individuals from Chesterville for the book, getting their sense of what photographs mean to them, where they were during the time they were taken, and how they feel about the past and their life today. Using pictures of the past, the purpose of the book is to get people to reflect on their journey as human beings travelling through life.

There were a lot of challenges writing the book, such as how to capture the moment and put it into words while reading the face of an interviewee. As a writer, one wants to capture all the emotions presented and feed them back into the book. Some emotions might have been lost in between words, but the stories being told are real and eye opening. All the stories in this book touched me and humbled me in many ways: the love and commitment individuals have for their families, communities and the country.

Nomvula Sikakane – Project coordinator

CONTRIBUTORS

Gift Nyamapfene
Khethukuthula Lembethe
Mphumeleli Ngidi
Nomvula Sikakane
Talent Buthelezi
Takudzwa Makoni
Zimasa Magudu
Sam Mukanya
Paulo Menezes
Mabusi Cebekhulu
Silungile Dladla
Euphemia Nomasonto Bhengu
Peter Mckenzie

A Silent Lullaby
By Gift Nyamapfene

The photograph is of a young woman holding a young baby on her lap while sitting on a wooden stool, *isiqhiki*: a chair that one cannot lean one's back on. It is an old black-and-white 'colour' photograph. The woman is looking away from the lens of the camera and is emotionally detached from the baby or is camera shy. She looks vulnerable. It was sunny when the photograph was made.

The young woman is wearing a white sleeveless blouse, a long black dress, and has hand-done cornrows on her head made from her natural hair.

The woman in the photograph is Thandiwe Mbotho holding her firstborn son, Celokuhle Nkwanyana, whom she had given birth to in the summer of 1968. Her son was two months old when the photograph was made and this was their first photograph together.

Sipho Dlomo, a well-known local photographer, made the photograph in Chesterville at Mbotho's home in Road 7.

She had to wear free, simple clothing because the scorching sun of the summer was unbearable. Her natural hair was tightly plaited according to cultural convention, which believes that a young mother should not touch her hair. If she touched her hair, elders believed that strands would fall out dramatically until she was bald. When she was pregnant she was not allowed to walk outside the house at night because evildoers were believed to be at work in the dark and would harm the unborn child.

Mbotho had an empty gaze on her face when the photograph was made because she was disappointed with herself for falling pregnant at the age of 20. She had just begun her 30-year teaching career at Chesterville High School. She carried with herself the responsibility of a new child and the burden of a disappointed family who had strong social reservations about a young woman having an out-of-wedlock child.

Had she turned 21 without a child, Mbotho would have had the whole family celebrate her for her exemplary youth through *umemulo*, a traditional Zulu 21st birthday. The local Ethiopian church, at which her family worshipped, excommunicated her for half a year and she was dispirited by this public embarrassment. That all spoke to the gender inequality, sexism and cultural norms that marginalised women in the community.

Mbotho's maternity life was unbearable. The law did not allow her to get pregnant on the job and she had to hide her pregnancy for nine months from the Chesterville High School council. The principal knew Mbotho was pregnant and he helped with the cover-up. Her over-sized blazer played an equal role in hiding the pregnancy from school associates.

She did not have maternal check-ups with a doctor or nurse because she was afraid of losing her job. Maternal leave was out of the question. One Thursday in the summer of 1968, Mbotho took time off from work under the disguise of a four-day illness

and went into labour. Dr Foster at McCord hospital in Durban delivered the baby, and a Dr V. Gcabashe faked a medical letter supporting Mbotho's sick leave claim.

Mbotho did not breastfeed her son and was absent from all of the natural mother-child bonding process. Her mother and grandmother looked after Cebokuhle. Mbotho failed to reconcile with the changes and hostility that came with the birth of her son.

A new life had come into her life but the highlights of that experience were regret and impurity.

Her son will only learn about this story when he reads this piece. Mbotho never told Cebokuhle about this rough episode of her life. Her strongest memory of Cebokuhle's childhood is the high-pitched crying that she had to endure with him. Cebokuhle cried a lot, which pushed his young mother to the edge and they would both cry together through the night.

Mbotho met the love of her life and got married in 1971 when Cebokuhle was four. The man accepted her son and looked after him as his own. Mbotho was happy to have a strong family unit for herself and her son. Cebokuhle grew up to be a happy, respectful and intelligent young man. He has a family of his own and made Mbotho the proudest mother in the world when he became a qualified electrical engineer. Cebokuhle has worked for prestigious organisations such as Eskom and Lebone Engineering (Pty) Ltd.

Mbotho says that, for her, this photograph provides a huge sense of history and represents the indelible moments of hardship that she experienced as a young woman in Chesterville.

Passage into the Hands of the Father
By Gift Nyamapfene

My father is calling. Come take me. I am going home.

Those were the last words of Enoch Ngobese, an educated, progressive Methodist church pastor from Chesterville. He was also a teacher at Amanzimtoti Training College. The photograph is of a funeral. There are six men carrying a coffin and they are coming from the building behind them. They are in mourning and there is somberness on their faces. The photograph was made after a funeral service or body viewing, and the men are moving the body somewhere else.

The funeral procession is that of Enoch Ngobese from Chesterville. He died during the summer of 1981. The deceased's brothers and cousins, the Ngobeses, were carrying their brother's coffin out of the Methodist church in Chesterville.

Enoch Ngobese's son, Pastor Vukile Ngobese, said his father was probably one of the community elders who were involved with the local underground apartheid resistance movement. Many people came to mourn him upon his death.

The photograph was professionally made. It is sharp and the depth of the photograph brings out all the subjects perfectly: from the sadness on the face of the man in the front, to the man wearing the beret at the extreme end of the procession. The photographer was at the right place at the right time.

Ngobese was ailing from old age and passed away in his Chesterville home. One morning he woke up, ate breakfast, and after going to walk outside the house a bit, he could sense that he was not feeling strong. He went back to his bed and there he breathed his last.

There was a huge male presence at this funeral. There are only four women in the photograph and one young white man exiting the building behind. At the far right of the photograph, one man is wearing a hat.

The coffin looks expensive and was professionally carpentered. There is nothing covering the coffin other than the flowers on top.

It was raining on this day. The ground was muddy. There is a uniform fashion sense among the subjects. All of them are dressed in dull and dark colours. Most of them are in long black coats like undertakers. There is one old man who is white-headed, and another unique man at the very back of the procession is wearing a beret.

Pastor Vukile Ngobese, one of Enoch Ngobese's surviving children, is a priest who was inspired by his father and his family, which contains a long line of priests in Chesterville. He said his father, who was a devout Christian, was exclusively sent off through a Requiem mass, which is part of the Methodist church's funeral rituals.

Methodists believe that life is eternal and that one can look forward to life with God after death, although they hold diverse

beliefs about the afterlife. They regard the funeral service as an opportunity to express their grief, celebrate the life of the deceased and affirm their faith.

At the Methodist funeral service for Enoch Ngobese, a pastor led the congregation in prayer. The Requiem mass represented the deceased's final holy communion. It was his departure from earth and through this mass that he was entrusted to God's love and care in heaven. The spray of artificial flowers on top of the coffin is also part of the order of service of a Methodist funeral.

There was no cowhide covering the coffin as is common with funerals in KwaZulu-Natal and other Zulu communities. Pastor Vukile Ngobese said that this was the case with his father's funeral because they had a deep understanding of the practice. Hides on top of the coffin originated from the Umkonto we Sizwe funeral traditions. When a cadre had passed on, comrades would place the flag of the ANC on top of the coffin to confer the deceased with hero status. After the ANC was banned in 1960, together with its regalia, cowhides replaced the flag and this tradition has been widely adopted as part of the cultural order of service in various communities.

A beast was slaughtered before Enoch Ngobese's burial. The slaughtering served only to provide food for the mourners, unlike the Zulu cultural practice that puts slaughtering an animal in the context of an offering to the ancestors so that they accept the deceased. Mourners wore dark colours as a sign of the sadness surrounding the funeral.

The white man, together with the gentleman in the beret, might have been his underground movement acquaintances. Enoch Ngobese was a fashionista, along with many of his close colleagues in Chesterville, which explains the dress code of the men who attended the funeral.

The coffin was provided by Doves-Morgan Funeral Services: it was specially made and expensive. Since Enoch Ngobese was a teacher, he could afford to subscribe to a funeral insurance that would relieve his family from financing his death.

Listen to your call you little flock
By Gift Nyamapfene

This is a blurry out of focus photograph of a gathering of a vast number of children. A man standing behind a podium in front of the young crowd is conducting the proceedings of the day. He is dressed in an all-black suit. He is charismatic. An elderly man is seated beside him, following the proceedings. The photograph was made outside of a building or a house. The building is modern and has a roof drainage system, air vents and windows.

This photograph is of a Salvation Army church's Sunday school service outside the Gcaba family house in Road 27 in Chesterville. The Salvation Army believes that Sunday school provides the opportunity for children to come to a safe place to learn about God's love and his people. It is a place where they can meet Jesus for themselves. Sunday school can be held on any day of the week and at any venue. On this day, it was conducted on a Sunday.

Some of the children know each other as can be seen by their embracing each other. The subjects are dressed randomly and there is no uniformity.

Most of the subjects are seated on the grass and three young boys to the outer right are rested on a wooden bench. Two infants can be seen in the photograph. There is one man sitting behind the children at the back left.

Nkosinathi Gcaba, who is in this photograph, said that a Pastor Shange is the man in black. He came from the neighbouring Lamontville area to visit their church and to conduct the service. Pastor Shange also presided over Sunday school on the day. These intercommunity visits were common and promoted unity amongst The Salvation Army in the then Port Natal area.

The church service was conducted outside of Gcaba's home because the church had no building to worship in. Gcaba's father was a Corps Sergeant Major in the church and that entailed that he would be responsible for hosting the church gatherings. The Corps Sergeant Major is the senior local officer in the Corps or church, and it is therefore a position of much responsibility.

The holder of this position is the 'right hand man' to the Commanding Officers of the church and is appointed by 'the General'.

The Corps Sergeant Major is the first point of contact in the absence of the Commanding Officer and oversees the smooth running of the Corps programme.

During The Salvation Army Sunday school programme, there were spiritual disciplines of scripture study, the memorisation of bible verses, prayer, and the building of spiritual relationships. Gcaba said that he and other children would sing and engage in a quiz on what they had learnt on the day. Sunday school is viewed as both evangelistic and educational.

The Sunday school was composed of Junior Soldiers and Corps Cadets. Junior Soldiers are children between the ages of

seven and thirteen who have professed Jesus Christ as their Saviour and have signed the Junior Soldier's promise of becoming a 'Salvationist'.

A Corps Cadet is a young 'Salvationist' who is thirteen years or older and who undertakes a course of Bible Study and leadership training to grow spiritually and become better equipped for effective service in The Salvation Army. The Sunday school has a uniform but on this day they were not wearing it.

Worshipping outdoors was challenging for The Salvation Army in Chesterville as they had to retreat into the house when it poured, especially in summer. The scorching sun disturbed the smooth flow of the service but all this was not enough to falter the endurance of the congregants.

Today, The Salvation Army in Chesterville is in the process of building its own church. They worship in the school hall at Ukukhanya Kwelanga Junior School. This photograph reminds the Gcaba family of their unwavering faith and the blessing of growing up as Christians.

The Chief and the Tempest
By Gift Nyamapfene

Wake up just before dawn, turn on the stereo, caress the aerial and tune the buttons throughout sunrise to find the best signal. Such was the little price to pay for owning and listening to the radio back in the day.

In this photograph, a young, dapper middle-class gentleman to the left and an elderly, charismatic man on the right are posed with a radio in their hands. The charismatic man is Chief Ngobese, the late grandfather of the Ngobese family in Chesterville, and the man to the left is one of his sons, Enoch.

Chief Ngobese lived in Nquthu and was head of all the people who belonged to the Ngobese clan who were scattered around Port Natal. The two lapel pins on the Chief's jacket represented his regal status in society. Chief Ngobese's son Enoch worked as a teacher at Amanzimtoti training college. Pastor Vukile Ngobese, one of Chief Ngobese's grandsons, said both men were fashionistas. They were comfortable with shopping for the new fashions and adapted to the new trends that came with the changing days of apartheid.

A professional photographer made this photograph. Although the photograph is a close-up, it still tells us a rich story about the subjects, including their close relationship, deep fashion sense and progressive level in society.

On this day, Enoch Ngobese gave his father a new radio as a gift. The radio was fresh from the box as can be seen from the price tag tied to the top right of the radio handle.

While the price of the radio is unknown today, Pastor Vukile Ngobese said it was an affectionate present.

The two gentlemen can be seen looking each other in the eyes with ease and joy, implying that they knew each other well. Such a father-son relationship left a legacy in the family. Pastor Vukile could not hide his cheerfulness when engaged in dialogue about the relationship between these two men whom he considers role models. 'They loved one another,' he said.

The photograph was made in Models Furniture Shop in West Street, Durban where the radio was bought. Pastor Vukile said the radio was known as a 'Tempest' during that time.

The term 'Tempest' was adopted from the code name Telecommunications Electronics Material Protected from Emanating Spurious Transmissions (TEMPEST). Tempest came about during World War II and it entailed technical recourses and regulations that aimed to protect communications equipment from being intercepted by the enemy. Radios were part of that communications equipment, so this points out how South Africans have historically carved inventive terminology into their own vocabulary.

Pastor Vukile said that the popular radio station folks listened to on the Tempest was LM Radio. LM Radio was an AM station broadcasting to South Africa from Maputo, Mozambique via satellite. That radio station played a significant role in providing news, and entertainment through music, as broadcasting in

South Africa was state-controlled and monopolised by the SABC. LM Radio was privately owned and at this point, it was a heaven-sent alternative for the family.

It is amazing how this small shiny box acted as a tool for change. The radio was educational. The Ngobese family learnt of what was happening beyond their house and location, including the revolution for a democratic South Africa. They were interested in the commonality of their life story and those of other families beyond their community.

People were restricted from moving freely due to the Group Areas Act imposed by the apartheid government, but a radio bridged the Ngobese family's life with people they had never met before. Families were united and enjoyed life together through the airwaves.

The family listened to jazz, rock, pop, and the talented voices of underground Black South Africans whose music had no other medium through which to be heard. In those days, radio owners did not pay radio licences.

Today, Pastor Vukile Ngobese still cherishes the importance of a radio, which was introduced to him by his grandfather and father when he was young. Today, he enjoys walking around with a digital tablet in his hand listening to his favourite soft vibes in the sun.

Professionalism kept the noise away
By Khethukuthula Lembethe

A Saturday in a township is busy, and I found that Chesterville was full of activity. The Khambule household was no different. At 9 am, a row of washing was already on the line, and everyone was doing their bit of the weekend spring cleaning.

My being there caused no distraction, which put me at ease because I was afraid she would dismiss me as I was a bit early, and the cleaning continued with the rhythm of a line factory.

Busi Khambule welcomed me into her busy home and offered me a seat in her living room, which seemed like an organised mess as she was still tidying it.

When presented with the picture, the pride in her face does not go unnoticed: she is proud of what her mother was and of the legacy she left behind.

Mama Rosina Ngenzeni Khambule is pictured at a retirement party held at the King Edward Hospital. In the picture, Mama Rosina is wearing a pink dress and is receiving a symbol of gratitude for her role in the nursing profession. She has since passed but her legacy lives on. Mam'Khambule worked at the University of KwaZulu-Natal since 1989.

The smart dress, stockings and formal shoes gave her a respectable place in society.

A true definition of a nurse is someone who selflessly gives in service at all costs: someone who goes beyond the walls of hospitals and clinics: someone who is driven by compassion and love.

One such person is Mama Rosina Khambule: she embodied all the qualities mentioned above and more. According to her daughter, Busi Khambule, her mother was an important building block of the strength of the community.

Rosina retired in 1986 and continued assisting at the Medical school until 1995, demonstrating the passion and love that drove her career.

During that time, nursing was a desired profession for most young women: it was a key to many doors and was deemed lady-like.

Many women bought themselves civilisation by becoming professionals. Becoming a nurse meant that Mama Rosina could mingle with white people: spend time in 'civil society'.

Nana, her daughter, followed in her mother's footsteps by studying nursing but dropped out and pursued teaching.

Busi takes out some photo albums to share with me, each picture with its unique story. This family really values capturing memories. She took out pictures of herself as a toddler, sharing a short story about where she was then, and another one of her in high school at Ohlange in Inanda, one of the highly esteemed schools of that era.

Mama Rosina was a woman who wore many hats, something that resonates with most South African women. She was an active member of the church in Chesterville and she used to

bake and sew in her spare time: a gift she inherited from her mom; she also used to work in the garden.

She was also part of a community old age home called Umthandi, which means lover, which was adopted from the township of Clermont.

Mama Rosina kept the noise of the struggle away from her house. She wanted a better life for her children, and she was not part of the politics in the community. Busi, however, revealed her involvement in political activity, even though it wasn't much: she was part of an underground anti-apartheid force.

The Khambules are a family of women as heads of the home; their strength is what keeps the family afloat. Since Mama Rosina's passing in the year 2000, Busi and her sister Nana have held the family together.

He sacrificed his identity
for our freedom

By Khethukuthula Lembethe

A struggle fought by Victor Sobantu, or rather Siphiwe Makhathini. Either or, they shared the same values of bravery, courage, perseverance and countless other soldier-like virtues.

In the picture is a man called Victor Sobantu, an Umkhonto we Sizwe veteran; in the picture is the same man, Siphiwe Makhathini, a man born in Chesterville.

The picture was made in Umlazi before the 1994 democratic elections.

'When I see this picture, I get a sense of pride: he fought for our freedom,' says Mama Doreen Makhathini, Siphiwe's mother.

Makhathini was born on 1 December 1964 at the McCord Clinic in Chesterville, Road 12. He left for exile in 1982 after experiencing some problem with the branch in Chesterville. Not many people knew he was out of the country.

Mama Doreen, while preparing *phuthu* and spinach for the men extending her house, greets me with a big smile shouting *ngena*, *ngena* and pointing me to the lounge with her head, expressing her anticipation of my arrival.

Like many conversations with an elder, my name, and most importantly my surname, is an important factor in establishing a relationship.

Siphiwe came home from exile in 1993 and became Nelson Mandela's bodyguard and, later, Jacob Zuma's bodyguard.

Pretty close to former President Nelson Mandela and elevated in the car away from the crowd, Siphiwe Makhathini seemed quite important – more than just a bodyguard.

Dressed in a formal shirt and tie next to a rather casually dressed Mandela, he still wouldn't meet the standards of the bodyguards you see nowadays in black suits and ties and with clean-shaven heads and beards.

At a glance, Makhathini seems to be looking around: maybe there was something in particular that he was looking for. He seemed more nervous and anxious than Madiba.

He was hired because he knew the enemy. His experience and training in exile made him the perfect person for such an important job. Even though the crowd looks like large group of harmless supporters and lovers of Madiba, he would know if there were any traitors around. His mother, Doreen Makhathini, describes him as her fighter. The look of pride on her face is inevitable.

Twelve years of exile in Angola and Lusaka: a young man left home as Siphiwe Makhathini and took on a name which later described him best: Victor Sobantu.

A name, identity, association and belonging: these things a Black man holds very dear to him. The name Siphiwe Makhathini was sacrificed for a name we can all share and claim: freedom.

In the African culture, a man's name is what he takes with him, shows off with and leaves behind for his children and

generations to come.

Makhathini came back a different man with a different name and mandate.

When asked what freedom meant to her and if she regarded Nelson Mandela as a hero, Doreen replied, 'Nelson Mandela is my hero; I love him very much. Freedom to me means living well, being happy, not suffering like we did back then – Bantu education. It is because of him that we are free and that our sons came back alive.'

I could imagine that a mother would have some resentment towards the struggle, or even freedom, if it cost her her son.

'What he was fighting for he's back with, and that's where I get my closure.'

Mama Doreen says that her husband, Big Boy Bernard Makhathini, at some stage took a trip to Lusaka to visit Siphiwe. Bernard was once beaten up when visits to his home were made in search of Siphiwe.

Siphiwe lost his battle with cancer, leaving behind no wife or kids but a great legacy.

Fashion had no boundries
By Khethukuthula Lembethe

When I met Mama Rose Mary Khoza I was a bit frightened: she seemed like a feisty, no-nonsense old woman who reminded me of my grandmother a bit.

At a glance, I can make a personal confirmation that, yes, that's her, her hair is still full on her head and I can hardly spot any grey hair.

As I make reference to her picture, where her hair was done to the T and no thread is out of place and her garment fits her perfectly, from my judgment, she looked like this most of the time. She must have been a professional woman who loved looking good. The picture was taken in1961 when she was 21 years old. Rose Mary says that she was on her way to a 21st birthday party and was wearing a dress, which seemed tailor-made, that she had bought at Stuttafords.

Rose Mary arrived in Chesterville in 1959 at the age of 19, when the apartheid struggle and violence were at their peak, and not very long after the forced removals of many residents.

The self-proclaimed fashionista and lover of the camera was a regular at the studio and she can recall exactly where the studio was and what it is today.

'The studio is next to where Cambridge is now: it is an array of shops below the Hinalia Flats at the Warwick Triangle Market,' Mama Rose said.

Mama Rose was born on 25 November 1938 at Mzumbe Fairview Mission. She did most of her schooling there and left after matriculating and obtaining a certificate in teaching.

Mama Rose came to Chesterville when she got a sales lady job at Ajmeri. It was important for her to get a job because if she didn't, she would have to go back to the village and ask the Chief to write her a letter permitting her to be in Durban.

Mama Rose said she enjoyed dressing up. For her, it was an escape from what was happening at the time. When she wore the fancy clothes that the white madams also wore, she didn't feel any 'less than'.

I asked Mama if she used to put chemicals on her hair to make it straight. She said she put rollers in her hair to create the curl I see in the picture.

'I used to do my own hair in those days; there were no salons,' Mama Rose says. Was there an obsession with straight hair? 'At that time if a woman had straight hair she was beautiful,' says mama Rose.

Even today, Mama Rose thinks hair is a woman's crown, and she praises herself for still having good hair at her age.

The apartheid era created an ideology in young Black women that beauty was lighter than they were, and it had straight hair. There was a need to identify yourself outside of yourself.

I asked her how she feels about fashion post-1994. 'The fashion of back then has now returned. I can recognise most of the clothing you young people wear.'

When her family first moved to Chesterville, they lived in a

cottage. She doesn't have any of her old clothes since she has moved many times.

When she worked at Foschini as a sales lady, she used to wear her own clothes to work, unlike the sales ladies today, who wear uniforms. 'When we went to get our dompass (ID), we were told to plait our hair because if we kept the Afro, they would make us return to have it redone. There were men who hated straight hair and preferred Afros: they would stand and cut off the straight hair.'

Being Black after 8 pm
By Khethukuthula Lembethe

This image looks like a stolen scene from a 1980s South African movie: high-waisted skirts, frills, pumps, Afros and poise exude the high fashion of that era.

In this picture is Mama Rose Mary Khoza with one of her favourite nieces. 'She is Coloured. Her mother married a Coloured man and they now live in Newlands,' Mama Rose pointed out.

I immediately realise that being Coloured had an importance and status: for her it meant being better.

A street photographer took the picture when Mama Rose was walking with her niece on West Street, which has since been renamed Pixley ka Seme. He made this photo without them noticing.

In the 1960s, a street photographer would take a picture of you and hand you a ticket so you could pay at the studio to get your picture. Street photography is photography that features human conditions within public spaces and does not require the presence of a street, or even the urban environment.

'I took the ticket and paid 25 cents to get this picture,' Mama Rose says.

'There was a studio situated near the passage where Game is now, it was called C to C Studios; that's where the photographer worked, and if we didn't pick up our photographs they would put them in the window as a display to attract customers.'

Even though Mama was Black, she mixed a lot with Coloured people, and her sister also ended up marrying a Coloured man, but she still lived the struggles of a Black woman.

Mama speaks about the unfairness of the apartheid system while pulling her blouse down over her shoulder to show me some scars she got when a cheap bus that was not roadworthy overturned in Chesterville, emphasising how, during the time of the struggle, Black people were never looked out for and always given the least and cheapest treatment.

Mama also shared a story about how she was jailed because she was Black and sitting with her Coloured fiancé after 8 pm in his car.

'I was jailed and prosecuted for being with someone I loved. The system didn't care about love.

'The apartheid system had strict rules about interracial relationships that made it hard for people to get into relationships. Whenever we went to church at night, we had to leave before the hooter sounded.'

There were relationships between Black and Coloured people. Mama Rose told me a story about how alcohol was not sold to women and how they used to send their Coloured friends to the bottle store.

And some Black women married Coloured men for their surname and a better life, while some of the Black men changed their surnames to get identity cards so they could access the bottle store.

What does it mean to be Coloured? For some, being Coloured means being almost white, and for some it means having a rich heritage.

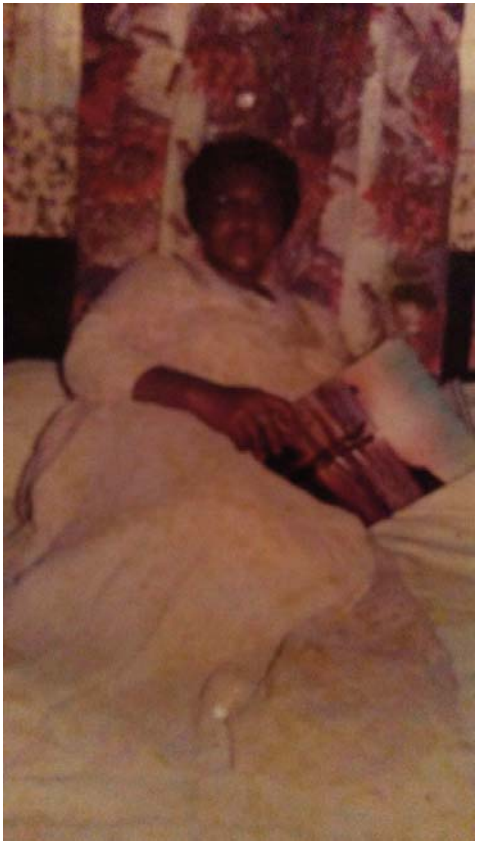
'In 1960, it was the time for mini-dresses,' says Mama Rose, explaining why she wore that dress to town.

Mama Rose enjoyed wearing formal clothing. 'When I worked as a sales lady, we would be the first to choose from it when new stock came in,' she says.

The Coloured communities were better than the Black townships: it was hard for Blacks to get houses, even harder if you didn't have a husband. 'After 1994, it was easy to own a house in Chesterville, and when the RDP system was in place anyone could get a house,' says Mama Rose.

Mama Rose never married and fostered many disadvantaged children: some are now married, and some have passed.

She takes pride in the young lady she was and has the pictures to show it off.



An album is a great preserver of memories
By Khethukuthula Lembethe

Yes, madam. No thanks. Yes please, madam. No problem, madam: those phrases are fine-tuned into a domestic worker's vocabulary, and are often spoken as a routine part of the job.

Mama Regina is a free-spirited lady, calm and welcoming, and for her, good manners are as genuine to a young Black girl in 2014 as they were to a White madam in the 1980s.

Mama Regina was a domestic worker, which explains her spotless house and courtesy.

The album she is looking at in the picture is the same one I'm looking at today and it is where this picture is kept. History has a special way of going round in circles.

In the picture, Mama Regina is lying on a beautifully made bed in her Chesterville home in Road 16, House 825, where she still lives with one of her grandchildren. She is pretending to be reading when an 'unexpected' photographer pops in to snap the moment. Street photographers were known by the community and would pass by unannounced and people would take that opportunity to have a picture made.

In the photograph, Mama Regina is wearing a floral dress and a beret. It is cultural for African women to wear a head doek as covering the head is a symbol of respect and subservience. In her time, modern African women used berets as an alternative: they were much more fashionable, stylish and more ladylike than a scarf.

The type of beret a woman wore told a story about her status in society. Mama Regina is wearing a beret at home, which could imply that she owned many of them.

It couldn't have been easy being a domestic worker in the apartheid era, serving, helping and taking care of the oppressor. It took a special kind of discipline.

Domestic workers often brought the mannerisms of the white folk back home, teaching their children table manners such as using a fork and knife to eat, saying please and thank you, and so fourth. Women in the apartheid era took pride in their homes. Home was their haven, sanctuary, and something that many have left as a legacy for their children.

Mama Regina was married and lived with her husband until his untimely passing. Their son, Jungle, survived a shooting by an anti-apartheid force in Chesterville: he was the only survivor; his peers couldn't get away. Jungle later died from a long-term illness.

She is now old and is no longer working.

A trip through memory lane
By Mphumeleli Ngidi

My first-ever visit to Chesterville Township was on 8 September 2014. The trip was neither an excursion nor for gallivanting, but rather for a 'bizarre' visit: a visit for photographs. I, together with the Masibumbane team of about twelve members, spared the day to recuperate and analyse photographs hung on family walls and archived in the albums of Chesterville residents. For my assignment, I was designated to interview Busisiwe Zulu, who availed, without a hitch, a photo of her late husband, Vusumuzi Zulu. The photograph was made in 1967 while Mr Zulu was in his late 30s.

Though Mrs Zulu remained tight-lipped on the birth and death years of Mr Zulu, she did hint that her husband was way older than she (*ubengidlula kakhulu ngeminyaka*). Mrs Zulu, née Ndlovu, lived her early years in Cato Manor before her family relocated to Chesterville. Incongruously, in Chesterville, where Mr Zulu had been born and bred, she was a neighbour of Mr Zulu. The Ndlovu and Zulu families are located in close proximity. Nakhu ekhaya (here is home), said Mrs Zulu, pointing at a nearby house. Mrs Zulu indicated that her grandmother and mother had also been married to husbands of the same neighbourhood. When I asked her about this 'trend', she pointed out that outsiders were not welcomed in Chesterville. One who is born or lives in Chesterville would marry another from Chesterville!

After carefully considering the photo, I gave it to to Mrs Zulu to stimulate her memory and for her analysis. With this interview in mind, I unearthed that photography is unlike the other more demanding cultural activities, as French sociologist and anthropologist Bourdieu points out, such as: 'drawing, painting or playing a musical instrument; unlike even going to museums or concerts; photography presupposes neither academically communicated culture, nor the apprenticeship and the "profession" which confer their value on the cultural consumptions and practices ordinary held to the most noble, by withholding them from the man in the street.'

Testimony to the commonality of photographs is that they are a usual feature in most families and they are not too demanding financially, which makes their availability more common.

The photos tell of nostalgia, memoirs and other huge stories. Ingledew indicates that photography shortens a bigger story, as it is 'a potent and powerful force' which is able to 'tell huge stories in single images.' Mr Zulu may be deceased, but his photo serves as a memory of his lived experience preserved for his wife.

But, I argue, it is inescapable that a photo is vulnerable to simulation as photographic elements engross 'the consideration of lighting, focus, contrast, quality, and what can be seen sharply'.

The photo of Mr Zulu does not seem to be too simulated; that is, having special effects. Mrs Zulu, however, indicated that the colour of her husband's complexion had been enhanced a bit in

the photo as he was a bit darker. The photograph was made in a studio; hence, it is not feasible to determine whether the photo was taken during the day or at night. Relying on Busisiwe's statement, however, the photo was made during the day because they would have been closed at night.

In ancient times, the twentieth century, photography was 'employed to record facts' which, as van Gelder, et al. put it, 'were often, but not always, facts of historical value.' In this regard, contrary to other forms of representation such as scripture, painting and graphic arts, photographs 'offered immediacy and transparency of depiction.' I concur with this version because photographs now become readily available in an instant and, if not, do not take longer periods for 'depiction'. Mrs Zulu provided that her late husband used to have photographs taken of himself every Friday at Bobson Studio in Grey Street, Durban. Bobson Studio was owned by a businessman of Indian descent who took the photographs himself. The photograph would be available two days from the day it was taken.

People like Baudelaire had moved quickly to denounce photography. They argued that photography could not 'possibly succeed in creating true works of art because it could never meet the main asset' of creative human genius. Baudelaire argues that photographs lack 'a subjective input or imagination, and such input is indispensable if one is to speak of a true work of art' because such creativity is located within the realm of painting. Though photography does not serve the 'true work of art' creativity like other forms do, such as painting, photography serves, to people like Mrs Zulu, as a mirror at which they retrieve the memories of the fallen.

The 1967 photo features an immaculately dressed Mr Zulu. Since the photograph is black and white, Mrs Zulu could not remember the exact colours that her late husband was wearing. The hat, back in those days, symbolised class: it leapfrogged the person's class above others. For Mr Zulu, the hat was not worn for a mediocre or impromptu ceremony. He would only wear the hat to special occasions held in other areas, not in Chesterville.

Mrs Zulu hinted that her husband was what we might call a fashionista in modern-day urban language. Mr Zulu, who plied odd jobs until he was appointed at Transnet, was always wearing 'nice' (*wayehlale egqoke kahle*) to and from work. Mr Zulu was not a person obsessed with fashion trends just to be different; he was rather an avid being with a devotion to fashionable clothing. At home or at events around the Chesterville area, he would not wear formal as in this photo. Chesterville events would not see Mr Zulu in his blazer, formal shirt and trouser. In Chesterville, he would wear an *nkumba* or *kotoyi* (a woolen-hat), Bermuda shorts, and a short-sleeved or khaki shirt and pants at times. To rubberstamp his fashionista profile, Mr Zulu bought from one shop: the Ideals Clothing shop in Grey Street,

and his clothes were washed and ironed in a laundry also located in Grey Street. In the photograph, the Crockett and Jones shoes are one of the numerous pairs that Vusumuzi owned. He had lots of formal footwear that he wore to and from work.

The man who was usually neat, even at home (Mrs Zulu says he wanted his home clothing ironed every time), was an avid soccer player. Nicknamed Nkebe (the eagle), Zulu played for Chesterville Brothers, one of the men's soccer teams that competed in the Chesterville league. When asked whether the team competed in the high-profile league under the Durban and District African Football Association, Mrs Zulu could not be sure. He was nicknamed Nkebe because of his eagle-eyed vision for goals. Mrs Zulu believes that her husband, a lethal striker who could tackle defenders with skill, would have been plying his trade abroad if he played in the current setting and provided that he had represented Natal in various matches. In my search, however, I could not find his name in the interrace or interprovincial matches organised by the South African Football Association and the Natal Inter-Race Soccer Board in the 1950s and early 1960s. Vusumuzi, if he were still alive, would have answered better though.

Throughout the interview, the softly spoken Mrs Zulu spoke proudly of her late husband. The smile never vanished from her face; no tear dropped; there was no emotional breakdown. History can now not only be told through books, research or oral history alone. Photographs should not sit in the auditorium in the telling of our communities' history, because to some families 'photographs matter'. Rather than playing a peripheral or substitute role in the telling of history, photographs remain greater experts of memory, history and nostalgia.

A journey through photographs
By Mphumeleli Ngidi

It may be argued that photographs are one source of memory for the young, the matured and the old. What draws more interest is listening to what people have to say about their photographs. Researchers who employ photo-interviewing or photo-elicitation, as put by Tinkler, use photographs to 'facilitate dialogue between the interviewer and interviewee'. Photo interviewing hence necessitates the interviewee to tell histories of reminiscence and memory using the photo as a principal reference.

On Thursday 11 December 2014, I went to Chesterville Township after communicating with Siphelele Khanyile to avail his photograph for the interview. When I jumped off a taxi I found Siphelele, 21, waiting for me at our rendezvous interview spot: a well-tarred pavement near his home. Born and bred in Chesterville, Mr Khanyile's home is located in Road 6 in the same township. Road 6 is close to Road 1, Chesterville's main road. Siphelele bragged that while most people have to bathe, wear fancy clothes and travel a distance to come to the Pavillion Shopping Centre, to him the neighbouring Pavillion is like a tuck-shop where he buys airtime and bread.

I have met Siphelele before, several times. Siphelele, a funny and jolly person whom I have known since 2010, tells me that the interview shall be made in the road so that I can easily board a taxi home after the interview. He ended up jokingly saying: *Ngiyadlala angifuni ukuthi ungene ekhaya ngoba kuhle ungaze ungaphumi phela wena ungowasemafamu* (I'm joking. I don't want you to enter my home because you will want to be part of us as you don't know the nicely built township houses since you are from a rural area).

Siphelele introduced three photographs and I chose the photo in question as it's contents attracted my interest. The subject in the photograph is Siphelele Khanyile. The photograph was made in early August 2012 around 2 pm after he had finished his chores. It was a sweltering day and Siphelele and his friend Linda Ndlovu had been working in the yard since nine that morning. They had not yet finished when 20 minutes worth of rain poured down, wetting the surface. Linda took the photograph using Siphelele's camera after the rain had calmed down.

The nicely built peach house with a grey-tiled roof in the photo is Siphelele's home. The gate clips the home's boundary. The front barrier is comprised of the nicely pruned trees while the back and right-hand side of the house boundary consists of a fence that is eclipsed by the thorny trees. The garden, which Siphelele and his friend had been cutting, is green as it was the spring season. In the yard, the gravel lines squeezed on the green grass can be seen a few steps from the main road, Road 1, where Siphelele is standing. The lines reflect Siphelele's father's car route to the garage, which is located behind the house. The other feature in the photograph is a pink-painted house with a brown base. Siphelele seemed hesitant to provide full details of the

neighbour providing that *omunye umuzi nje* (it's the other house). When I pressed him with questions, he told me that the house belongs to the Magwaza family. I discovered that the two families, for undisclosed reasons, are not on good terms: they do not even speak to each other. *Banesihlahla sikamango uma uwela egcekeni lasekhaya owethu namagatsha asehlahla awethu* (They have a mango tree: if the mango falls to our yard it ours and the tree branches hanging over our yard belong to us.).

In the photograph, Siphelele is half-naked as it has been raining. He provides that when Linda made the photograph he was also half-naked because the rain cooled them off: they had not taken a bath the whole day. Hanging vertically from Siphelele's shoulder down to his ribs is the camera bag of the camera that they used for the photo. His father had bought him the camera. Ironically, the only items in the photograph that belong to Siphelele are the camera bag, the t-shirt hanging on his left shoulder and the underwear shorts. He says he wore the items every time he was preparing the yard. 'It is my "bushing outfit"', he jokingly says.

Siphelele, who often brags that he attended a multiracial Berea West Primary School in Westville, has a lot of stories about the items he is wearing in the photograph. He received the cap, which he says he always wears, at the skate park at the Pavillion. He says that while playing the skateboards with his white friends another skateboarder was severely injured, and the cap fell off. They called an ambulance and Siphelele 'reserved' the cap so as to give it to the injured skateboarder. To prove his innocence he says:

Angilintshontshanga ngangimugcinela lona kodwa ngahluleka ukuphinde ngimubuyisele lagcina sekungelami kodwa angiligqoki uma ngiya eskate park ngoba angazi noma washona yini kungaze kuthiwe wabulawa imina (I did not steal the cap but I reserved it for him so as to give it back, but I could not. I do not wear this cap when I go to the skate park because I do not know whether he died or not: I don't want to be suspected of being a murderer.).

Though very dark-skinned in complexion, Siphelele, widely known as Ndlebe in his neighbourhood, says he hates the sun, which is the reason he has a wide range of caps.

The swimming shorts were given to him by a white friend of his who resides in Westville. They attended the same Berea West Primary School in Westville before Siphelele 'lowered the standards' and went back to study the secondary level at Chesterville Government Secondary School. Siphelele would visit and sleep at his unnamed white friend's home for days, but his friend only came once to Chesterville: to a ceremony in Siphelele's home. The white man, who was scared to be with Africans, could not come to Chesterville because of the stories he had heard about Chesterville as a mischievous place full of violence and gangsterism.

The takkies, too, also do not belong to him; nor do the socks. He dispossessed the takkies from his brother, Nkululeko, who lives in Marianridge near Pinetown.

Siphelele, who matriculated in 2013, performs comedy all over

KwaZulu-Natal. He is a typical 'bourgeoisie' or 'coconut', to employ the township lingo. He is the type who jumped the township queue as he attended a multiracial school in primary, can play skateboards, and speaks the American English: a staunch hip-hop fan who wears caps usually worn by the African Americans.

Education is the key to success
By Nomvula Sikakane

The song has been sung, the stories told, but the people have never met those who colour their tongues when they speak of our history. They focus on the youth, claiming that they have taken the wrong path, forgetting that the road was carved with bad experiences.

James Zithulele Ntuli is one example of those who have taken the wrong direction but with help and determination was led back to the light. He recalls the mistakes he has made over the years and also the inspiration for claiming back his life. Ntuli was born in Blackhurst Estate, which was famously known as *Blekhess* five years before the construction of Chesterville in 1943.

As I walk into the house, I am greeted by two elderly men and a woman, quenching their thirst and deep in conversation. When they see me, their faces light up and the woman asks, jokingly, 'Are you married? Because you look respectable, like a young *makoti*.' I smile, not sure what to say. The room is friendly and clean except for a few bottles and cups on the table. There are groceries on the lounge table. Ntuli had just come back from collecting his pension.

From the two men sitting on the sofa, it is not too hard to tell who Ntuli is, as he is smartly dressed and still has that charming look I noticed in the photo. Dressed in his Sunday best for no special occasion, one can tell that Ntuli has always been a lover of fashion and of dressing smart. It is amazing how, 50 years later, the man still takes fashion and dressing well serious.

We joke around a bit as I take out his picture. He smiles when I show it to him, tilts his head to the side, a bit shy and in disbelief. 'Can you recognise me? Can you tell this is me?' He chuckles, almost like finding his voice, and then relaxes as he signals that I should hand the photo over to him. He passes it around, sort of boasting about how he looked as a young man.

He leans back, takes a deep breath and starts talking about the days of the photo. This picture was made in a studio in Butterworth, a town in the Eastern Cape famously known as Gcuwa, between 1956 and 1959 while Ntuli was studying at Bethel Training College. The picture is of Ntuli wearing a white suit, posing with his leg on an object to show how cool he is. 'Those days my suit was in style and that pose was trending: I had to be seen doing the same.' The man of style reminisced about what life was like during those days when one had to find a way to make the most of the little one had.

I ask him what the occasion was as he was smartly dressed in the picture. With a distant look in his eyes, as if reliving those days in his head, he said that the way you dressed mattered in those days: you had to stand out. 'You had to look good whenever you went out so that the other ethnic group would see that your group had style. Going to studios for pictures was a norm – almost a habit that everyone had. Being far from home, you had to send some pictures to your family so they

would know that you were alive and well.'

Life was tough for Ntuli in 1959: he had to return home because his parents could no longer afford to further his education and 13 years later he found himself imprisoned for the first time. 'I was jailed for ten years; it was nothing political, I just got mixed up with the wrong crowd,' he said.

Even in prison, education remained at the centre of Ntuli's life. Back then, it was either education or politics. While serving his sentence, he continued studying and received a carpentry certificate, but what he enjoyed most about prison was the opportunity to teach his fellow inmates. 'I loved teaching; that was what kept me going inside,' he said.

In 1975, Ntuli was released from prison and was shocked to learn how the quality of education had deteriorated. Ntuli said his mother, who received a 1910 quality education, could teach people even though she just had her Standard 3 while a 1970s student with a Standard 3 could not write a coherent sentence.

'Back then, parents were very much involved in our upbringing and in educating their kids. By the time one went to school, one could write one's name and most necessary words. Today's kids are sent off to school without the basics, so the teachers have to bring them up to speed,' said Ntuli.

He also asked: 'If you can't teach your children, how do you expect the teachers to cope with them?'

If Ntuli had his way, he would bring back the kind of education he and his mother received as it would better benefit today's South African youth. 'I sit with the youth today, and if I had to compare a current Grade 12 student to a Standard 6 graduate in my day, the matriculant would look like a minor.'

Remembering Nompumelelo
Octavia Ngidi
By Nomvula Sikakane

As a young Black woman in South Africa, looking at this picture I feel inspired to see this woman graduate. I felt an urge and a desire to ask her a few questions about the day and what it felt like to be in that gown. Pride and joy are written all over her face, but one cannot help but wonder who the woman inside the gown is.

Nompumelelo Octavia Ngidi was born on the first day of July in 1966. Growing up in a poor home and being raised by a single mother, she was determined to get something more out of life. She knew the way to do that was through education. 'I told my kids from an early age that your guide to a better life is your studies, so they always knew that education would give them their big break in life.'

It was in 1998 that Nompumelelo graduated from King Edward Nursing College. 'I had a sense of joy and pride knowing that my daughter had made her dream come true, which was also my dream: Nompumelelo had lived my life for me because I could not.'

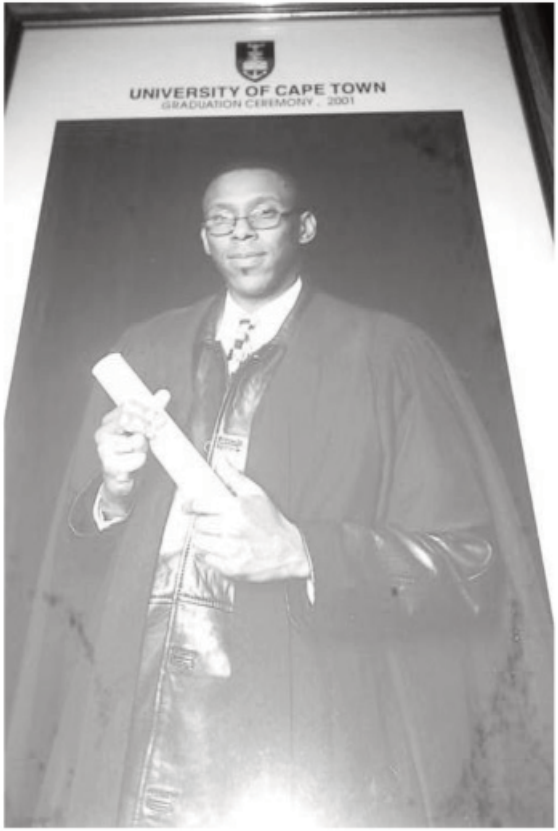
When words like that escape a mother's mouth, one always wonders if the child was ever permitted to be herself, or if she became who she is because of her mother. Nompumelelo became, to her mother, the image of a life she had always envisaged, with the freedom she had always dreamed of.

Nompumelelo's story is told by her mother, Elizabeth Khanyile, who, in her late 70s, is still active and does her own garden. As I take out the picture of Nompumelelo, Gogo Elizabeth smiles and takes a deep breath as if trying to block an emotion.

This picture was made at a pop-up studio at the City Hall on the best day of her daughter's life: she had achieved what she had always wanted. Wishing to become, and then being a nurse came naturally to Nompumelelo as she was a caring and loving individual Her love was not only felt by her family but also extended to the members of the community. 'My daughter had a good heart, she loved people and made sure to contribute to the wellbeing of everyone in any way she could.'

The picture is of Nompumelelo in her graduation attire. She looks happy but uncertain. She is holding her qualification. She had always wanted to be a nurse and now she finally was one, but she does not look like a happy graduate. As I speak to her mother about the life of her daughter and what she stood for, her brother, Mazwi always takes centre stage. It is almost as if she didn't know what to say about her daughter, which somewhat explains the uneasy look on Nompumelelo's face when that picture was taken.

Growing up in a very patriarchal system must have made Nompumelelo uncomfortable in her own skin: an achiever but uncertain of her worth as a woman. Nompumelelo, even though raised by a single mom, was always seen and not heard. Her features in the picture have an unsettling poise: they are those of a graduate who is unsure of her place.



Relationships beyond the grave:
a story of pride and joy
By Nomvula Sikakane

A life that started in the cracks of darkness is one that has been the brightest of all. Mazwi Khanyile, a law graduate from Cape Town University, has a life story of pride and joy as his mother Elizabeth testifies.

The late Mazwi was born on a faithful Monday morning, 6 January 1964. 'I can still remember that day: a bright, beautiful day.' At the time, his family were barely getting by, but the joys of a mother holding her son brushed all those money worries away.

'Mazwi was always brilliant, smart, and handsome too,' his mother says.

Life was tough raising three kids, and being a single parent is no child's play. Straight after matric, Mazwi worked at supermarkets and tended small jobs to take the load off his mother.

'I don't know how he met Willies Mchunu; I am guessing through one of his part-time supermarket jobs or maybe his secret involvement in the African National Congress.' Elizabeth felt that her son kept his affiliation private so that she would not be scared.

'My son loved the ANC, even though he did not brag but rather kept it an unspoken truth. I later found out that he was chairman at some point, but I am not sure of what, but it was a position in the ANC,' she said.

Soon after Mazwi met Mchunu, he joined the National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa (Numsa) and moved to Mpangeni. He lived there until 1995 when the union closed down other branch offices to only have one office situated in Durban. 'He lost his job,' said Elizabeth.

For two years, Mazwi stayed at home until he got a job at the Department of Labour. 'He always complained that there was not enough money,' said Elizabeth. In 1999, Mazwi started working at the Department of Economic Development under Dr Mike Mabuyakhulu and that is when he could afford to further his education. Mazwi now had the opportunity to further his studies. He enroled at the University of Cape Town in the year 2000 to study law but still kept his job.

The photo that Elizabeth shares is of Mazwi on his graduation day. He is a tall young man, dressed to impress, holding his qualification in his hands and he has that little smirk: it is not a broad smile, but it is felt. Mazwi is wearing a long-sleeved leather jacket and his glasses seem to say 'I have arrived'. This style must have been planned: this is how an academic looks like; it is what he has always wanted and, yes, he has arrived.

'I was very happy; I have no words to describe how happy I was. I was a nobody in my community and there was no way I could have raised a graduate.' Overjoyed at her son's graduation, Elizabeth did not know that it would only be a year before her joy turned into sorrow as Mazwi died in February 2003.

Elizabeth believes Mazwi became the man he was because he

understood the circumstances he grew up under. ‘It is what made him become the man he was; he was always appreciative of how I raised them and of the hard times. He was proud of who and what he had become,’ said Elizabeth as she wiped tears rolling down her cheeks.

There is a lot the ANC owes us
but they have forgotten we exist
By Nomvula Sikakane

The promise of a better life after the apartheid era motivated a lot of people to join the South African liberation struggle. Oppression, segregation and being treated like slaves in one's motherland gave everybody the push and a clear reason as to why one should oppose the status quo. Indeed, it was something that was within reach; hence, sacrifice was something that everyone could offer.

Little did the masses know that it was the plate in the cupboard that was going to grace the table while the pot that was subjected to the heat in the process of cooking would be tossed aside into the sink. That is how Mndaweni, a Chesterville resident, was feeling right now.

Stanley Mndaweni is a 60-year-old, staunch African National Congress (ANC) activist who sacrificed most of his life fighting for the freedom that South Africans proudly enjoy. Mndaweni is one of many people in Chesterville who fought in the liberation struggle but has not yet felt or enjoyed the fruits of his labour, 20 years into democracy. Mndaweni was working as a liaison between comrades in South Africa and Swaziland and other neighbouring countries.

Walking into the house, I smell an aroma: someone is cooking in the kitchen. Mndaweni is preparing a meal. 'Breakfast,' he says. He tells me and my companion to wait outside as the interview is going to take place in the thatched tuck shop that adjoins his house.

He gives me two pictures from his album; he only has three anyway; the other one is recent, and I quickly disqualify it. He looks at me and back to his photo and says, 'Back in my days, before I got sick like this.' The photos are of Baba Mndaweni as a good-looking young man, full of life and happy, a complete opposite to the man standing in front of me, a man, frail and unhappy.

The picture was made in the early 80s in Chesterville. Mndaweni is not sure where he was going or what the occasion was, but he remembers those shoes were every man's desire: 'Crockett and Jones'. What Mndaweni remembers about those days is the cruelty of apartheid: when the Boers would come, house-to-house, threatening and killing people, and also the Black opposition parties killing each other. 'A lot of people fled Chesterville because of that. I can still smell the tear gas and the gunshots that left my brother-in-law mentally unstable.'

The photo was made at night. Mndaweni is not looking straight at the camera. 'That was the pose back then. You didn't want people to think you were camera ready: you just pretended as if they took the picture without notifying you.' Mndaweni looks smart with his crisp white shirt, beige pants and brown Crockett and Jones. He is dressed to impress; there is no worry in his eyes, or the sad impression he gives when talking about the happenings of those days.

The ANC brought the oppressed together under its wings; one

of the ideologies that it spoke of was camaraderie. Comradeship was the concept of making lives better for all inhabitants of this richly blessed country, but it never came into existence for some. Mndaweni nods his head, trying to wipe a sad expression from his face as he says, 'I see some of my comrades in parliament and in leadership positions, and I am stuck here, waiting still.

'Looking at the broader picture, the elite are the ones who are enjoying the large portions of the cake; they tend to forget that if it were not for the masses who took part in the struggle, this democracy would not have been realised. It pains me so much to see how the ANC leadership is taking us for granted. We too are supposed to be enjoying the fruits of our hard labour, but these are just dreams now,' Mndaweni adds with disappointment and sadness in his eyes.

'As the ANC cadres who participated in the liberation struggle, we feel we are neglected; we are living in absolute poverty. The youth have it good, I would say; they are the ones who know what democracy feels like. The people who are supposed to be celebrated as the modern-day heroes have been thrown away into the dustbins of history.' Mndaweni stares blankly at the ground and whispers, 'HISTORY, that is all we are today. The contributions we made to the liberation of this country have since been forgotten.'

A liberation veteran has since been reduced to a one-time hero who cannot afford a decent meal, medical attention or access to a special pension to keep going. 'I run a small tuck shop; hardly make enough to keep me going. The ANC only know I exist when they need my vote: they call me now and then during campaigns just to get my vote, but when it is time for them to return the favour, they are not reachable. If only one could turn back the hands of time and see to the promises we were given, I believe life would be far better for us all, the unsung heroes,' Mndaweni concludes.

Music in the air
By Nomvula Sikakane

I am late, feeling panicky, nervous, and a bit disappointed at myself because I had made a morning appointment at 10:30 with Nonhlanhla Wanda and I am only opening her gate an hour-and-a-half later. I glance at my watch one more time. I assure myself that all will be well, hoping and silently praying that she is not mad. I am not alone and that gives me a bit of strength.

I knock on her door and her smile calms my nerves, 'Welcome', she says. She quickly puts her food to the side to formally welcome us into her home. We have a little chat before we get to the day's programme. She excuses herself and goes to the bedroom to fetch her photo album, which is more like her wall of fame. It is neatly stuffed with pictures and newspaper articles.

She hands me two framed pictures to choose from, and without paying much attention to the album, one of them stands out. It is a photo of Nhla holding a microphone, and one can tell she was blasting a fine tune.

A bubbly soul with radiant energy, Nhla smiles when I choose that photo, and tells me '*zikhona ezinye njalo izithombe*', meaning: 'there are other photos if you want, but I have made my pick.'

In the midst of apartheid, while everybody else was fighting and joining the armed struggle, Nhla was taking up arms in the struggle to alleviate poverty and uplift young artists in underprivileged communities.

Nhla's passion for music started back in the early 1970s when her father, a jazz fanatic, would make her listen to jazz. 'I grew up on jazz. I grew up listening to Caiphus Semenya, Letta Mbulu, Mahalia Jackson, Sarah Vaughn and the like.' The smile on Nhla's face tells me she is 'in the moment' as we speak. She adds that, when in high school, she would sing to her school, class by class, and the students would throw five and ten cent coins to her in appreciation of her talent.

She looks at the picture again and starts sharing her best moments. The photo was made in Philadelphia at the Blue Note jazz club in the United States sometime between 1991 and 1993. It is a picture of Nhla on stage with the band. Behind her, you can see a person holding a string guitar. The expression on Nhla's face says 'I feel the music'. There are lights on in the background, confirming that it was a nightclub.

Nhla was on tour with the Peace Train project, which was looking for people of different origins and diverse ethnic groups to come together, uplift each other and fight the apartheid struggle through music.

When the time came for Nhla to further her studies, she didn't know whether to pursue music or another career because she was not sure if music would make her a sustainable living. Instead, she decided on teaching, and after graduating, Nhla went to Technikon Natal to do a six-month classical jazz course.

After two years of teaching in Highflats, Nhla decided to quit her job because she wanted to study jazz at the University of

KwaZulu-Natal; but the odds were against her and all doors closed on her. 'The system of apartheid set Black people up for failure when they tried to enter universities back then.' Nhla was told that she should do opera for three years to qualify to do jazz, and to pay a fee of R6,000 up front, but she could not afford that, and that is how her dream of doing professional jazz failed.

When one door closes, another opens, and it was after that rejection that Nhla met Sharon Katz and Meryl Cohen, leaders of the Peace Train project. 'The Peace Train helped me a lot, and I got to do what I love most: help people through music!' The Peace Train took over 500 kids, and 200 of those kids got scholarships from different sponsors who came on board. Through music, the Peace Train managed to spread the message of unity and peace while touring with Ladysmith Black Mambazo just after the release of Nelson Mandela. The Peace Train travelled nationally and internationally, securing sponsors to fund the kids' education.

Since the Peace Train, Nhla has performed with different groups and is continuing her journey to uplift young, up-and-coming musicians. It was during the days of the photo that Nhla discovered her deep passion of helping people through music. 'I have created a space where young artists, professionals, students and self-trained musicians come together to learn from each other.' Nhla also serves as a career counsellor for the young artists, giving out advice on what they can do with their talent.

Culture and religion
By Talent Buthelezi

In the image are two young ladies who appear to be in their late teens in a setting that seems to be a typical Heritage Day celebration in South Africa. The elements in the image are contradictory because the African culture is presented in a Christian environment, indicated by Christ's cross on the wall.

The cross is also featured with a chalkboard just below it, which suggests that this might have been a missionary school. The photographer and the subjects knew the image was going to be made as indicated by the posture of the young lady on the right, regardless of the camera-shyness of the other on the left.

The two girls are wearing African clothes; however, the girl on the left wears flip-flops and her friend on the right has jewellery in the form of earrings. These two elements contradict the African culture and display something I'd term as the 'modern retake' of the African culture where Western clothes are incorporated into African attire.

Ahead of the subjects is a desk with bowls on top filled with African cuisine.

The image introduces us to the hugely debatable topic of culture (African culture) and religion.

Do these two elements conflict? And what about the setting: the school where the image was made? Read on and find out what the interviewee thinks about that.

The image was made in the late 1990s after the fall of the apartheid regime. It was during Heritage Day celebrations at St. Anne's Catholic Church in Chesterville.

In the image are Mafihle Zondi and her friend and church mate, Nuh Bonnet, who were just halfway through adolescence. Zondi is on the right-hand side in the image, and she could not hold back her happiness on this day as shown by her dazzling smile to the camera.

She was wearing eye-catching Shembe attire while Bonnet (on the left) had an *ibhayi* (African cloth) fashionably wrapped around her body.

Unique fashion like that in the image represented the diversity of African culture in Chesterville. Cultural dissimilarities were embraced as a source of unity among the people, and the community was able to blend and survive together, regardless of this potentially divisive factor.

During the interview, when I pointed out that she had negatively reflected the tradition since Shembe women do not wear jewellery with their outfits, and older or married women wear an *isicholo* (a hat), Zondi stated that she had borrowed her Shembe attire.

'I did not have clothes to wear for the Cultural Day celebration. On Sunday morning, I borrowed the clothing from my neighbor; however, she did not tell me how to wear the clothes. I remember receiving them and rushing off to church,' she said.

Interestingly, Zondi is Catholic and, despite that, she and her

family were proud to participate in this special gathering, which has predominant African traditional connotations in Chesterville.

Zondi believes that African culture and Christianity cannot contradict. 'The diversity of cultures makes the people of Chesterville stonger,' she said.

Black people in Chesterville celebrated their heritage, even during the apartheid era, regardless of the thorny atmosphere escalated by the government, which feared the important culture would play in unifying the Black majority.

Before 1995, 24 September was Shaka Day in KwaZulu-Natal. It commemorated the formidable legacy of the Zulu King, Shaka Zulu. Zondi said the celebrations played a significant role in celebrating people whose culture has almost been diluted by a century of oppression.

'The day was filled with festivities with the blending of different cultures. The youth at our church wore dynamic African clothes; however, it is interesting that we also unintentionally represented the Western Culture as you pointed out,' she said.

Even more, Heritage Day inspired a peaceful mind in young people. Zondi believes that these commemorations did more than observe African pride. Such a gathering was also an opportunity for the elderly to make young people aware of the challenges the community and the family were experiencing in a new South Africa. Zondi recognises the pivotal role that Heritage Day plays in the Chesterville community. Heritage day grows bigger by the year, and she is proud to share this part of her life with her children because it made her youth exciting.

'Heritage Day is the only day when we go back to our roots and celebrate being Black – something that was seen as a disgrace in the past. The holiday is one of the meaningful and treasured days for me as I get to educate everyone about my culture,' she said.

Zondi's album presents an opportunity for posterity for her children who can read a lifetime of history through hundreds of images. They learn of their grandparents and connect to life in Chesterville by deriving meaning from pictures. Still today, she makes photographs for her family, which she believes will play a significant role for her children.

When asked why she gathers images and how she feels about her album, Zondi smilingly said that she wants to leave a photographic memory for her children as a remembrance, honouring her life.

'Images will confirm my existence. I want my kids to look at them and remember me. They will not be able to hold me physically, but they will have these pictures of me, and that, I think, is amazing,' she said.

The undying love of fashion
By Talent Buthelezi

In the image is a young boy with a firm look. The little one is located in a garden, possibly at his home, which gives the image a peaceful ambiance. His eyes are looking directly into the camera, which says that he is confident about having this picture taken and that he is a lover of life and aspires to grow up into a well-mannered young gentleman. The look on his face, together with his outfit, also indicates that he is an old soul trapped in a young man's body. His posture is facing the photographer, hand in his pocket, and one foot is slightly ahead of the other – a pose that was popular in the olden days, or so I discovered reading other photographs taken in the past. Dressed in formal clothes, namely a shirt and pants with the shirt neatly tucked in, his 'shirt-formal tradition' was the order of the day for him while growing up. His shoes (at his ankles) are covered by his pants, which says that the pants might not be his size and, in addition to that, he has the pants above his waist around the middle stomach area – something nowadays termed as high-waist pants.

Anxious to conduct the interview, I enter the Khuzwayo home (the boy's household). The boy's aunt, Greta Khuzwayo, sits on the couch, and we begin.

'Unfortunately, my boy cannot join us, he is now at a better place – home,' she says. Greta elaborates on the death of the young boy she identifies as Bonginkosi 'Snco' Khuzwayo – *inganeka* Auntie (Auntie's boy).

After his mother's death when he was only two, Bonginkosi Khuzwayo was raised by his aunt in her home in Chesterville in Road 6. Bonginkosi was later laid to rest after being killed when he was 21 years old by an opposition force in Chesterville, a few houses away from his home during the apartheid era.

'The past,' she says, 'was a devastating time for every family who had young boys in the area because their households were often raided by policemen, which instilled fear into their lives.'

The 'young boy' is not so young as I discover that he was born in 1965, so this year he'd have been 49 years of age: 28 years older than me, suggesting that he'd probably be more like a father or uncle to me. However, I am astonished by the photographic timeline as this image gives evidence to the history and evolution of photography in my country, South Africa.

Revealing the image, Greta is instantly joined by her daughter and both share joyful smiles. They state that the photo brings back a happy remembrance of Bonginkosi.

When the picture was made, Bonginkosi was at his home in the garden. 'The garden was the family's favourite place, and we'd take turns working in it,' said Greta.

The family doesn't recall the exact day or date; however, they state that when the picture was made it was just another day and that he wasn't dressed smartly for any occasion.

'I had dressed Bonginkosi after bathing him, and a photographer walked past our street, and we called him to take

photographs of the family,' she said.

Greta states that fashion, as well as photography, was a huge thing back then. 'People knew how to dress and would dress up in formal wear for no occasion. It was our thing,' she said.

Greta added that wearing pants above the waist around the upper stomach area was a trend in the 60s.

Curious as a cat, I asked the family how they felt about this image and other images in their album, and Greta responded by saying: 'Some of our pictures were lost as we moved from one section to the next here in Chesterville, but the images we do have bring us an abundance of joy, love and happiness. I have my children's life in stages, made from when they were young, and the images ascend with their age as they grow, which is a great feeling.'

The facial expression on Bonginkosi's face is described as his everyday look: he was shy, very quiet and reserved.

'Bonginkosi loved clothes and adopted his style from the community: everybody dressed the same. Before his untimely death he had started working at Musgrave Centre as a cleaner so that he could afford to buy all the clothes he desired,' she said.

When asked what a day in the life of Bonginkosi would entail, Greta says that he'd be dressed smartly, super clean and be by himself.

First graduate in
Chesterville
By Talent Buthelezi

Six people are seated in a studio in this picture. The curtain makes it evident that this is a studio image, as do the vintage wooden chairs. The subjects resemble each other, suggesting that they might have been siblings or other relatives of some kind. All of them are well dressed in formal clothes, with two out of the six wearing glasses, which gives them an instant professional look: as if they are academics. Glasses play a different role for me, especially when reading pictures because, when I see glasses, I instantly associate them with intelligence and an advanced or professional career and fail to reason that the person in glasses merely has a vision problem. Two out of the three subjects seated are wearing wedding rings, which suggests that the two ladies are married. The gentleman in the middle wears no ring. Some of the women in the image are wearing berets.

Wearing a beret isn't only a fashion statement for African women, they also symbolise or suggest that you are married, and are respecting your husband and the community.

The bearer of the image is Linda Mokoena, the daughter of Gladys Gratitude Nhlabathi (the lady seated in front, on the left, wearing glasses).

I discovered that the interview with Linda would be one-sided as all the people in the picture are deceased, so what is reported on is what she vividly remembers being said by her mum; however, I was very excited to put her memory to the test. Named after her late aunt Linda Nhlabathi, Linda Mokoena is a 72-year-old woman from Chesterville, and she was happy to reminisce about the image with me.

Linda's mother, aunts and uncles are portrayed in the photograph made at a studio in Bloemfontein. Her mother and her mother's siblings were there for the weekend attending another sibling's funeral. Unfortunately, Linda does not remember the name of the deceased; however, she states that the deceased was male and was her uncle.

The Nhlabathi siblings were all teachers by profession and worked in various provinces around the country.

On the day the image was made, they had decided to have one photograph taken with all of them in it as they realised after their brother's death that they did not have one.

'This picture was taken a long time ago. I was young when it was taken and the information I am giving you regarding it are just bits and pieces I remember from what my mum had shared,' she said.

According to Linda, her mother Gladys was one of the 'first female Black graduates' in South Africa, and she graduated from the University of Fort Hare as a teacher.

Gladys (Linda's mother) taught Standard 10 (Grade 12) in Groutville.

Linda says that her mother was a teacher by nature and a master of English and that she would often correct one's English

when speaking. 'My mother loved correcting people when they spoke English. She used to correct them and make them say the word she had taught them again, or make them repeat the entire sentence with the proper command of the English language,' said Linda.

Gladys and her siblings had a great relationship: they loved each other very much and would do almost anything to help each other.

'I remember how they'd call each other for hours. They were very close and loved one another,' she said.

In 1993, Linda lost her mother to the silent killer: hypertension. 'I was devastated when she passed away. I was 51 years old and I cried a lot,' she said.

Linda added that her mother was terrified of the colour red and that she would cry when she saw it. Her anxiety escalated as she wanted to join her church's women's league but couldn't because the ladies in her church wore red uniforms.

'When my mum was nervous she used to cry a lot, and I'd want to help her but she was too fidgety and didn't want anyone near her,' said Linda.

Throughout the interview, Linda the retired nurse stressed the importance of education and how it unlocks every door in life. 'My mother taught valuable life lessons such as respect and the importance of education. She motivated me to do my best at school and I owe her my success,' she said.

The legacy of Chamberlain
Jeremiah Nakasa
By Talent Buthelezi

In the image is a man with a pen in his hand. The subject seems to be writing and is comfortable with whatever he is putting down. The expression on his face says that he has his thinking cap on as he looks knowledgeable and is concentrating.

Dressed to the nines in his black suit, shirt and tie, with the tie placed at the centre, neatly aligned with his esophagus, this is a man of prestige.

Pictured in the photograph is Chamberlain Jeremiah Nakasa, father of the fallen hero, Nathaniel Nakasa – affectionately known as Nat Nakasa. My interviewee, Gladys Nakasa Maphumulo, the daughter of Chamberlain Nakasa, welcomes me into her home but first and foremost, before we start with the interview, Gladys requests a prayer.

With the prayer done and dusted we get into the interview.

Gladys is the only female out of the five Nakasa children. Her father, Chamberlain, was born in Lusikisiki in the Eastern Cape (Pondoland).

When I reveal the image to an enthusiastic Gladys, she says, 'This is the first time I'm seeing this picture of my father.' Shocked but excited, she calls her son to show him the photograph she has in her hand of his grandfather.

Gladys describes her father as a handsome, well-groomed gentleman. 'He dressed formally and always looked smart and elegant,' she said.

Nakasa worked as a typesetter for a printing company called Indian Views. The company was located in town, and he is said to have loved his job. Gladys smiles, nods and hand gestures as she talks about her dad and his job. 'He believed that people should work, especially young people, as an occupied mind defeats boredom and being mischievous,' said Gladys.

Immediately after finishing that sentence, Gladys asks to be excused and goes to the next room. Upon her return, she has a duplicated document of a book titled: *Ivangeli lokuz'Akha – The Gospel of Self-Help*. The book was written by none other than Chamberlain Nakasa himself.

The book is motivational and contains various methods on how communities can tackle poverty.

'My father had the RDP vision a long time ago. He would call boys in our community, Chesterville, and ask them to build houses using corrugated iron,' she said.

Gladys states that her father believed that this was a good method for combating crime in the community.

Tempted to compare Chamberlain Nakasa with his son Nat Nakasa, I pull back and let Gladys do my dirty work.

Gladys doesn't compare the two gentlemen but rather points out the similarities between them. 'My father and Nat were both talented in that they were writers and visionaries who always thought ahead,' she said.

Chamberlain died of diabetes in the 1970s at McCords Hospital.

Meleko! Meleko!
By Takudzwa Makoni

Selby Goba's warning pierced the crisp evening air, sending people scrambling for cover. Moments later, the heavily armoured police van snuck around the corner and opened fire indiscriminately, tearing to pieces the door frame Selby had thrown himself and his mother through, split seconds before. Another evening in apartheid-era Chesterville.

Gwendoline's well-worn face wrinkles into a smile at the memory. 'My brother was a very strong, very brave man. I miss him very much.'

Gwendoline Busisiwe Goba was born in Chesterville in 1944. Her father, a priest, moved their family of ten from Mayville in the early 40s and Gwendoline has lived there ever since. She has witnessed every incarnation of the town; from its birth as the most basic of housing for Durban's detritus: the Black, often seasonal workers and labourers, to what it has become today: a vibrant, diverse, fully formed community.

The photograph, taken in the 60s, is of a young Selby walking down Durban's West Street. Shirt neatly tucked in, and with his 'best belt' on, Selby is photographed during his work as a chemist's messenger. It is important to note that jobs with access to potentially illegal material (drugs) were very rarely trusted to Black people, and this serves, perhaps, as a testament to the status the young man had garnered.

The quality of the storefronts and the fashionably dressed white woman at the edge of the frame infers that, on this particular street, Selby was very much 'the other', and he almost pre-emptively brandishes his chemist's notebook, warding off the inevitable demands for his pass book.

Gwendoline has kept this photo for over 50 years and cannot help but smile every time she glances at it.

'Selby was a loud person, always ready with a joke, and always ready to help those in need, even if it was just to give a warm smile and a friendly word,' she shares.

'Even through many of the difficulties we experienced as a family, he could be counted on to lift all our spirits. He was always well liked in the community, even as a boy, and as he grew older he gained respect. He cared deeply for his family, and cared deeply for his community.'

A street photographer took this photograph unprompted, and this unguarded moment shows no glimpse of the gregarious, engaging young man that Selby, by all accounts, was.

There is a solidity to his shoulders and a purpose to his stride: as stoic as the mannequins he walks past, not bothering even to glance at the fancies he cannot afford in the shops he would be barred from entering. No matter how funny your jokes, or how gainfully employed you were, this was apartheid South Africa and you were still Black.

That serves, perhaps, as an apt metaphor for Chesterville: from the outside looking in. Chesterville, with its 99 per cent African population, was seen as imposing and impenetrable: a

conglomeration of 'Blackness'. But the individuals were, and are, exactly that: unique people with personalities, families, hopes, dreams and desires.

And memories.

'I remember back then; things were much, much harder than they are now. You could not even leave your area to look for work without permission. Many nights the whole family, all ten of us, would sleep outside in the cold because the landlord was allowed to lock us out the second we were late with the rent. I remember that on many of those nights Selby was the one who kept our spirits up and assured us things would get better.'

Selby Goba died of cancer in December of 1989. He is survived by his sister Gwendoline and two daughters.

Social scenes, fashion trends, love and band members
By Zimasa Magudu

It is a dreary and rainy Sunday morning as, with a photo in my hand, I make my way to Chesterville to meet with Mam'Bathoko Makhathini, one of the women in the photograph. Prior to this opportunity I had studied the picture, and now I would be sitting face-to-face with the subject more than 20 years after it was made, revisiting the moment captured, together.

Before speaking to Mam'Bathoko about the image, I first handed it over for her to look at, and as she looked at the photograph I observed her, and I watched her silently play back through all the events that time had made her endure before and after the photo was made. After a few moments, she raised her hand to cover her mouth with her eyes open wide, and she gave the picture back, sharing a small chuckle on the side. 'I don't even wear earrings anymore because now they catch you and forcefully strip them off, hurting you,' she says, and that makes me wonder what else she has had to let go of.

Sitting before me was a woman so different from the one in the photograph. Change is constant, I thought, but it wasn't only her who had changed, her whole world was different now, and Chesterville was, and still is, a big part of that.

In the photo are two relatively young women, both fashion forward, and one of them is the now 58-year-old Mam'Bathoko Makhathini sitting beside me. The earrings, shoes, clothes, hairstyles and poses of the subjects in the picture spark an interest in the fashions and social scene of the time during which the image was made.

'I used to date a band member, so I had to maintain my appearance to keep my man.'

I learn through Mam'Bathoko that the younger woman on her left in the photograph was her childhood friend, Mbenu Gonya, and yes, it turned out that my judge of her character was on par, for she was indeed as shy, reserved and less 'out there' in reality as she appears to be in the photograph.

'She was younger than me, and she was not married. She was soft, not a forward person like myself. She was taller, though,' said Mam'Bathoko, speaking about her childhood friend.

According to Mam'Bathoko, the photo was made in the mid-1970s and, although she does not remember the exact year, she could still recall that it was after 1974 because that was the year she got married.

'I am already married as I'm standing there,' she says with pride before telling me that, because they were still too young, the pastor who married them forged their documents, hence increasing their ages each by a year or two. She got married in Kwamashu to Mandlenkosi Makhathini, and they had two children, both of whom died at very early ages.

Her story speaks of being a young woman fond of fashion trends and the social scene as a whole, and of finding love and comfort at a very young age and at a time when there was much

unrest, limitations and restrictions in her community due to politics.

She has happy memories of her social life growing up, but the political tension and rivalry took the life of her beloved brother.

'They called him Snico, but his real name was Bongani Khuzwayo, and he was killed by the A-Team.'

Bathoko's brother was a member of the United Democratic Front – the UDF – and political tension between UDF supporters and members of the Chesterville A-Team frequently resulted in attacks against UDF and ANC supporters. The A-Team was a state-sponsored group of Inkatha supporters set up in 1985 in Chesterville to counter civic organisations.

Mam'Bathoko explains that her brother, who was the eldest, was shot while he was hiding and the person who did it was an *impimpi* because his whole family was part of the A-team. She further explains that he has also passed away.

The A-Team was not the only group that made her life difficult: she also had various encounters with the 'Black Jacks'. Arguably one of her worst nightmares, the Black Jacks ensured that they had a record of everyone in an area, and if you were not from that area, you had to get documentation, much like Mam'Bathoko's lodger's permit, which had to get a stamp monthly as she was married. If the documents were not 'renewed', a fine would have to be paid.

'I even went to court. I would get caught, and they would put us in their trucks and take us to their offices, and we would return the following day.'

I eventually asked about the pose that both of the women are striking, with their arms crossed over their chest forming an 'X', and it turns out that they were not Orlando Pirates supporters as I had assumed, but 'just liked the pose'. The two ladies were, in fact, Amazulu Football Club supporters.

'It wasn't much about liking football, it was more about the fun that came with the sport,' explained Mam'Bathoko with a smile. She then told me of 'the good old days' when she would go to watch football matches at Princess Magogo Stadium, hiring a bus for up to three days, having fun and feeling safe with her friends.

Mam'Bathoko and her friends would often visit the studios where they would take pictures much like this particular photograph. The studios were at the Ajmeri Arcade, which is in Grey Street in Durban. The shops in the Grey Street area were also where all the fashion-trending clothing items were bought. Matching outfits were always a must, and the brown shoes worn by Mam'Bathoko were a gift from her grandfather, purchased at one of the stores in the Ajmeri Arcade.

'Life was fun and a lot more affordable then. I was so happy I even lost weight,' she says with a giggle when I ask her how she felt when it was all finally over, and she could somehow live her life without limitations and restrictions. She tells me that, although life was very challenging, they managed to have fun, and there were no financial issues, which she believes are part

of the reason there is so much crime and drug abuse today.

She goes on to tell me how different life is now compared to the era in which she grew up. She tells me that now she attends church and has stopped drinking and cares for her husband who is very ill.

'I still dress up now and then, and I even wear Tommy Takkies to church,' she says, adding that in Chesterville, the grandmothers are still young at heart. I look at her hairstyle, which is a perm, and I note that this is one of the things she has managed to carry through into her new life alongside her husband.

As I listen to Mam'Bathoko, I get the sense that I took her back to a time that she had long since put behind her; but at the end I realise that her heart is content and time has dealt its cause with her, but the memories she has in her heart are priceless.

The knowledgeable gentlemen
By Zimasa Magudu

Well groomed and well dressed: that's the first observation I make as I look at the photograph of two men in suits and sitting on a motorbike holding their cigarettes in the same manner. If you look closer at the black-and-white picture and focus on the faces of these relatively middle-aged gentlemen, you will see how fashionable they are – regardless of their amused look.

'These are the people who were very knowledgeable,' says Pastor Vukile Ngobese, the son of the gentleman with the hat on, on the backseat of the motorbike.

I learn through Pastor Ngobese that the men were Enoch Zamokwakhe Ngobese – with the hat – and his friend Julius Nkosi – who was also the owner of the motorbike the men were posing on. 'They were always together.'

The photograph was made in the late 1960s in Chesterville. Pastor Ngobese tells me that the men were approached by a photographer who asked to take their picture. If you look at the back of it, you will see 3 Lions Durban Photographers, 42 Stamford Hill Road. Pastor Ngobese tells me that the area has not changed much since the image was made.

Their shoes are well polished and shiny, their pants crisp with clean creases, and that was their everyday look. They never left their houses in any attire other than a suit. I learned all this from Pastor Ngobese.

Pastor Ngobese tells me that his father, Enoch, was a teacher at Amanzimtoti Training College, and his friend Julius was a salesman who worked mostly at furniture shops. The motorbike, a Vespa scooter, was unlike ordinary bikes. 'They had more class,' says the pastor, referring to the bike in the photograph with NU on its number plate, which is the code for Westville.

I ask Ngobese about the hat and shoes that his father is wearing in the photo. 'They used to have hatstands,' he tells me. 'The stands would be displayed inside the house, and they would have collections. He took pride in his hats, and it was always our duty as kids to make sure that the hat and the shoes were clean and polished.'

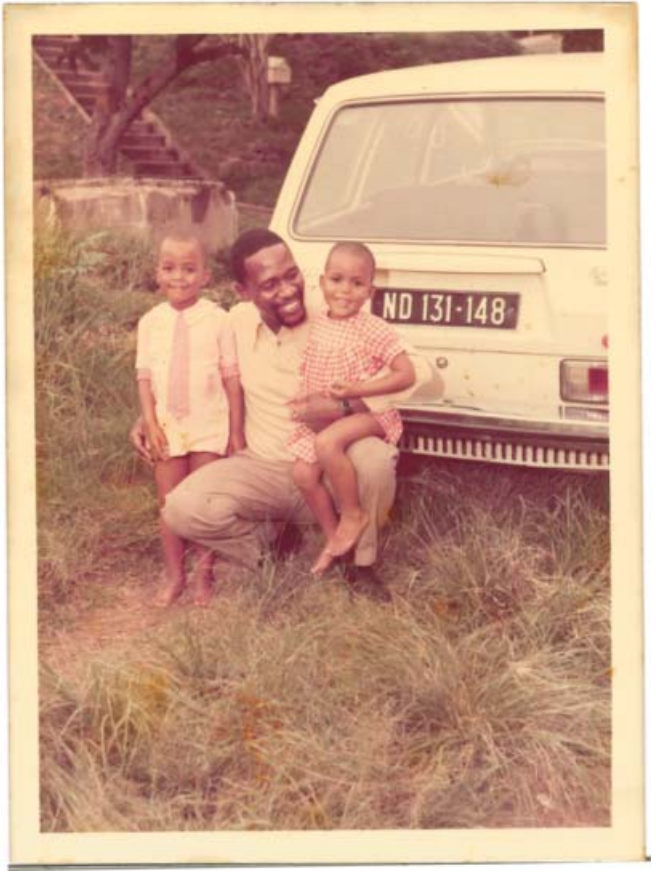
From my conversation with Pastor Ngobese, I learn that his father was very particular and discreet, but very much an entertainer too. 'There was always laughter wherever they were, and other men would gather with them in their formal suits,' Ngobese tells me. The pants were called '20 bottoms' and, according to both the photograph and Ngobese, they were never meant to cover the ankles. One of the labels that Pastor Ngobese can still recall from the 60s is Alba, and he remembers how stains on the suits would be secretly removed with benzene.

'It was a quiet time then, and they were part of the Mayibuye Uprising, which was led by Chief Luthuli, leading up to the 1980s. They were very secretive, and my father never allowed us to clean his briefcase,' Ngobese tells me. He further added that those two gentlemen always had secret documents and their meetings were always held in undisclosed places.

Enoch had five boys and one girl with his wife, Florence Ntombikayise, who was one of the first nurses in Chesterville. He died in 1981. 'The man upstairs is calling me now,' said Enoch, one day before he died of natural causes, according to Ngobese.

'He just woke up, got dressed, had his usual soft porridge and milk, and a few minutes after he had walked out, he came back, sat on the couch and jokingly said, "the man is calling me".'

So these are the people who were very knowledgeable; they followed current affairs. My father always had a newspaper, and on Sundays, he would read the *Sunday Times*. That is according to Ngobese, a proud son of the man that his father was.



Living legend – *umfana wasekasi*
By Zimasa Magudu

He was not just a fan, a supporter, a follower or a player. He was excelling in sports. He was reporting factual information.

Those are the views shared by Pastor Vukile Ngobese about his brother, Sipho Ngobese, who has been labeled by the Ethekwini Municipality as one of the 'living legends'.

'As a brother, he is our role model. He had a learning desire, and that is why the whole family loves reading.'

In a picture before Pastor Vukile Ngobese and me is a gentleman whom I later learn is one of the living legends: Sipho Ngobese. He is with two adorable little girls whom I immediately believe to be his daughters. The photograph is in colour, and the moment captured has a warm atmosphere filled with happiness as all three subjects are smiling and glowing as they embrace each other.

In the photograph, Sipho crouches down with Phindile sitting on his lap, and Gugulethu stands closely beside him, his arms embracing both the little girls. A beautiful family portrait, I think to myself. Behind them is the back of a car with ND initials on its number plate, which leads me to believe that the photograph was taken in a township in or around the Natal Durban area. I learn that the car was a VW station wagon and was Sipho's second car.

The subjects are framed with the beautiful flora of Chesterville: big green trees and grass, and a flight of stairs and a small postbox also appear in the background. The setting leads me to think that the photo was made outside of Sipho's home, and the barefoot children escalate my belief. He is well groomed and well dressed too, and the two girls both have short hair and no shoes on. I immediately see myself in these two girls as a lot of Black parents choose to keep their children's hair short until they grow much older.

According to Pastor Ngobese, the era in which the photograph was made was when there were still only three townships: Chesterville, Lamontville and Boumaville. 'The Afrikaaners called it Lokasi, and that is how it became Kasi. We used to call ourselves *abafana basekasi*.'

When you speak, he digests what you say. He is assertive, not aggressive or passive.

I can't help but smile as I listen to Pastor Vukile talk passionately about his big brother, trying to be as accurate as he can, and this comes through from the hand gestures and slight pauses as he recollects his memories. Pastor Vukile smiles with every memory and thought he recollects of his brother, and I note that his big brother was, and still is, indeed his role model.

I learn from Pastor Ngobese that Sipho also had a son who sadly died in 1994 who was a bodyguard of the prominent Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma. The pastor hasn't much to share about this, and he tells me that it was a very sad moment for his brother.

I learn from Pastor Ngobese that the photograph was made in the mid-1960s with a Yashica camera – 'his first camera' – and

that it was taken by their younger brother Mpumelelo. This piece of information confirms to me that the image was made in their yard. Pastor Ngobese proudly shares with me that his brother was part of the Marian Hill project where the government donated half a million rand towards the translation of the Bible from Greek into isiZulu.

Sipho was born in 1994 and grew up in Chesterville. He attended Umkhumbane Government School, Chesterville Secondary School, St. Francis College in Marianhill and, later, Unisa.

He moved to Ntuzuma when he was working as a sports editor at *Ilanga* newspaper, and he was also married at that time. Pastor Vukile tells me that his brother was one of the people who moved in 1973 to Ntuzuma due to the Outer Ring Road. The people who qualified were married people, and they received four-room houses. Sipho got married around 1965, according to Pastor Vukile.

'He was clear and able to analyse,' says Pastor Ngobese, speaking about his brother's accomplishments. His brother started off as a freelance sports reporter, moved on to being sports editor and later became the chief editor, but politics at that time resulted in him taking a five-year break from the newspaper industry.

'He went through a transition in the mid-80s of five years out of newspapers and got into plumbing,' says Pastor Ngobese, adding that the reason 'was politics within the newspaper industry'.

According to Pastor Ngobese, *Ilanga* newspaper became the newspaper of the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP). The ANC president handed over the ANC to Buthelezi to control while ANC activists went into exile. They gave him the newspaper as well, and it was during this time that Sipho stepped down.

'He was a person who liked being happy, and he avoided fighting because he had a family.'

Sipho's love for sport not only inspired the people around him, but it also paved a pathway career-wise as he contributed tremendously towards sports development in Chesterville as well as towards *Ilanga* Newspaper. He was indeed a living legend.

'He had charisma, the ability to draw people closer to him, but for the Lord. Church and Christianity was a family thing.'

The light of her community
By Zimasa Magudu

Like a little kid in a candy store, spoilt for choice: that is how I felt when I was in Mam'Lucy Rose Ngubane's home.

She takes out a huge stack of files and photo albums, and we spend close to 40 minutes going through old pictures. My attentions falls on a particular photograph, and after another ten minutes of searching through the treasure chest and Mam'Lucy insisting on finding the 'most suitable one', she finally sits back and we have one chosen image before us. It is not the clearest photograph, nor is it the most beautiful of the lot, but I gather that the memories behind it are priceless.

In the picture are about twelve women seated around a table with snacks. They are all Black. Serving the ladies are two white women, and the setting looks like a church or classroom. The photo is in color. Mam'Lucy points to a woman in the corner, and I immediately see the resemblance, and it turns out that it is Mam'Lucy herself. She doesn't remember the names of all the other ladies, but she vividly remembers the occasion.

The photograph was made in 1985, and it was taken by one of the group members. The group, as I later learn, was the Chesterville Self-Help Group: Mam'Lucy's brainchild and hope for many. The occasion is the end-of-year staff lunch for the ladies of the Self-Help Group.

'The duties of the group were to help the needy, and to educate and train members of the community in different aspects,' Mam'Lucy tells me.

I learn through the very well spoken and articulate Mam'Lucy that the white ladies in the photograph were from the Baptist Fellowship in Westville, which is also where the photo was taken.

'If there was anyone who could contribute their skills, they were always encouraged. Sewing, computer lessons, football coaching and car maintenance courses were all made available free of charge for members of the Self-Help Group,' says Mam'Lucy, who also tells me that unity was encouraged, and people from the group were amazed at receiving love, warmth, attention and support because it was during a time that was filled with sadness.

Mam'Lucy was a teacher and the light of her community. She saw a lot of suffering and poverty, and she would often talk about the problems she saw in her community with her friend from church.

'Some parents could not afford to buy school uniforms for their kids, so I had to sew them for my class, but the parents could not pay me. It was tough. I knew some families who would come to my home for food,' she tells me, adding that because she was a teacher, everyone saw her as the light of the community.

'Fortunately, my friend from church, Hazel Bindon, was a social worker. We shared the burden. It came to a point where we couldn't cope, and we knew we had to involve other community members. We became a committee, which was later registered as a fundraising organisation.'

The organisation was registered on 22 February 1982 after it

had been running for a year, and Dr Archibald Gumede – who also became the president of the United Democratic Front in 1983 – insisted on drawing up a constitution.

'There were Christian white leaders who were against the laws of the apartheid regime. Some comrades did not support us due to ignorance. They hated the whites no matter how kind they were. They hated the colour just like some whites hated the Black people.' Mam'Lucy tells me of the challenges the group came across.

'Comrades also hated the police, even the Black ones: they were recognised as puppets because they were working amongst white people. They did not like Mr Ndawo, who was one of our members, because he was a city policeman at the time. He has now resigned.'

Mam'Lucy tells me that they – she and the white Christian ladies – would secretly meet at the 'Berlin Wall' with the group members because one could not enter Westville/Chesterville by car. She further tells me that staunch poles were pitched on the ground, and only domestic workers and garden boys were permitted to walk through as they worked in Westville and lived in Chesterville.

'It helps to be a strong believer in God because you find joy and peace in the spirit of God,' Mam'Lucy tells me when I ask how she managed to get by during those days.

Mam'Lucy tells me of the days when she would help comrades who were running from the police. She would give them female clothes and put makeup and wigs on them, and they would go out into the streets as women, and when she would get called in for questioning by the police, she would just tell them that she was giving testimonies about Christ, and the police would free her.

'I was also secretary for the pastors when they held their meetings,' she tells me, adding that the pastors were also politicians, and the notes that she took during meetings were always hidden or buried underground. The pastors disguised their political interests and would use their positions as pastors to hold meetings that would initially be about church and testimonies, but towards the end, they would go into politics.

'I feel joy, and I'm still smiling today as I was smiling when this picture was taken. It gives me great pleasure to see the good work that has come out of something that I was influential in.'

Man's bravery in a woman
By Sam Mukanya

'In this picture is my mother, Mary Thipe, who was born in 1918 and died in 2000. She was the vice president of the provincial committee and in the ANC Woman's League,' said Mam'Nooi.

She looks closely at the photograph with a look of confidence and assurance. In the picture is the breathtaking beauty of a much younger face than that now in front of me: one filled with wrinkles but still that of a strong and beautiful woman.

When I asked her when the photo was taken, she exclaimed '*eish*' with a smile and called one of her grandchildren, who also could not give all precisions on the date.

'I remember that this picture was taken in the late 1990s by a journalist who was interested in her story as her grandson, my son, was coming home from exile,' said Mam'Nooi.

'Life was not easy before this time arrived as the family were pro-ANC, and remember that my daughter, my brother, and my sister's son were injured as the apartheid government was using some Africans to watch over us and sometimes to do evil to our families.'

The beret on her head was just an ordinary beret: it had no connections to the ANC. During those times in exile, there were no uniforms to identify who was from which camp, but those came after 1994.

She was banned for five years. Hence, she had to report to the Cato Manor police station every Monday; another period of five years followed, which was a period of house arrest. She could not stay with more than five persons inside, and she could not go anywhere without reporting to the police station.

It was during that time that Albert Luthuli died, and she was forbidden to attend the funeral, so I had to go on her behalf.

'My sister and I joined the ANC movement in mid-1950 just to support our mother. She had signed up after she got married. Our father was not an ANC member, but he allowed our mother to attend ANC meetings wherever and whenever she wanted to,' said Mam'Nooi.

Mother was born in Matatiele. She was a fighter: a very brave woman who joined the ANC movement to fight for freedom. She had never been a soldier, and none of her children were soldiers, only her grandson, but she was involved and in charge of recruiting the youth to make sure that the MK had fighters. To make that happen, she would ask people who owned cars to take the boys and girls to the beach, and then, on their way, near the Melmoth area next to Ulundi, the driver would drop those who were interested, with their guide, and they would go and join the ANC camp. On one of these occasions, the daughter of one of the drivers also become an MK soldier.

Our mother was very strong and never gave up. One day in the early 60s, she was on the front page of the *Daily News* with a bloody T-shirt because she had beaten up a white policeman. She was a woman of consciousness. She would organise women and take them to go and fight their men who were drinking in

what we called the Beer Hall. The Beer Hall was part of a municipal strategy to make the men drunk so they would forget about the struggle. So the women would attack their men with sticks, fight them, and sometimes set the Beer Hall on fire.

When apartheid ended and Mandela was released, he phoned her and he invited all veterans to Pretoria. She was very, very happy that apartheid was over. I am proud of her for everything she did for South Africa.

This ANC is still the same ANC that my mom and I fought for … and I can still see the fruits of their efforts today: we all use the same buses, go to the same beaches … and she had a street named after her. Mom was a selfless leader and motivational speaker. She worked for the ANC so as to serve the people.

'I was born on 8 December 1942, the same year as Zuma and Mbeki. I am a member of the ANC as a veteran. I will never quit the ANC, for it is the only organisation that fought for people and our rights. The ANC are still fighting for people.'

The ANC has improved some things, such as SARS, for instance. There are some things that are not working well, though. For example, my son, who was a highly ranked member of MK, was sent to Russia for five years of training. When apartheid ended, he had to come back. He returned injured from Angola and Burundi, and to this day, he has received nothing in return. While other people are receiving grants, he has applied and re-applied with no response.

'As for me, some other things will take time, but so far so good.'

A hero in the shadow
By Sam Mukanya

The person in that picture is my son, the second born and only boy in a family of four girls. He grew up here in Chesterville, in this very house. He went on to become an Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK) soldier, and with that movement, he went into exile in various places around the world such as Angola, China, Uganda, Russia … where they were kept for special MK training. He later returned in 1992.

Thabo is still alive but in a very fragile condition. He is very sick and unable to care for himself. He lives in his bed because his condition does not allow him any freedom of movement unless assisted by other persons. I learn from his mother, Mother Nooi, that the image of Thabo dressed in an MK uniform was made in 2012 by local photographer, Vusi Mteka, who also goes by the name Bashathe. Thabo's Aunt Maiketso, initiated and pushed for her younger nephew to be photographed as his condition was deteriorating fast, and the family was not sure how much longer they would have him in their presence.

By looking at the position of his beret – the sign is at the back – it became evident that Thabo was not dressed by a person who was familiar with the MK and the correct way of wearing the uniform, although he appears very confident and upright and superior.

Mother Nooi tells me that Thabo did not want to wear the uniform he is wearing in the photograph because he felt that it was a disgrace to wear it because it wasn't his; also, because the owner was not an MK soldier or part of a commando and had not undergone any training. Thabo's family did not understand Thabo's argument; they were merely interested in having capturing memories of their son, especially wearing a uniform that had been a big part of his life.

'I never knew when he joined the MK. He just disappeared,' said Mam'Nooi, who further added that Thabo could have been influenced by his elders, especially his grandmother – Mam'Nooi's mother – who was very involved in the recruitment of young boys to lend a hand in the fight. Thabo left Chesterville before the initiation of the A-Team, which later fought against MK soldiers in Chesterville during the period around 1983.

The MK was not in unity and, while in exile, it consisted of soldiers from different backgrounds and parts of the country. Hence, there were always differing camps within the MK body due to the various tribes, such as those from KwaZulu-Natal and Gauteng. The soldiers would refer to each other using insulting slang names, such as Bhari, which is what the Gauteng camp called the KZN camp, and the KZN camp would refer to the Gauteng camp as Cleva.

Slwane was the nickname given to Thabo in exile as he was a very brave man who often did what the others feared and had no boundaries.

'One day when he was in exile, Thabo's team lost their Motorola walky-talky in the bush. That was a problem as it helped them to communicate with other soldiers in different locations. Everyone was scared to go back into those bushes as a dangerous leopard was wandering around. Thabo was the only one to go back there and successfully walk out with the walky-talky – and without being harmed by the vicious creature.'

That is just one of the many stories of bravery that Mam'Nooi had to tell regarding her son and his experiences while in exile. The story continues as Mam'Nooi further adds that, a while after Thabo's act of bravery, he took it a step further by going back into that very same bush and walking out with a meal, which he invited his fellow soldiers to share, only telling them later that what they had feasted on was, in fact, the creature they had been living in fear of. He kept one of the feet raw as proof to his fellow soldiers.

When he returned from exile, he had a major operation on his stomach, which was the result of a conflict between the Clevas and the Bharis. The story, according to Mam'Nooi, is that during Thabo's time in exile, a dwelling belonging to one of the Bharis burnt down, and it was assumed that Thabo was responsible for that as he was known to be brave. During that conflict, a bomb exploded on his stomach.

When Thabo – whose exile name was David Ngwenya – returned to South Africa, he lived with his Aunt Mapitsi, who was the only one with whom he communicated. He slowly recovered and was admitted to King Edward Hospital after refusing to be treated in Johannesburg because of the Bhari/Cleva conflict. He never married and has been under the care of his family. He has a son who is now eighteen years old and visits regularly.

Upon his return, his family noticed how disciplined he had become, but he was also very reserved.

'I understand what he fought for, but the government of South Africa does not seem to share my level of understanding. He should be receiving a grant from the government like the soldiers who were in exile with him do,' says a distraught Mam'Nooi, who also shared with me that her son would often say, 'I must not die before I get my money.'

As father as son and as son as father
By Sam Mukanya

Earlier that morning, when I was up making ready my pen and notebook, I was unsure about whom my interviewee was going to be. Shining sun: brighter day? No, this was the hottest day of all of my visits in Chesterville. As my companion and I entered number 326 Molife Close, we were welcomed by the load shedding that had switched off the only cooling fan in the house.

When hunting down the story of the only boy of six children, son of Sandile Shange and Bongi Shange, musician by passion and profession, Sandy Junior Dumisani Mgwaba's photograph was nowhere to be found.

After about a quarter of an hour, here comes a picture of Sandy Junior Dumisani, a gentleman posing beside his colleagues at the University of KwaZulu-Natal. A happy face focused on the photographer; shirt wrinkled on its lower part as if to say 'the artist is here'; and boldly posed, confirming that photographs are forever part of his life as an artist.

When asked about the two friends, Mam'Bongi Shange said, 'They were his friends at the university. I don't know them, and I have never met any of them.'

'The sixth in the family of six, at six years old, he was introduced to music, particularly guitar. Passion for music was what guided Dumisane and, three years later, he started playing in the nightclub with other groups, but he didn't stop there. Sponsored by Shell, Dumisane studied music theory and social sciences at the University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN), and he wasn't only studying there, he was also teaching music,' said Mam'Bongi Shange

Born in 1967, Sandy Junior Dumisani was an accomplished guitarist playing both bass and solo guitar. He was a member of a local group in Chesterville 'playing all kinds of music, from jazz to gospel, but Sandy Dumisani was more linked to other musicians in South Africa than the rest of the group,' said Mam'Bongi Shange as she wiped her face.

I am not sure if sweat and tears were mixed up, but I am sure of that happening from the inside because she could remember the tragic and mysterious death of two talented artists: father and son. During his lifetime, Sandy Junior managed to bridge himself to several artists, performing live and doing studio recordings of music from gospel to jazz. This gifted and talented guitarist was just a freelancer with a mission to amaze his listeners, wherever and whenever he was wanted.

As I was asking myself the question: if one can only prove that one is a guitarist by playing guitar, who was going to do that for me as the storyteller on behalf of Sandy Junior? The answer came from my right; his mom was to my left; I could see the young sister looking through CDs, one by one for some tangible audio proof. She showed me a couple of compact disc covers: studio recordings with Andile Musweleni, Vuka Africa, Bongani, Sarafina and Swazi Dlamini, performing live in Joyous

Celebration (9), the list is endless.

Then an unforgettable moment occurred with the return of the electrical power: load shedding was gone, fans powered up, and everyone got fresh air. Home theatre and TV were switched on, and a live performance at the Playhouse with Swazi Dlamini and Sandy Junior was played: a traditional melody with traditional dance. 'Are you listening to the guitar? Unfortunately, they were not filming him,' said an emotional Mam'Bongi Shange simultaneously with her daughter. It was like they were seeing him playing live and we could not.

During the 2010 World Cup in South Africa, as he was busy working on his album and trying to finish his late father's unfinished album, the 43-year-old Sandy Junior was invited to go with Bongani and Sarafina to perform live in Pietermaritzburg. Tragically, that was the time death decided to remove Sandy Junior Dumisani's hands forever from the guitar. According to what was reported to Mam'Bongi Shange, after complaining about the temperature in the hotel room, he died from suffocation due to a plumber's fault that had mixed gas with water in the bathroom.

'*Eish*! They were almost alike,' referring to Sandy and his father, 'but his father was playing more,' concluded Mam'Bongi Shange.

An artist never dies: his musical spirit lives on. You can hear and listen to his talent, and you can see him playing guitar from your heart because death has decided to keep Sandy Junior Dumisani Mgwaba young at 43 years old forever.

Mchunu has a lot to be grateful for
By Nomvula Sikakane

It is late in the afternoon. Gloomy weather. I am sure it is going to rain any minute now, and Mr Mchunu is waiting for me. I knock on the door, and an expectant 'come in' rings out from behind it. It is Mr Mchunu, a happy and bubbly old gentleman. He lets my companion and me in, and he greets us, 'I thought you weren't coming anymore.' I politely explain that we got delayed, but are happy to be in his home.

As we sit down, he says, 'My child, I have survived a lot.' He takes off his glasses and points to something in his eye that looks like a massive cataract, but there is more to it than that. It was 14 June 1986 when Baba Mchunu survived a bombing at the Parade Hotel's Magoo's Bar on the Durban beachfront where he was working as a night security guard. Ninety-eight people in total were injured. Mchunu didn't suspect it had anything to do with politics but thinks it was more about business. 'Magoo's Bar was the busiest of all the places at the beachfront,' Mchunu says. The real definition of apartheid only came up after the bombing when the police would interrogate him about what had happened, not caring that he was also hurt and in recovery. 'They suspected I had something to do with the bombing, even though I was also injured.' That is how Mchunu got the 'ingrown' in his eyes. Luckily his eyes are working just fine.

Baba Mchunu hands me a photo. In it, he is wearing a uniform: black pants and a white shirt, a hat and tie. This picture was taken after the bombing. Mchunu was fired from Magoo's Bar and had moved to a place a few blocks away from his old workplace: Mykonos Space World at the beachfront. Mchunu looks at the photo and gives a deep sigh, almost in disbelief of what he has been through. 'When I look at this picture, I think of 1986: painful memories but a sense of gratitude towards God. I believe in God's will.' Mchunu, unlike many, is grateful for the challenging experiences he has come across in his life. 'When I look at the things that have happened in my life, not only in 1986 but throughout my life, I know God exists.'

A man staunch in his beliefs, Mchunu has a sense of calmness and joy; so polite and gentle throughout the conversation, but the mention of his nephew's name brings sadness – almost tears to his eyes. Mchunu never had kids, and Bongani Magwaza was the next best to a biological son. Bongani was killed in the fire. 'My house was burnt down by an opposing political movement.' Mchunu has never been involved in politics but knows and appreciates the history of South African politics.

Mchunu is grateful for the way life turned out: life after apartheid. All of his gratitude goes out to Nelson Mandela and other struggle heroes not mentioned by name. 'I always believed in Nelson Mandela and what he was capable of, and my guts were right, Nelson Mandela was a true reflection of the chosen one.' Mchunu admires Nelson Mandela for choosing to forgive rather than waging war against the apartheid government but is disgusted about the youth who take all that for granted and

sleep with the enemy (meaning young Black youth joining the DA). 'Nelson Mandela said forgive, but do not follow the enemy. 'I lost a job because of apartheid, but through Nelson Mandela's leadership, I gained a whole lot more.'

'The freedom that we received is enough. I remember back in those days you couldn't perform a cultural ceremony without the *Boers* having to hound you. You were only allowed to make one 20-litre bucket of sorghum, and you had to leave some meat for the *Boers* to take home, that's why in isiZulu there's a saying: *kunenyama yomthetho*, meaning "the meat for the lawmakers"," says Baba Mchunu (Now I understand that saying, I always wondered what it meant.).

Baba Mchunu says the police raids were the worst because you couldn't have your relatives visit you for long: they needed a permit to be in your house and only for a set period. 'South Africa has a very rich history, and I am proud of where we come from and especially where we are now. It sickens me when people wait or point fingers at the government, wanting and needing all sorts of things from them.' Mchunu says it is about time people appreciate how far South Africa has come and realise that 20 years into democracy is not a long time. 'We must acknowledge the good that has happened; yes, there have been bad things, but they are trying, and they are doing their best.'

For Siso Nxumalo: The struggle continues
By Nomvula Sikakane

Siso Nxumalo, a 59-year-old woman from Chesterville, born in Mkhumbane at a place called Sharpeville, takes me through her journey as the wife of a political prisoner and her involvement in the struggle.

'This photo was made in 1984. I was in town, in the famous West Street, now known as Dr Pixley Ka Seme Street. This boy next to me is my son. He is big now, but he was nine years old at the time, and that is my nephew, Thulani Dayi. Those days, West Street was a white area. You had to move when a white person needed to go past. In the shops, they would be served first, and you left just standing in the queue.

'In the 80s, segregation was at its peak: one could not come and go as one pleased.'

A teary-eyed Mam'Siso traces back memories of what it was like during apartheid, and the day her husband, then boyfriend, was detained for two years without trial. 'I am sorry to cry like this, but it is still very hard. I was young, but I made a decision to go and stay with his mom at their house because I really loved him. Things were tough; life was tough, but I decided to stay by his side even though I had no idea where he was.' Mam'Siso spent a year without knowing where her husband was detained; staying with her husband's family was the only closure she could have.

Mam'Siso remembers the meetings her husband would have in their living room but had no idea what those meetings were about. 'Women were always sidelined when men were meeting, so it was hard for me to gather what the meetings could be about, and politics was nothing close to what I would have come up with anyway.' Mam'Siso only found out after her husband's arrest that it had something to do with the freedom struggle, and it was called terrorism. After her husband's arrest, Mam'Siso joined the ANC. 'I did not really join for him. I understood what he was doing so I did it for myself, but at the same time, honouring my man, the father of my child. I really loved him. I stayed, not knowing if he would ever come out of prison or if he would want me after prison. I was loyal to my man, and that is what kept me going every day.'

Mam'Siso remembers the days when she would send food for comrades who were captured with her husband whom today pretend as if they do not know her. There were eight of them. Mam'Siso would cook every day and send food to them in jail and to their lawyers because they feared they could be poisoned. 'My commitment was to the freedom struggle and the people who wanted what was best for South Africa. It pains me to see them up there, and they cannot even greet me properly when we see each other.'

'I sometimes cry, thinking about what I went through in those days, and I have nothing to show for my contribution. We fought, I was beaten, my husband beaten and sentenced for a better life for all, but he only saw the better life from a distance.

There is nothing to show for his and my contribution except for the stories that we tell. I always say to myself that if only I had studied I would be far in life, but again, I think I was called into the struggle: that was my destiny. I would've ended up there even if I had decided to study.

A price well paid for freedom
By Nomvula Sikakane

As I browse through the Nxumalo photo album, deep in thought, a picture of what looks like a family portrait at first glance captures my attention. This family has albums: piles and piles of photos. I flip through the other pictures but my mind shifts back to that one photo. The photo is of five people, all smiles: three women and two men. I hand it to Mama Nxumalo who looks at it and says, 'I also found a good one,' showing me a picture of Baba Nxumalo carrying hand luggage posing with two kids: the one in front is their firstborn son, Simphiwe Kwame Nxumalo, and the other, a neighbour. She then says, 'Go outside and speak to Baba Nxumalo, he should be ready for you.'

I go to the garage where Baba Nxumalo is seated. It is a sunny day, and the man is quenching his thirst and chatting to his chicken. He says, 'I do not know how it is going to treat you,' referring to the chicken. 'It is very protective of me and follows me wherever I go; it even eats with me.' I smile and say that I am easy to warm up to, they will behave, and indeed they do. I show Baba Nxumalo the photos I have in my hand; with a smile, he selects one and engages with its contents and then takes the second one.

He clears his throat and points with five fingers to the first photo and says, 'I do not recall the date, but this was shortly after Robben Island in Newcastle (Madadeni) when I was doing my undercover job as a recruiter for Umkhonto we Sizwe.' Baba Themba Nxumalo is a 63-year-old man from Chesterville who, like many, gave selflessly to the liberation struggle and still has not reaped the benefits.

Baba Nxumalo recalls the day in 1977: 7 December. It started out as a seemingly typical day. 'I went to work, but that day I did not return home because midday the police came and collected me, and I was detained for two years.' Baba Nxumalo did not know where he was. He was in isolation because he was not supposed to speak to other people. Only after a year of detention did he find out where he was and, through a friend, he alerted his family of his whereabouts.

He looks at the picture again and says, 'Oh, those were the days.' The people in the photo are Baba Nxumalo, Ronny Khoza, and Ronny's family. At the time, Baba Nxumalo was working underground as a recruiter for the African National Congress.

He looks deep in thought and says, '*Ntombi*, let me tell you a little story,' and gives a brief and sombre smile. 'The day before I was taken to jail, I had a fight with "your mom",' referring to Mama Nxumalo. Baba Nxumalo said that as a young man you sometimes go off track, and that could mess up a good relationship. After that day, Nxumalo did not expect to see Mama Nxumalo again. He was detained for two years and thoughts of ever reuniting with Mama Nxumalo had disappeared. 'I was surprised to find that when she heard about my arrest, she went back to my house and took care of my

mother; then I knew, no matter what, that this relationship was crafted by the gods.

'When I came back from jail, I did not know what to do with myself: I didn't know where to go, who to trust, because a lot of people had joined other parties in secret and were spies, and I did not know where to position myself in the structures.' Baba Nxumalo was deployed in prison to be a unionist, so he learnt all he could about unions and, out of jail, he was to carry that mandate as his cover to continue doing ANC work. He lifts up the second picture and says, 'My first trip to London. I was invited to discuss ANC-related matters, but the invitation was addressed to the union to protect us – and the hosts us.'

As he shows me the scars he got from electrocution, a tear escapes his one eye, 'When I was recruited, I was not promised wealth. I was only told two things: be prepared to die, and if you are lucky, you will go to jail. There was nothing about money or positions in higher places: we had a bigger dream than that. But in all fairness and truth, this is not the democracy we fought for. I did not sacrifice myself for this.'

Baba Nxumalo says that in jail it was not easy to think about family or the people you left behind because you did not know your future; you could not even plan the things you were going to do after prison because you did not know whether you would live to see that day or even the next day and whether you would ever see your family.

Father/Daughter memories
By Nomvula Sikakane

The photo was made sometime in 1985: Nana as an infant cosying with her happy father on what looks like a perfect summer's day. The picture is of Nana and her hero, her father, Ntandokayise Russell Mngomezulu, a man who died for many: a man who dedicated his life to the freedom struggle so that his only daughter and many that lived on, could enjoy this freedom South Africa has today.

Nana, today, is a 30-year-old grown woman who never had a chance to meet and chat with her loving father but always hears about his activities in the neighbourhood. Ntandokayise was known as 'Makiribha' in the township: *makiribha utsotsi*, meaning 'trip the thug.' He was a fighter and a protector in the community.

The story of Makiribha is told by his only daughter, Nana Mngomezulu, and his older brother, Wisdom Four Mngomezulu. Looking at the photo, Nana says she feels love all the time and certainty that her dad loved and cared for her. 'I have no regrets, and I never even once doubted my father's decisions in life. I know that everything he did, he did for the benefit of our family and the community.' Makiribha died in 1986 just after Nana's first birthday. She never had a chance to meet her father but says the connection is there. 'I bump into people all around, and they tell me about my dad. I feel like I know him. I feel like he is still living.'

Four speaks so fondly of his late brother as he looks at Nana with a smile and admiration. 'The environment is what prompted Makiribha to get involved in the freedom struggle. I still remember the day my brother died.' The mood changes. Four was a student at the time, studying far from home. Even though his visits were mainly spent at the hideaway house, that evening he had decided to go and sleep at the family home, as the following day he was returning to school. That night the *Boers* raided the hideaway house and a lot of comrades died, and Makiribha was one of them. 'So that is how I survived, and I always look back on that day.'

Makiribha died for the freedom that everyone is enjoying now: equal rights for all, amongst many other things. 'I am thankful to my dad for the life I have now. I do not know what it was like in those days. I am grateful to know that my dad was not a coward: he stood up for the betterment of the community and contributed to the life I am enjoying today. He makes me a proud daughter. I say every day: who else would I rather be than my dad? He is a hero, and he is my hero.

A picture is a window
to one's soul
By Nomvula Sikakane

'This is where it all started,' Mamazana Mngomezulu says as she hands me back the picture I had just given to her, pointing it out as my favourite. 'I was always an ambitious somebody: always determined to succeed, and I knew from my brothers' teachings what I needed to do to get what I wanted in life, and that was freedom for all.'

Looking at this picture, Mamazana gives a smile, the distance in her eyes speaks volumes, and she looks at me to check if I understand what had just happened. I smile, unsure if I do understand the meaning of this picture and the time.

The photograph is of a nine-year-old Mamazana and her friend, a neighbor, Minci, outside the Mngomezulu house. The two young girls look very happy, regardless of the situation they were faced with, which was apartheid. By this time, Mamazana knew that she deserved a whole lot more out of life than what she was receiving, and she was determined to get her fair share. 'I knew I was oppressed, and I wanted to make a difference. Thinking of the future, I did not want my kids, if I were to survive the struggle, to live under the same conditions I was living under.'

Mamazana 'Smiley': that was her nickname, and it is apparent why she was called Smiley. 'I was taught by my mom's employers about politics and the apartheid strategy, and what it meant and, at that very age, I knew I had to do something about it.' Mamazana was raised by her brother and other comrades. Her parents were working away from home, so politics and the freedom struggle were part of her daily routine. 'The struggle needed women to get involved. There were places that men could not get access to, but women could, and I was one such person. I would liaise with various comrades so that the Boers wouldn't notice,' says Mamazana.

After this photo had been taken, Mamazana started getting involved with the freedom struggle. 'I went in with the attitude that I was doing it for my country and the future generation. I was prepared to die, or go to jail, or whatever was to happen to me: I was prepared. It was not easy, though,' Mamazana says. 'I remember the day I got really scared. When they took one comrade, I could hear him cry, shouting the words, *wangibulala*, which means "he is killing me". I could hear him cry until the last bit, and that day I realised the impact and the meaning of what we were doing and, even though it was scary and traumatic, we couldn't give up because that would have meant that the comrades who had died, had died in vain. We had to pull through.'

For Mamazana, looking at the youth back then and the youth of today, there is a noticeable contrast. Mamazana says, 'People were united back then; but today it is a person for themselves. I look at young kids these days: they do not know what it was like back then. It is easy for them to take this freedom for granted because they never experienced apartheid. I tell my kids all the

time about my life back in the days of apartheid so they can enjoy the privileges forwarded to them today.'

Serious intervention is required to make the youth aware of where South Africa comes from. I think they could start by learning the meaning of the South African flag – learn about our history – then they will know and appreciate where we come from and appreciate the life they have now.

It's a woman's world
By Paulo Menezes

It is a monochrome Sunday in Cato Manor, almost silent but for a handful of young boys kicking a ball about a few doors down. The township seems to be slowly exhaling before the new week begins.

I am greeted at the gate by a powerful figure, whom I soon learn is Mrs Jabu Manqele, the youngest of seven children, now living in Cato Manor. She welcomes me into the lounge where a Bafana Bafana game is playing on the TV. A tribute to Senzo Meyiwa lines the bottom of the screen. It sinks in that the footballer now rests just metres away from the home I now find myself in.

I show Mrs Manqele a couple of photographs, which she immediately takes from me and starts to speak about. 'This is my mom, Linah, and my two brothers. How happy they all look.'

It is 1949 – Grey Street – a group portrait: the mother sits on a chair with her two sons, who are toddlers. One is perched on the arm of the chair; the other is standing beside it. The mother, glowing, is pregnant with her first daughter. Mrs Manqele goes on to speak about her mother. 'She would never leave the house without looking her best. She learned that from Mrs Payne. She had a big influence on my mother. "Mrs Payne said this; Mrs Payne said that." Those things also had an effect on us kids.'

Linah Mbanjwa was born in 1919 and married Petros Mbanjwa. They would go on to have seven children: two sons and five daughters. Linah was a domestic worker who also became involved in the struggle, again influencing her children. Her daughter, Faith, would follow in her mom's footsteps by becoming an activist herself, tied to numerous groups including the Natal Women's Organisation, and was appointed as treasurer of the ANC Women's League in KwaMashu in 1990.

The Mbanjwa family is one of incredible connectedness to the community. Faith would also go on to educate the youth about politics, teaching classes in KwaMashu schools during her time there. Similarly, sister Jabu Manqele often finds her house filled with children as she helps them with their homework in the afternoons. Her face lights up when we get onto the topic of her projects in the community. She leaves the room to find recent photographs of another venture of hers that she refers to as 'my *gogos*'. She looks affectionately at the picture resting in her palm. She tells me that a group meet twice a week at her home to knit woollen gloves and hats for the aged. 'Oh! And beads! We also do beads!' making sure I haven't missed any details as I scribe.

The Mbanjwa family have had a difficult history, being removed from their original home of Chesterville and relocated to KwaMashu in 1959. I ask Mrs Manqele what she recalls of that. Noticeably tense, she says she was too young to remember anything. 'I was still a baby then. My sister Jenny will be able to remember more about those days.'

Regaining a little more confidence in her voice, she tells me that she has lived in her current Cato Manor home since 1992.

‘I like it here, yes. And it’s good to be back. Or at least closer to “home”.’

I start to make family connections as, soon after speaking with Mrs Manqele, I am led to her older sister, Thandekile Jenny.

Longing to belong
By Paulo Menezes

I am immediately struck by the presence of the women in this family. Their strength and confidence seem to fill the room, almost tangible.

I am invited to take a seat. I have a couple of photographs to show Mrs Hadebe. The first, as examined by Mrs Manqele previously, is the image of their mother, seated with their two brothers. Again, sister Jenny, as she is referred to, lights up with pride at the sight of her mother in the picture. I remind Mrs Hadebe that the photograph was made in 1949. She confirms that her mother was pregnant with her at the time.

Fast-track ten years from that photograph and the young Chesterville family are being uprooted from their home. The home has been raided by a group of men, and their belongings thrown into the back of a truck. Mrs Hadebe recollects the event with pain in her voice. 'I do remember it, yes. In fact, it's a sad story because my mum was in hospital: Springfield Hospital. She was attacked by tuberculosis at that time, and she was there for about a year. Those removals were already underway by then and were decided by a family's salaries. They said that those who were getting paid more must go to Lamontville or KwaMashu. So one day, when my father was at work and my mum was in hospital, and we had just come back from school, a long truck arrived and our goods were thrown into it and we were shoved out. There were no elders around, it was just us. We were crying, but they didn't care.

'KwaMashu was full of sugar cane at that time. It wasn't as good as Mashu now. No shops, nothing. Schools were far; shops were far; no electricity. My father had to buy a coal stove.

She lists the conditions of their new home with anger in her tone. 'We started all over again. But I can't forget the day when we were thrown into that truck. It was 1959.'

We speak about her return to Chesterville. 'I'm the only one who came back to Chesterville,' she laughs. 'I got married to someone who lived in Chesterville. Our house was in Road 17.' Thandekile got married in 1976, moving back to Chesterville in 1977. 'I feel like I'm at home here now, because to me, I still had that anger that I came out of this location. Although I was young, the anger was still there. Now that I'm in Chesterville, I know I'm at home.'

The funeral of Nat Nakasa
New York City, 1965

By Mabusi Cebekhulu

It was a Saturday morning on a warm July day in 1965 that the man called Nat Nakasa was laid to rest.

Twenty-five years earlier, in 1937, Nakasa had been born in the Durban township of Chesterville. He was a brave young man: a man of all nations and a hero to the freedom fighters. He was a man who crusaded for media freedom and freedom of movement. His work showed a commitment to the importance of dangerous stories, no matter what the political trends were of the day.

An ambitious journalist who had the cold fortune of being born Black in the twentieth century in South Africa, Nakasa was a writer for Africa's most widely circulated news magazine, *Drum*, and also *The New York Times*. He was the founder of one of South Africa's first literary magazines, *Classic*, and was the first Black columnist for *The Rand Daily Mail*, a popular white Johannesburg newspaper. In his world, freedom was not the end point of a long struggle towards justice. Nakasa battled state-sponsored segregation throughout his life while Nelson Mandela and O. R. Tambo were staging protests and revolution in South Africa.

In 1964, Nat Nakasa obtained an exit permit and went into exile. He left South Africa, not as a politician or a foot soldier of the freedom movement, but rather as a student. He went to Harvard University to undertake a Nieman Fellowship in journalism to advance his career. He stepped into the community of the freedom movement abroad and was perhaps the first South African man to enrol for study at such an elitist American university.

Nakasa's year at Harvard progressed slowly, and he began to feel more and isolated and slunk towards a deep depression. Nakasa could not stay out of trouble as a journalist. In February 1965, the young writer was fined by the FBI for his interest in that intelligence agency. He wanted to know about the FBI: whether they 'hid any skeletons' and how it operated. Five months later, under the strain of surveillance, loneliness and a precarious immigration status, Nat found himself in a New York City apartment. His US one-year student visa was also racing toward its expiration date. When it ran out, he would have to find another country to take him. He was caught in a precarious limbo: unable to return to South Africa, and with no citizenship in the United States of America, a place that he was, anyway, starting to feel offered little respite from the brutal racism of his home country.

Nakasa used to share his knowledge with other people, especially up-and-coming journalists and writers. He once told student reporters at Harvard University that 'the journalist was not there to bend reality, but to reflect the needs of the present': to look at things as they were and report them. He insisted that freedom of expression was an inalienable part of human dignity and the cornerstone of democracy, filtered through time and

memory.

In 1965, standing in a seventh floor New York City apartment building in Central Park West, facing an alien city, Nat Nakasa ran out of hope. On that warm July morning, he opened the window, desperate for a point of no return, and then he jumped, committing suicide.

At his funeral, South African singer Miriam Makeba eulogised him with a Zulu song translated as 'Faults of These Noble Men', but the mourned was not a noble man, but a brave man who had been, in many ways, quite ordinary. Like many others, he had swept through apartheid South Africa as a young man. He spent his whole life perfecting himself, trying to discover freedom and untold exile stories. Four years later, nearly to the day, South African President Jacob Zuma stood before a room of dignitaries at Durban's Elangeni Hotel to deliver the keynote address for the annual Nat Nakasa Award for Media Integrity. Awarded annually since 1998 by the South African National Editor's Forum (SANEF), the prize honoured a journalist whose work showed a commitment to telling important and dangerous stories.

'Let us celebrate the life and legacy that Nat Nakasa left behind for us,' Zuma said. His writings were published in a book called *The Native of Nowhere*, published by Raven Press.

Jacob Zuma calls Nat Nakasa 'an outstanding patriot and a courageous journalist', drawing a line of connection between them, casting himself as a supporter of the brand of anti-establishment writing that Nat spent his career perfecting. Nat the freedom writer, a Black writer, the exiled intellectual and the young suicide, is a symbol of the scars apartheid left on a South African journalist. Nat became part of a wild caricature of South Africa's past, one that speaks in stark moral dichotomies: good and evil, right and wrong, black and white.

Amandla! Awethu! Awethu! Amandla!
The struggle must go on!

A conversation with Dingaan's wife
By Ntombenhle Mbongwe

Who was Dingaan Mahlasela?

Mrs Mahlasela: Dingaan Mahlasela was a boxer who was not born in Chesterville. He was born on 16 December 1937 in Harrismith. This photograph was taken in his youth, before he got married, which was in 1967. During that time he was training young boxers in the community. He moved into Chesterville in 1977. He was a father to two boys. He died in 2012. May his soul rest in peace.

N. M.: What kind of person was he?

Mrs M: He loved himself. Jazz was his first love and he was known as part of one of the best jazz groups in town called Men About Town. Boxing was his next love. He believed that when you are a young boy, you must love boxing so as not to run to your parents and say 'Daddy, that boy beat me.'

N. M.: What role did he play in the community?

Mrs M.: He was huge competition, even to his peers. There was no place to stay in Chesterville when he got married, so he moved to Umlazi in 1970. In 1977, they got a house in Chesterville where he started a boxing club at the Community Hall. His aim was to develop young boys, take them off the street and teach them to stand up for themselves.

He didn't believe in professional boxing and said it would be the end of boxing. Because he wanted to groom the boys, he was more interested in amateur boxing. Raji of Road 25 and Nqampi of Road 6 later joined him in his mission to teach those boys boxing, and to create a free community in Chesterville. Issac Bohlali and Goodenough are products of Dingaan Mahlasela, who was instrumental in getting the youth off the street.

N. M.: If you look at Chesterville today, would you say he played a role in the present or has Chesterville changed from then?

Mrs M.: Things did change. There was a low rate of gangsterism in the community because most of the youth joined boxing. As time went on, Dingaan started to take boxing outside of Chesterville, entering competitions and the Olympic Games. By then, the young people of Chesterville were no longer the same. Those who wanted to carry on with boxing did, and others became numerous in the street. The community had been introduced to television and other new things that directed the youth to alternative ways of living. Although Dingaan Mahlasela took the young ones off the street, he couldn't take them all off, but those he did filled the hall. In 1978, he attracted the youth

from surrounding areas: Ntuzuma, Hillcrest and others, where the whites started to take an interest in boxing and went to the Chesterville Community Hall for boxing training.

N. M.: What role did you play, as a wife, to make him a success?

Mrs M.: All I did was support him. He became a national coach and travelled to the Olympic Games. I had to play the role of mother and father to our kids. But he never forgot his family. I have gifts that he would bring me from every country he has travelled in, says Mrs Mahlasela with a smile on her face.

N. M.: Where did his love for boxing begin?

Mrs M.: Where he grew up, boys used to fight with sticks, but by the time he was born they no longer did that and were carriers for golfers. They earned small cash for that, and the elder boys would take their money from them. That is what motivated them to learn how to defend and fight for themselves. From there he never stopped.

N. M.: What was the atmosphere like in Chesterville at the time, and how did it affect him as a boxing trainer who trained mixed races?

Mrs M.: It wasn't that bad. He was accused of being an informer (*impimpi*), but his defence was that his first son was part of Umkhonto we Sizwe. That confused people because while some were accusing the family of being informers, others were defending us and asking how we could be informers when the firstborn son is in MK and went into exile.

At the time, Chesterville was unsettled, but there were some who saw that this was the way to go. That period didn't last long. When you look at Chesterville now, the *wunga* has corrupted the youth.

N. M.: How was he as a father?

Mrs M.: As a father, he loved his family, and he was very close to his family.

As I was interviewing Mrs Mahlasela on this question, she received a phone call from her elder son, and I heard her say to him: 'You never know how much a person means until he is gone.'

Dinagaan passed on in 2012. He left behind his wife and their two sons. Mrs Mahlasela happily shares with us that her husband's funeral was more of a celebration of the life of a hero who played a role in many lives and that everyone who was there paid their respects to him. At the funeral, the guard of honour became a celebration in her heart, seeing the greatness of people

Keith 'Boyies' Ntombela,
KwaMashu, 1963

The Last Bird Fair
By Silungile Dladla

The young boy beat his drum. If he knew it was the last time he would ever beat it, he would have beaten that drum until he was out of tune. This photograph was taken in 1963 in KwaMashu, 'Ezimpohlweni', at the Bird Fair, which was like the Rand Show: there was a huge tent and many things used to happen. We used to buy samp for a few rands. When I think of the Bird Fair I think of Ngada's mum who used to support us with the superintendent.

Keith 'Boyies' Ntombela was born at home on 22 May 1954 in Chesterville at 187 Road 3, KwaNtombela. He attended Nabantwana Crèche, St. Barnabas, and Good Hope Primary. Then he went to Amangwe Secondary School, then Transkei Mlokotho High School, and eDlangezwa High School at Nongoma.

We were called 'the Boys Brigade'. There was a man called Roger who was in charge of Chesterville. I think he is still alive and still lives in Ridge Road. We used to call him Madolodolo; he was a superintendent. He was the one who formed the group he used to unite the township. There where many of us in that group.

At the age of nine years, while studying at junior primary after school, I used to see Roger training the older guys and I used to go watch them play. While they where playing, I would take two sticks and imitate what they where doing. Roger recognised that I had a talent so he introduced me to the drums. I was his favourite because I was the youngest.

I was the leading man: they used to call me the ringleader. The guy behind me with the drums is Sgila. I would start on the drums and the rest would follow my lead. The people who used to control the huge drums and the trumpet were Qhawe and Pat. Some of the guys that I was with in the group have passed away. Roger decided that we should wear berets and khaki clothes because that was a school uniform and we could all afford it.

When Roger's contract expired in 1964, that was the end of our group. He was relocated to Lamontville where he formed another group. The brigade ended and I continued with school. After Standard 10 I tried to earn a living. I went to study how to be an electrician at Ethusini, currently known as the University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN).

When you ask me about politics, it reminds me of the time when my sister got a scholarship to go and study in Britain with the assistance of alawyer called Bhengu. That created a huge controversy for my family because the Special Branch oppressed us a lot, asking us how a Black person could go overseas to study. But in spite of all that hassling, that lawyer, Bhengu, did help her to go to Britain to study.

Thoko Khuzwayo and
Nombuso Gonya:
friends of soccer
By Nokwanda Mduli

I have two photographs. In one of them, the ladies are sitting down, holding a picture of what looks like a boat. They are wearing uniforms with heels and what look like *pantsula* hats. There is paper on the floor and red curtains. Their eyes seem concentrated to one side and are not looking straight at the camera: what was the distraction? This was a studio shot. There is a certificate in the far corner of the photograph. What is the significance of the photo the two of you are holding? In both photographs you appear to be smiling, whereas your friend is very serious. In the second frame, you stand together again with your friend. What brings you two together? It seems that you are wearing matching colours in support of something. Your clothing resembles a nurse's uniform. Again you are wearing heels: you love walking tall. Is your uniform a nurse's uniform?

I meet Thoko Khuzwayo and she is how I thought she would be: outspoken and loves to talk with people. She is at her Chesterville home with her husband of 39 years, Bab Khuzwayo. BaThoko, as family and friends know her, instantly laughs at the photographs, explaining that they were taken during the time when she stayed in Inanda in a place called eAfrika.

The person she is with in the picture is her friend, Nombuso Gonya, from Pietermaritzburg. 'She used to be a close friend of mine when I had moved from Chesterville after I got married. We used to go to studios and make photographs and both of these pictures we took because we supported uSuthu – an amaZulu soccer team.'

During those times, supporting soccer was a big thing. Everyone supported and belonged to some group. Those times were beautiful. Bathoko explains her fetish for heels, stating that she was short and needed to look taller. 'When I walked in heels I felt good and was fairly tall.' She confesses that at her mature age she still owns a few pairs. Although she laughs when I ask if she is still a soccer fanatic, she says, 'Oh no, I go to church now. I don't have time for soccer anymore.'

'The uniforms we are wearing were made at the tailor. We just used a design we knew and asked a lady at the Adjemery Arcade to sew them for us. In those days, going into Adjemery was a big thing: it gave you status and made you look like you could afford.'

Bathoko later moved back to Chesterville's Road 6 with her husband during the time of *oqonda* or *izibonda* (known as street committees or forums today), where they could lodge any complaints they had. After that came the riots, involving UDF members and the A-Team. That period was also known as the Lodger Era. It was a time when all Black people had to report to any community station to verify their location. After experiencing misfortunes in her life, Thoko returned with her husband to Chesterville under that façade.

Even though the living conditions were so tough for the Chesterville community, there was a sense of calm. Bathoko

remembers how they used to walk to watch Gibson Kente at the YMCA in town. They walked there and back: there where no taxis at the time and buses were scarce. We felt protected. The community was tight and you could feel the brotherhood.

Thoko and her husband lived like that for years, housed by her mother until they got the home they live in today, in which she lives with her nephew's son. 'He has come as a blessing to me because I did not have children of my own. Although staying with him under those circumstances, I still love him like he were my own.'

'I personally feel that Chesterville had its fair share of trauma but there was a lot of good that rose up between the cracks,' Thoko said. She remembers going to Johannesburg in Form 2 on a school trip, which was the same year she met her husband. 'I got married at a very young age – at around seventeen or eighteen years. I got married because that is what the traditional custom is.'

And although years have gone by, passing times bring new changes to society. Thoko express her concern about the use of drugs and about the paranoia of not being able to walk around freely at night without getting mugged or harassed. 'We urge all youth to look within themselves and know their worth. You are more than what you imagine yourself to be, keep our streets safe.'

Chesterville Community Hall, 1960s
By Mabusi Cebekhule

The picture records a meeting that was held by Mr Chamberlain Nakasa at the Chesterville Community Hall in the 1960s. All the men who used to attend meetings in the community gathered together in order to deal with issues such as crime, violence and politics in the area, and also to find the way forward in challenging those issues that were affecting their way of living. The men are wearing black suits and ties to look neat and decent. Since the women were also part of the meeting, they have covered their heads in the traditional style as a sign of respect to their husbands. There are no fancy chairs around as only benches were used at that time.

In this picture, all are concentrating on Mr Chamberlain Nakasa's speech. He is briefing the members of the community and ward committees about politics and struggle and about what could be done to solve those problems. Some of them were standing like solders, watching and observing in search of anything that might disrupt the meeting and prevent it from continuing. Sometimes the members were attacked by spies and the Black Jack policemen, who would try to destroy whatever they had planned or were trying to achieve.

Because of the violence in the community of Chesterville during that time, few women attended those meetings so the majority were almost always men. But this time the men and women of Chesterville took time out to attend a briefing meeting about the politics happening in and around the area and how to go about fixing those issues that were major problems in their community. They had had problems before, even in their group, with people spying in the meetings in order to get paid, provide for their families, protect their lives to look perfect and innocent to the Black Jack policemen in the society so that they would not get killed, get arrested or chased away by the police.

The knowledge exchange taught and educated members of the Chesterville community about the subtleties of politics. They held their meetings undercover because of the Special Branch and Black Jack policemen.

'We must change the way we live by standing up and putting our feet down against violence, crime, politics, and the abuse of women and children,' said Mr Chamberlain Nakasa. They all seemed to agree with Mr Nakasa as they formed a new campaign called 'Operation Shanela', which dealt with the issues that affected the community and made an effort to solve those problems.

Pastor Duma
(1907–1976)
Peter McKenzie

This photograph was a personal affirmation of the Masibumbane project: a divine intervention if you like. It was an uncanny moment for me, my experiences with Reverend William Duma, which had faded with the filters of time, memory suddenly jolted by a man I and my very charismatic family were in awe of; he was 'a man of God'; my father's spiritual father. Quite remarkable when you think of the dynamics of the time, where apartheid deemed that you were subjected to parallel but separate existence: racial hierarchy.

The spiritual leader claims the central space in the image, the chosen one to intercede on their behalf, heal the sick and save the sinners. His followers reveal varying responses to the act of photography, strength drawn from spiritual fortitude, a variety of facial expressions, some downcast, accepting yet defiant.

The shortest man stands tall in the photograph, a presence among others of similar disposition. His countenance exudes the confidence that belief brings. He clutches the Bible with the assurance that its precepts would lead his followers out of the morass of the times, a contemporary manifestation of the Bible's Moses.

Another figure dominates the frame: Reverend Clifford Nxumalo, second in the back row from the left. He stands forward of the others, perhaps as a leader, his gaze unwavering and strong, exuberant of the fighter within. He, unlike Duma, was a spiritual and political firebrand. As Reverend Duma's translator, he animated Duma's sermons moving with ease from English to Zulu and vice versa as Duma often used both languages. He would take poetic licence to add humour and passion to Duma's preaching. They were a sight to behold: one a rock and the other impossible to hold down, a brotherhood of belief defiant of apartheid's intent.

Reverend Clifford Nxumalo was hounded by the apartheid security agents, jailed, and beaten. His family disintegrated as a result of the pressure of being continuously on the run, the only religious minister brave enough to bury fallen comrades, where they still rest nearby, hopefully in peace.

My memory, kindled by the photograph, goes back to the time of a devastated McKenzie family, uprooted from a settled, kind of middle-class existence in multi-racial Mayville to the desolation of the township of Wentworth, a dumping ground of disparate coloured communities from all over Durban, tiny houses smack against an oil refinery and a nearby sewage processing plant. So one either smelled petrol or shit depending on the way the wind blew.

Into this humble blockhouse of a traumatised family came the powerful presence of Reverend Duma or 'Pastor' as we knew him. My father would pick him up at the then Durban International Airport when he returned after counselling death row prisoners and administering last rites before they were hung, the only Black priest given this onerous honor. He was

always exhausted by the experience and would come for the sustenance of my mother's beans curry. Satiated he would sigh, 'Hawu Hilda, but you make a nice beans.' His recollections of those harrowing experiences of death row fell on my young impressionable mind trying to make sense of the drastic experience of being uprooted and having to start again, the societal and physical prison that deemed society and comrades to death.

On one such visit, Pastor arrived at our home to find that my mother had been hospitalised and needed to have her womb removed for fear of cancer. Pastor had my father take him to Addington Hospital immediately. He prayed over my mother and then advised her to get her clothes and return home sans procedure. She lived to be 93 years old.

Lewis Nkosi – urbanised, eager, fast-talking and brash
Peter McKenzie

Lewis Nkosi pauses mid-story, on a Drum magazine deadline, the pinkie on the space bar, undecided. The moment of contemplation, reaching for a phrase, a thought, a moment of lucidity in the crazy world of reporting apartheid. The square frame of the twin lens Rolliflex camera is pin sharp, the clutter of notes on his desk, probably his research notes, contrast sharply with the his impeccable neatness, he was like most Drum journalists of the time, a dapper man.

> *'In those days I had two sets of realities, one was the ugly world in which I lived my trapped life, and the other, more powerful, was the world of the books I read.'* Nkosi.

The delicate balance between staying sane amidst cynicism and of calm in disquiet. The massive burden of impossible objectivity tempered by the need to be true to self, community and struggle imperatives. This was the context, legacy and heritage in Drum's offices. It was the end of an era, an epoch of defiant journalism where the thin line between freedom of expression and investigative journalism were continuously challenged, where physical freedom and survival was a job in perpetual conflict with apartheid goons.

Lewis was born in Embo (Hillcrest) in 1936 and grew up in Chesterville. He started his career in journalism at the Ilanga news paper in Durban, moved to Jo'burg in 1956 and joined Drum magazine. Drum at this time was a motley staff of eccentrics, egoists and revolutionaries passionate about the written word and its possibilities to continuously challenge apartheid's oppression. Nkosi's colleagues included the legendary journalists and photographers of the time: Nat Nakasa his homie, Can Themba, Casey Motsisi Juby Mayet, Es'kia Mphahele, Henry 'Mr Drum' Nxumalo and Peter Magubane to name but a few. The magazine's proprietor was an equally eccentric British World War II fighter pilot Jim Bailey.

Their passion for journalism was contextualised by the headiness of the 50s and 60s often referred to as the Golden era of Drum. It was a time of intellectual vigour and creativity that defied apartheid's odds often leading to harassment, jail and exile. The heady illegal shebeens of Sophiatown and downtown Jo'burg were essential to this life on the edge which subscribed to the adage *'Live fast die young and have a good looking corpse'.*

They pursued writing exposes that was a pure form of realism, lust and the bravery of black life at this time. Prof Willie Kgositsile describes Nkosi as the anarchist 'Lewis did not observe any boundaries in connection with anything in life,' a poignant irony in

pervading apartheid policies and inherent racism.

Lewis went into exile in Britain and the USA in 1961 after he was banned under the Suppression of Communism Act. In exile he met great writers and artists including James Baldwin, Wole Soyinkwa and Aime Cesaire. He also wrote essays, radio plays for the BBC including 'The Transplanted Heart: Essays on South Africa' and Tasks and Masks in 1981. His best known novels include *Mating Birds, Underground People* and *Mandela's Ego*. In 2008 he was awarded the Order of Ikhamanga.

Nkosi returned to South Africa in 2001 and was a regular in the bohemian, arty world of Melville's pubs where he mentored young writers and held court over drinks. After one of these late night sessions he stumbled and fell on his way home and banged his head on the concrete. After a yearlong illness this legend finally succumbed.

His legacy is described by poet Vusi Nchunu, '*As a writer he refused to be tied down to any ideology. In fact, he seemed to mock ideologies in our political movement, he wanted to liberate the African voice.*'

Lewis Nkosi died on the 5th September 2010 in Johannesburg. He is survived by his twin daughters, Louise and Joy, and his wife, Astrid Starck.