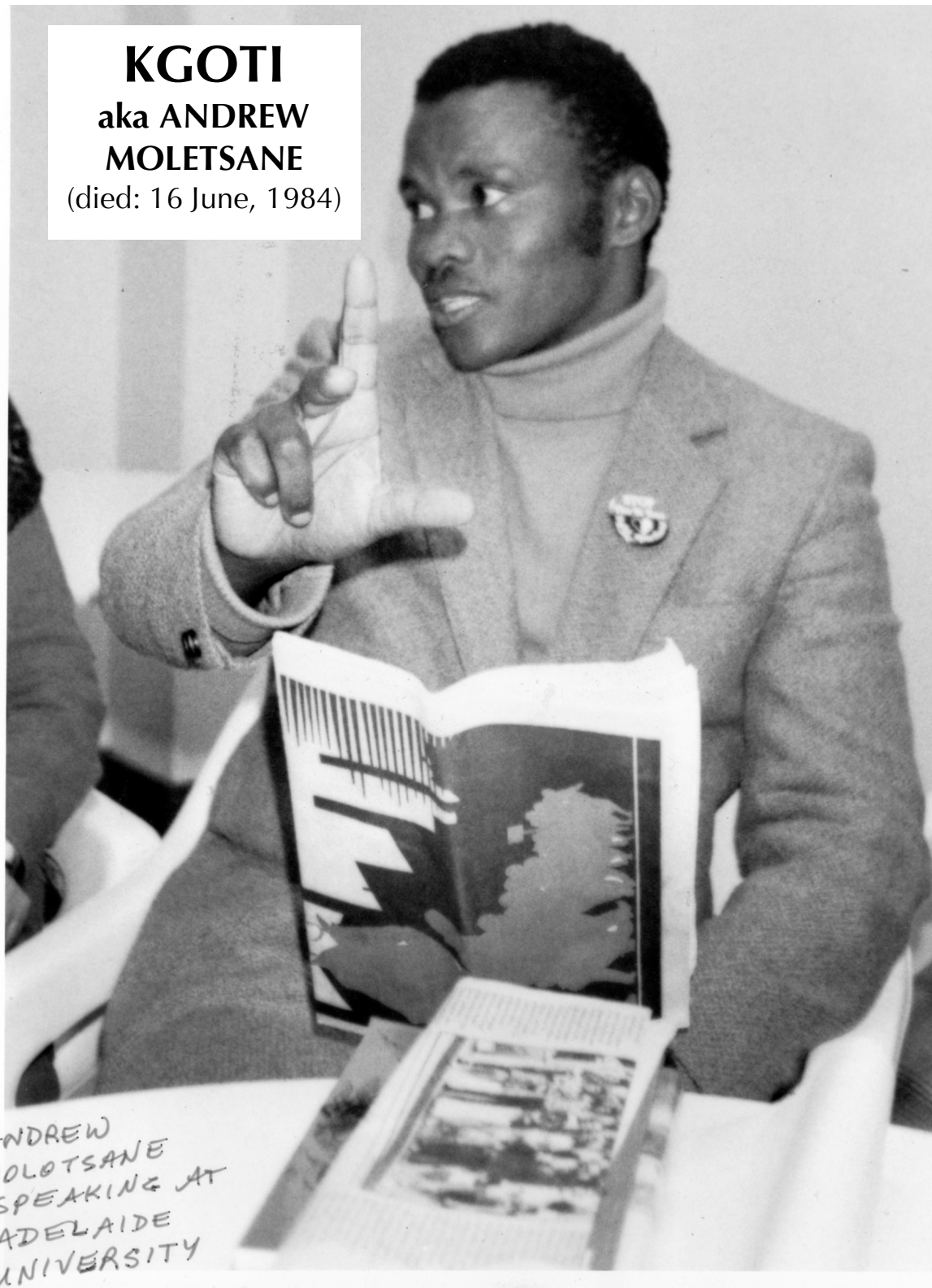


KGOTI

**aka ANDREW
MOLETSANE**

(died: 16 June, 1984)



ANDREW
MOLETSANE
SPEAKING AT
ADELAIDE
UNIVERSITY

Footprints

When Kgoti arrived in Lesotho on 16 June 1976, I was in Pietermaritzburg in a cell with my 10 clients/comrades who were held at the prison during their trial. No bail was granted them.

All our energies were concentrated on understanding the massacre of our children who protested the use of Afrikaans in some subjects at school.

It was a year later, before exile snatched me into her ranks, that I met Kgoti. We were instant friends. He had a sense of humour and could tease mercilessly.

Early in January 1978 he was one of the speakers at a memorial meeting called by students of Roma University to remember Dr GM Naicker, Advocate Duma Nokwe and Dr Rick Turner who had died.

I was sitting next to Khalakhi Sello and when Kgoti spoke - in addition to the three named, he mentioned the name of Jack Hodgson. Sello asked when Jack had died. I replied there was a small article in the Rand Daily Mail in December 1977. How can this young fellow (Kgoti) know about Jack - my peer?

I had learned from Kgoti that he had met Jack in Botswana before Kgoti's arrest. He told me how impressed he was with Jack who had been in the Treason Trial of 1956 (*see 156 Hands That Built SA by Naidoo*).

I was shocked to know then, he (Kgoti) was a member of the banned South African Communist Party and that he was on Party business with Jack. So was the banned Communist Party active in 1976?

Kgoti had married a young Mosotho woman, Sieptha, whom he wanted to divorce. He was going for military training – Umkhonto weSizwe. The marriage got him residency.

He drew papers from precedents I gave him and filed the papers and argued his divorce. He was amazing! Judge Mofokeng called me to his chambers and asked me to ensure that this brilliant 'child' was given a legal training.

He was much better without legal training than many who had spent years at University, training to be lawyers.

How could I tell the Judge the truth?

Kgoti was a teacher of politics to young refugees coming into Lesotho. He worked with Rev. John Osmer's caring for the young in Lesotho. He cared so completely for the youth who arrived daily.

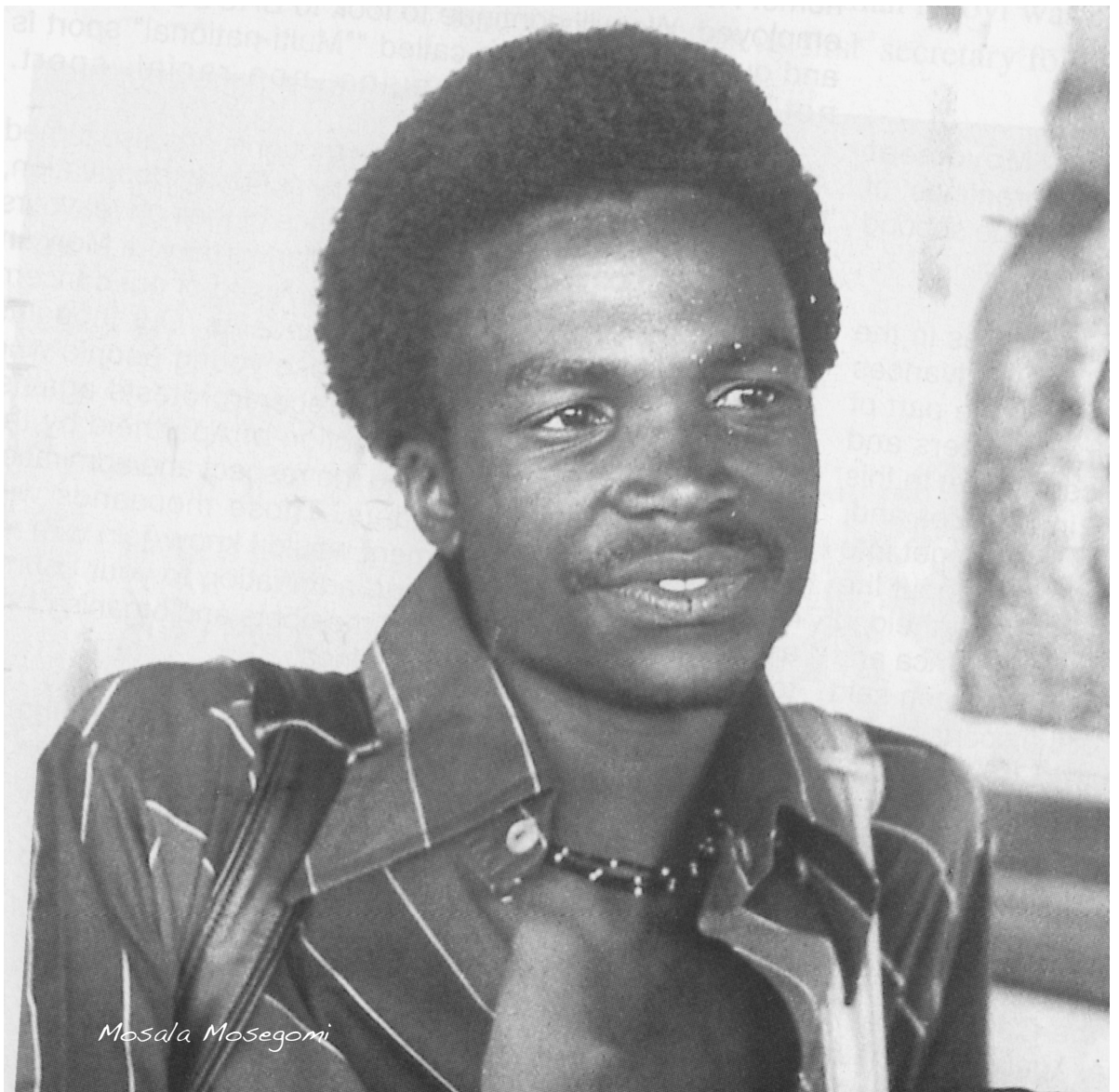
Unlike some refugees, Kgoti did not have a drinking problem then. When he left us for military training he was sober as a judge! (How true is this saying, when at the moment we are in the dog box with our Judge Motato, convicted of drunken driving in September 2009)?

Kgoti returned from training and I had heard that Willy and Kgoti had a party and both were seen drinking. He was too ashamed to see me again and scared of my "razor sharp tongue." Maybe the training was so severe that the alcohol habit kicked in.

It seems that all armies suffer this problem and articles written on the US army tell that this highly militarised state, has ensured that the USA has the biggest drug problem in the world.

Kgoti was deployed to Botswana, and in 1984 after hearing of his death I was told that, like our Judge Motato, he wrapped himself around an electric pole in a drunken stupor.

What an awful waste of such great talent to our country! Dear Kgoti!



Kgoti - as told by MOSALA MOSEGOMI

Mosala, who knew Kgoti long before any of us, lived in the same street as him. In an email to me dated 23 July 2009, he said:

“Hi Phyl,
When Kgoti died I was in Morogoro, Tanzania. What happened that morning was that I walked into one of the offices at Mazimbu. There was an elderly lady that had arrived from Zambia and was talking about her trip. During that brief moment she mentioned something about Kgoti, I waited to hear what was being said about my friend only

Footprints

to hear she was announcing his death. I could not believe it, and could not even get the details - I just left. I could not talk to anybody about it, because nobody would know or understand. So I mourned my friend's death in silence, without anybody knowing.

"I so much wished to attend his funeral, but did not know who would understand just how important that was to me. Something that was interesting was that Kgoti arrived in Lesotho on the morning of June 16 1976 and died in Botswana on June 16, 1984.

"The most touching for me was the last time I saw him in South Africa. It was in John Vorster (Police headquarters) during our detention. It was the day he was taken away after being charged. Since he was on the third floor and I was on the second floor, on the day of their departure they were all brought to the second floor to take a shower before leaving. He tried all means to peep at me through the window to say something, but the SB's (police) was following them, so he had to make an excuse that he wanted toothpaste from me. I gave it through the small window.

"The next we were to meet was at a reunion in Lesotho. It was an emotional meeting. I had lost so much weight and Kgoti attributed that to the stand I had taken in order to save him (Kgoti). Ever since we have remained very close until his death. "He was the best friend I ever had in exile because that was where our friendship and comradeship grew.

Bye
Mosala Mosegomi."

I (Phyllis) recommend that Mosala's book '**Soweto Explodes**', be incorporated into the school system. For those who thought June 16 was an event, Mosala's dissertation puts paid that notion. Like Mandela's Long Walk to Freedom, he builds up his story with the Nationalist Party making law of the Bantu Education Act (1954) and the countrywide protests it attracted.

How the protests countrywide built organisations and the formation of the African Students Movement (ASM) followed by the South African Student Movement (SASM) in every remote corner of our country.

Footprints

The detail of these committees, their names of personnel, students, some teachers and head-masters he covers are amazing. I too have learnt so much from this author.

On page xvi of his book, Mosala commences as follows:

"I thus start the book by chronicling the events and circumstances that led to the formation of the student's movement that came to be known as South Africa Students' Movement (SASM). SASM was formed from African Student Movement (ASM). ASM was a student movement that was initially somewhat aimed at helping secondary and high school student improve their performance in school. If it was political, the political agenda was covert.

"As the organisation associated with mature university and former university students who were members of Black Consciousness Movement, it became overtly political and changed into an inclusive South African Student Movement. The organisation was to grow from Soweto to other parts of South Africa. The discussion is necessary to provide both a context and a full understanding of the road that eventually led to the events that made Soweto explode on June 16th 1976. The discussion also clears misunderstanding about the national debate of who played a role in the events that were to change a nation."

Let me (Phyllis) add here that not much consideration has been given to:

- 1 Over 3000 ANC, PAC and others on Robben Island therefore families in SA
- 2 Several Namibians in prisons and Robben Island
- 3 The international Red Cross visits to our prisons
- 4 The UN and its recognition of the ANC and PAC
- 5 The anti-apartheid groups all over the world.
- 6 Families in SA receiving grants from Defence & Aid.
- 7 Banning of D&A groups in SA in 1966
- 8 H/A and banning orders on many South Africans
- 9 Banishment orders on hundreds of South Africans

And more, much more carried in our censored media!

Soweto Explodes carried the NAYO trial, in which Kgoti was an accused and Mosala, the author, was one of the seven State witnesses, who courageously refused to give evidence against their comrades.

The following is from another email by Mosala to me:

“(Soweto Explodes) is very comprehensive and contains a lot of new material particularly regarding youth and students movements before June 16, 1976. I have created a website to support the book: www.sowetoexplodes.com. There is a whole chapter on NAYO. This is the only book so far that tracks the history of NAYO and SASM from the beginning right to 1978 when the organisation were banned. It also has information on the whereabouts of all those students and youth that played important role in the different youth movements.

“In the NAYO Trial there were seven accused. Malebell Joe Molokeng (known as Bro Buti in Lesotho died in April 2009), Kgoti Molotsane, Sandile Benjamin Mfenyane (became a doctor after completing studies in Bulgaria), Bheki Langa (Ambassador in Russia), Phumzile Dyanti (became a doctor after studying in Cuba), Amos Masondo (Mayor of Johannesburg Metropolitan got five years in Robben Island) and David Nhlapo (who got five years in prison).

“Critical witnesses that refused to give evidence was myself, Kgaogelo Kgosana (became a doctor after completing studies in Bulgaria), Themba Kubheka (current Ambassador in Angola), Mphakama Mbete (Ambassador in Mexico and brother to Baleka Mbete who was also a member of NAYO) and Robbie Khame. “The five of us brought the case to its knees by refusing to testify, hence the state could only convict two out of seven. All the drama and stories are captured in the book.

“I grew up with Kgoti from the same township of Killarney in SOWETO, we met at high school in 1968. We got involved together in politics and that is how we both ended up in the NAYO Trial. After refusing to give evidence against Kgoti, I was charged under suppression of communism but later charges were withdrawn due to lack of evidence. Kgoti's acquittal was due to my refusing to testify and to corroborate another witness's evidence. He never stopped thanking me for that, but to me it was more a matter of a principle stand and commitment.

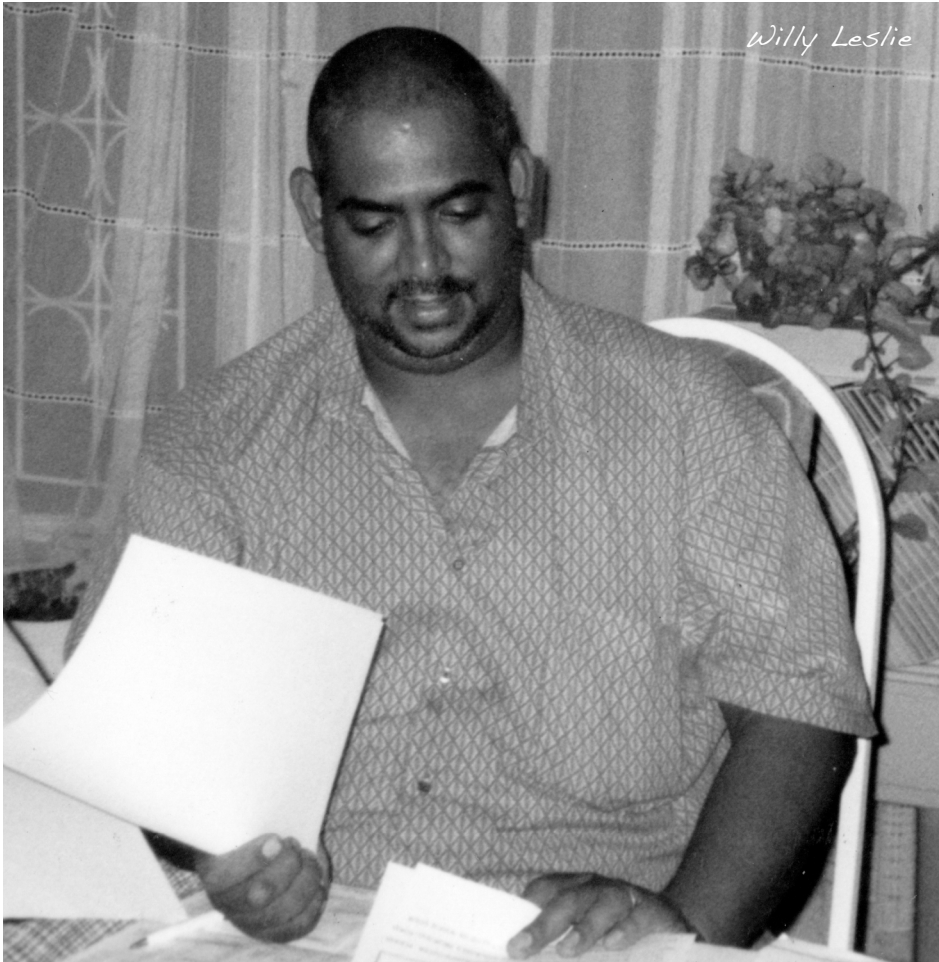
Mosala Mosegomi “

As told by WILLY LESLIE

(Born 19/7/51)

Willy visited today (2/7/2009) and in the discussion I realised how fond he was of Kgoti. They lived and worked together in Maseru as refugees.

It was Peter Wellman (*See Footprints in Grey Street by Naidoo*) who said before his death: "Waiting to die is boring." At 81 years I am also in the 'waiting' business, but as you can see from these great stories that need to be told, 'boring' is not a state of mind I can sustain. I hope you agree!



Footprints

On the 20 August 1976, Willy armed with a letter signed by Steve Biko on a South African Students Organisation (SASO) letterhead found himself in Maseru. I will attempt to piece their stories together.

Khoti arrived in Maseru on the 16 June 1976. In the book "The Road to Democracy Volume 2", the authors Gregory Houston and Bernard Magubane have this to say:

"Between June and October 1975, the majority of the leaders of the Ekukhanyeni Youth Club (NAYO) and several other organizations were arrested and later brought to trial in Johannesburg. The seven accused were Joseph Molokeng, Amos Masondo, Andrew Moletsane, Bheki Langa, Pumza Dyanyi, David Nhlapo and Benjamin Matenjane."

Let me tell you the story as Willy tells it. He takes long, and like Comrade Zuma, there are no **'no or yes'** in his account. A poor witness in our courts, nonetheless a great story teller.

After our children's uprising on the 16 June 1976, protesting the education system, children fled the country to Swaziland, Lesotho and Botswana, some as young as 9 years and sought freedom from torture and oppression of the ruling South African regime. But were the three governments prepared for this 'invasion'? Three of these independent states had just emerged from British Colonial rule.

So how free were they? In Lesotho 150 000 men were working in the mines in SA. Their wives unable to support themselves worked as domestic workers in South Africa.

Mostly the children cared for themselves unless lucky enough to have grandparents who lived beyond 45 years. The only jobs available to the Basotho were teaching, the church, the mines and the civil service under the British. (*See Le Rona Re Batho by Naidoo*).

It became known that Willy residing in the 'Coloured' Township of Wentworth, near Durban South Africa, would be forced to leave the country, to avoid being called as a state witness in the SASO trial. Newly married Willy (to Betty Montgomery), was assisted by Betty's reluctant parents, to Maseru, where they had relatives. Willy describes them as RICH relatives! They were the Andersons who owned the only Dry Cleaners (laundry) in Maseru!

Footprints

Willy crossed at the Ficksburg border (not at the border post) but wading through the Caledon River in winter. The Montgomery's went through the legal border, picked him up in Maputsoe, a little town in the north of Lesotho and drove to Maseru.

They met with the Andersons by lunchtime and were taken to the Maseru Club. They were not members nor dressed for this elite club, a remnant of British colonial rule, now with civil servants as members. While they ate others played bowls on the lawn. No blacks played bowls then!

Willy knew a Saso member Gabi Sandamela (PAC), formerly a student at Natal University residing at Wentworth Student's Residence, who was now at Roma University. They went out to find him. He could not help as a student and was not willing for his family to deal with a political stranger and refugee.

He referred Willy to Bogart who had an upmarket clothing outfitters shop near Sello's office in Maseru. Bogart (PAC) could not accommodate Willy at his Seapoint rooms which were occupied by the PAC.

Both Bob Matjie and Kay Sello were ANC, but Willie did not know of them.

With no accommodation, he was taken to the police at 10 pm to declare himself a refugee. Listening to the SAP being questioned by the South African parliament today and the response of Tim Matthews acting police Commissioner saying "I am not aware that there are (police) stations without telephones..."

Willie remembered the police in Maseru taking his statement. It was tedious with Willy spelling each word and having difficulty with the word REFUGEE. This was a ruse of the Lesotho police as their literacy rate was the highest in Africa. Maybe checking to see how authentic Willy was!

Emmanuel Malopo, son of CD Malopo, then Minister of Foreign Affairs in a BNP party (Basotho National Party) was called to help. They were anxious to find a home for Willy and Betty's parents - but failed! They decided to keep them in jail for a few days. It was formality to keep applicants in prison for two weeks or longer until satisfied that

Footprints

applicants were not South African spies or BCP (Basotholand Congress Party) members.

They did the same with Kgoti and Jerry Modisane, who arrived before the Soweto Uprising.

During the interview Willy showed them the SASO letter, signed by Steve Biko, which was read several times. Who was Steve Biko they asked? A year later they got to know who he was. But for now they were puzzled!

The police confronted by Mr Montgomery, could not understand his command of Sesotho in spite of his name! They wanted to find alternate accommodation, being confronted by the tears of Mrs Montgomery and the pleading of Willy's father-in-law.

The police did not want to lock up Willy and his in-laws, and kept asking if they knew anyone in Maseru. The in-laws said they had relatives by the name of Moshabisha living in the Seapoint area. One officer knew of them. They pretended to be looking for this relative at both Victoria and Maseru Hotel but instead Willy paid for their beers and cigarettes.

Between 2am to 3am they arrived at his home but the occupants pointed to the hut across the road. This hut had its thatch coming off the roof and parts of the mud-plastered walls with huge holes. Following the police Willy and his in-laws watched them kick the door in and rudely awaken the occupants from whom they wished help.

Eventually it was settled that Willy would live in this one roomed house. The only bed occupied by the couple and their baby. Luckily, Will had packed his sleeping bag and slept in it on the floor beside the bed, while Betty's parents slept in the car. It was winter!

There was no bathroom except a large basin where the young couple washed and left for work when the child minder arrived to boil water and fix Will's wash basin. Betty's parents washed in the basin too and with breakfast over they went to the police station.

Daily reporting at the police station meant that Willy had to write his statement again. When completed he met his host and they went shopping at Maseru Supermarket near Queen 2 Hospital on Kingsway.

Footprints

Willy filled up the trolley with over R90.00 groceries etc. and that must have eased the tensions of how this poor family was going to feed three extra mouths. Willy's in-laws left soon as he was established in the home at Seapoint in the first week of his exile.

Before exile in Lesotho, Willy worked in Umbilo Road as a fitter, turner and exhaust technician. It was these skills that set him apart from other exiles. He found work or could be easily self-employed. I remember a time when he employed several refugees.

By now his host's wife and child had moved to the family home across the pot-holed street, and Willy could sleep on the only bed with his host.



At independence the only macadamised road in Lesotho was in Maseru from the British ambassador's house to his office.

Within the first week, returning after the daily visit to the police, Willy heard a familiar voice behind him saying 'don't shout, carry on walking. See you at 7.00 pm this evening.'

Willy knew that it was Gwaza who left the country in 1974 with Keith Makoape. They had lived with Bishop Phillip in Merebank, whenever they were in Durban.

Footprints

That evening at 7pm, Willy was visited by Chris Hani, Japhet Ndlovu, Rev. John Osmer and Gwaza. He found difficulty being introduced to John Osmer (from his black consciousness training white people were the enemy). He behaved similarly to Rev. Mike Lapsley when he worked with students at the Wentworth Campus. His 4 visitors welcomed him to the ANC.

He met Comrade Khoti the next day!

Willy was very surprised: **'I did not know I was ANC'**. He worked with Gwaza in South Africa not knowing he was working with the ANC! John had arranged that Willy live at the Anglican Centre. A month later he was joined by Betty.

After Willy had left South Africa, they raided his home in Wentworth (SA) and took Betty in for questioning, asking for Willie's whereabouts.

Betty enrolled for a teacher training course, and both went for political education and their tutors were Gwaza, Charles Ntai, Jongwe, and yes Comrade Kgoti.

Those seeking political asylum were growing and the Lesotho government had acquired a home, which the exiles promptly named the CAMP. When I saw it there were some 30 comrades living in a three bed-roomed house with one bathroom/toilet, and 30 foam-rubber mattresses. Willy and Betty lived in the "guest house" (misnomer for servants-quarters). John Osmer took my extra blankets and one of my two heaters for the camp.

As more homes were found, so too the venues for our political classes changed. Soon thereafter Willy was employed with CARE Lesotho, with the help of Rev. John Osmer, and Kathy Royer the Menonite representative dealing with refugee issues. This gave Willy a home of his own and a home to exiles.

Willy and Betty are alive and they must be interviewed. For wonder of wonders, he became the South African ambassador to Lesotho, shortly after democracy, following the death of Japhet Ndlovu (the first South African ambassador) and that is a great story. His Excellency Willy!

As told by IRENE GALE

Irene Gale's email to me -12 July 2009:

"I'm sure I told you that, on both occasions he stayed with us, Andrew would head off to his bedroom early to work on his papers. But on the last day of the second visit, when I got back from the airport and went into his room to change the sheets etc, I was hit by the smell of whiskey.

"I found that he had clearly tipped over a bottle of it, and there was a large wad of soaked pages from a notepad in the rubbish basket, filling the room with fumes.

"Later the young people he'd stayed with in Melbourne commented on his keen liking for whiskey. It was clear that while he was staying with them he had felt quite confident to drink with them, but while staying with us old fogies he had not been game to drink and so had gone into his room each night to 'work on his papers'. We were rather stunned that he'd felt so constrained when with us. We drank wine with our evening meal, but didn't drink much other than that. We would not have been shocked."



ANDREW MOLOTSANE SPEAKS WITH SOME
ADELAIDE 'CARE' MEMBERS.



On March 29, 2007 Kgoti's name rang loud and clear in the Australian parliament as evidenced below:

"...and I can recall too Madam Speaker, a very personal connection to South Africa. I recall one brother, a member of the ANC who fled the terror in his homeland, Andrew Moletsane. Andrew came to my home in Otara in South Auckland, to give testimony about the terror being imposed by the crumbling apartheid regime of South Africa. A few years later, Andrew Moletsane was hunted down and murdered in Botswana by one of Botha's goon squads. His name is recorded forever in the List of ANC Members who died in Exile: March 1960 - December 1993."

- Hone Harawira, Spokesperson for Disarmament and Arms Control during a debate on the Terrorism Suppression Amendment Bill - 29/3/ 2007

Footprints

As we know Kgoti's died in a car accident, but the speaker above may not be so far off the mark – Botha and his "goon squad" and other architects of apartheid must be held accountable for the deaths of our comrades in exile.

The Maori of New Zealand and most indigenous people all over the world have suffered (and continue to suffer) from the disease of alcoholism brought by the colonisers.

Kgoti looms large in our proud heritage!

Hamba Kahle Kgoti, my son and comrade!

Phyllis Naidoo

Durban

14 September 2009.