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Heritage Month is celebrated annually from 1 to 30 September. It recognises aspects of South African culture that are both tangible and intangible: creative expression, such as music and performances; our historical inheritance; language; the food we eat; as well as the popular memory.

The 2016 celebrations were aimed at highlighting the role played by the Living Human Treasures, our living legends, the custodians of the cultural heritage and indigenous knowledge for their immense contribution to the arts, culture and heritage sector. It was through the works of these icons that we were able to get international organisations, civil society movements and different nations to pledge solidarity and support the worldwide anti-apartheid movement.

It was significant to launch this month in Sophiatown, an area which played such a pivotal role in the political and cultural struggle of our people and was forging a non-racialism that in 1955 earned the wrath of the apartheid government and was mercilessly demolished and its people forcibly removed to far flung places.

This much beloved town, also called Sof'town or Kofifi, was flattened to the ground and renamed Triomf by apartheid architects as if to celebrate their destruction. It would only be in 2006 that the place changed to the name and identity with which its former residents had known it.

It is in this place where some of the legends were made. Sophiatown as a whole is of great historical significance in our cultural and historical life.

South Africans celebrate Heritage Day by remembering the cultural heritage of the many cultures that make up the population of South Africa. Various events are staged throughout the country to commemorate this.

Some of the historical milestones commemorated in this publication:

- The South African Constitution: The Foundation of a Healthy Democracy
- Samora Machel: The Loss of an Enlightened Leader
- 16 June 1976: A Day that Changed the Course of South Africa
- A 50-Year-Old Memory: District Six
- The Historic Women’s March of 1956: More than 20 000 women marched to the Union Buildings
- Sophiatown: One of the last places where people of any race could live together
- The University of Fort Hare: The 100th Anniversary
- Sol Plaatje’s Native Life: 100 Years in South Africa
- Delville Woods: Honouring South Africans Who Fought in World War I
- Indian Culture: Celebrating over 150 Years in South Africa
The South African Constitution is a remarkable document born out of conflict and a fractured past. It is regarded as undoubtedly one of the most enlightened and progressive constitutions of any nation in the world.
At its heart it, the South African Constitution places 'human dignity, equality and freedom'. These are an important part of its essence. It seeks to protect South Africans from injustice and to defend the basic rights of its ordinary people against any possible abuse of power. South Africa’s Constitution has journeyed a long way to attain its current status. As we commemorate the 20th anniversary of the acceptance of the South African Constitution, we realise increasingly how valuable it is, how it managed to heal a fractured history, and how important it is to protect all South Africans and to guide us as we move into the always uncertain future.

Following the fall of the apartheid government, it became imperative to establish a Constitution that would provide for a healthy democracy in South Africa while protecting the rights of minorities and, above all, the human rights of individual South African citizens. The process of constructing, drafting and accepting the Constitution was an arduous one. From the beginning, the importance of the Constitution was appreciated, given the particular circumstances, the need to right so many wrongs and, at the same time, to provide reassurance and to allow for the protection of different languages and cultures.

The South African Constitution was established through a carefully considered process involving a great deal of consultation and negotiation. Most of all it owes so much to the enlightened approach of the African National Congress (ANC) and their conviction of the importance of the basic human rights for which they had struggled so long. It also owes a great deal to certain members of the previous ruling party who came to realise the evils of the existing regime and the absolute necessity for change.

The Preamble to the Constitution establishes the integrity of the process. It acknowledges South Africa’s problematic past and presents the
Following the fall of the apartheid government, it became imperative to establish a Constitution that would provide for a healthy democracy in South Africa while protecting the rights of minorities and, above all, the human rights of individual South African citizens.

The Constitutional Committee of the Assembly canvassed public participation and worked long and hard; the Constitution was finally signed into law by Nelson Mandela on International Human Rights day, 10 December 1996. It represents a remarkable achievement by representatives of all South Africans.

The South African Constitution is very special in that it places the Bill of Rights for all human beings at its heart. Chapter 2 states explicitly that the Bill of Rights is a cornerstone of democracy in South Africa. It is designed to protect each person under South African law and to ensure that we are all equal before the law. This is possibly the most important part of the South African Constitution as it emphasises essential elements of human life such as the right to equality, human dignity, life, freedom of expression, the right to education as well as language and culture. This carefully constructed Bill...
The South African Constitution was established through a carefully considered process involving a great deal of consultation and negotiation of Rights was a collaboration between the active political parties at the time with the African National Congress playing a key role.

The Constitution explicitly acknowledges the importance of culture in the development of South Africans. To this end it has established the Commission for the Promotion and Protection of Rights of Cultural, Linguistic and Religious Communities. The Constitutional Court also houses an impressive and significant collection of South African art as a symbol of the importance of culture to the people of South Africa.

As we celebrate the 20th anniversary of this triumph of human rights and dignity in South Africa, we are still confronted with the on-going demands of the task of preserving and building on this achievement. For example, the danger of a lapse into racism or other forms of sectarianism is always there. This is a human failing that must be continually countered, particularly in our country where the apartheid system was born and its evils realised. For example, the increasing use of social media has exacerbated the effects of these evils and it is essential to find means to counter this without compromising legitimate freedoms.

It is necessary for government to exercise a constant vigilance to find strategies to counter racism, xenophobia and other forms of sectarianism; to build tolerance, the concept of ubuntu and an enlightened and prosperous civil society. Because of the importance of building social cohesion and the tolerant expression of South Africa’s rich and multi-faceted nature, the Constitution emphasises culture and the need to support cultural diversity and to promote the development and expression of excellence in all of this country’s different cultures. It is here, as well as in may other spheres, that the government, through the Department of Arts and Culture, continues to play a vital role.
SAMORA MACHEL: THE LOSS OF AN ENLIGHTENED LEADER

On 19 October 1986, the aeroplane of the President of Mozambique, Samora Machel, mysteriously crashed in the Eastern Transvaal region of South Africa. The lives of Machel and 33 of his entourage were lost. It has been said that the plane was diverted from its course by a false beacon but this mysterious accident remains an unsolved puzzle in our Southern African history.
Samora Machel was born on 29 September 1933 to cotton farmers in the village of Chilembene in the Gaza province of Mozambique. At a young age Machel was enrolled in a Catholic school run by missionaries, there he acquired his early education and demonstrated his innate leadership ability. It is there too that his strong moral values became firmly entrenched. Honesty, integrity and compassion are some of the qualities that would later guide his political career.

Machel then studied to become a nurse – one of the few professions open to black Mozambicans at the time. Already attracted to Marxist ideals at that stage, he began his political activities while working in a hospital, where he protested that black nurses were paid less than white nurses for doing the same job. He soon went on to follow in the footsteps of his great grandfather who had fought against the Portuguese colonial government during a local uprising. Samora Machel joined FRELIMO (The Mozambique Liberation Front). FRELIMO was founded in 1962 as an emancipation movement that fought against the Portuguese for Mozambique’s independence. In 1964 he began training in Algeria as one of 250 fighters and soon engaged the Portuguese forces.

On 25 June 1975, after the fall of Salazar in Portugal in 1974, Mozambique’s independence was announced and, in the same year, Samora Machel became the first president of his newly liberated country. After gaining independence for his country, Machel continued the struggle as an avid advocate of social justice, education and equality for all.

Following the success of the emancipation movement in Mozambique, Machel believed that it was imperative to support other African countries in their battle against discriminatory and undemocratic governments. Samora Machel therefore played a prominent part in supporting freedom movements in then Rhodesia (known today as Zimbabwe) and the African National Congress-led movement in South Africa. When Machel died, he was deeply mourned all over Africa, particularly in Mozambique, a nation had lost an enlightened leader.

Machel’s death has been surrounded by a great deal of controversy, especially due to the events that occurred leading up to his death. The country was embattled because of an armed uprising by the RENAMO movement that was supported by both the South African and Rhodesian governments of the time. After six South African soldiers died in a landmine explosion near the border of Mozambique in the year of Machel’s death, there was a high degree of tension between South Africa and Mozambique.

When Machel received intelligence that his life could be in danger, he prepared his colleagues for that possibility. Speculation and suspicion still haunts the tragedy and the loss of a notable leader. Although South Africa’s Truth and Reconciliation Commission opened an investigation into the crash in 1998, the case has still not been resolved. Machel’s presidency ended after eleven years in office. As a leader he advocated many worthy causes, including education for all. In 2005, fees for primary school were eradicated making it accessible to everyone. Unfortunately, the development of the economy necessary to support these initiatives proved a great difficulty. Nevertheless, he remains a great symbol of the struggle to establish freedom in Africa. ▲
On 16 June 1976, high school students in Soweto took to the streets in a peaceful protest against the mandatory use of Afrikaans as a language of instruction in black secondary schools. The students planned to meet at Orlando Stadium before marching to the regional offices of the Department of Bantu Education, where they intended to raise their grievances with the authorities.

The 1953 Bantu Education Act was one of apartheid’s most offensively racist laws. It brought African education under control of the government and extended apartheid to black schools. Prior to the apartheid government’s Bantu Education Act, 90% of black South African schools were state-aided mission schools. The new Act demanded that all such schools register with the state, and removed control of African education from the churches and provincial authorities. This control was centralised in the
Bantu Education Department, a body dedicated to keeping it separate and inferior. Almost all of the mission schools closed down.

Under this Act, many more children were enrolled and the existing schools became extremely overcrowded – with class sizes of some 60 children – and the quality of the education declined. Fewer than 10% of black teachers had a matric certificate in 1961 and the schools were poorly equipped, with no science laboratories or sports fields, and often no library. Many children dropped out of school. According to South African History Online, ‘Because of the government’s ‘homelands’ policy, no new high schools were built in Soweto between 1962 and 1971 – students were meant to move to their relevant homeland to attend the newly built schools there.

The students planned to meet at Orlando Stadium before marching to the regional offices of the Department of Bantu Education, where they intended to raise their grievances with the authorities.

Then in 1972 the government gave in to pressure from business to improve the Bantu Education system to meet business’s need for a better trained black workforce. 40 new schools were built in Soweto. Between 1972 and 1976 the number of pupils at secondary schools increased from 12,656 to 34,656. One in five Soweto children were attending secondary school.

In 1976 the government introduced the compulsory use of Afrikaans as a medium of instruction from Grade 7 – then Standard 5. Circuit inspectors and principals received the directive: ‘It has been decided that for the sake of uniformity English and Afrikaans will be used as media of instruction in our schools on a 50-50 basis.’

What this meant was that mathematics and social studies were to be taught in Afrikaans, while general science and practical subjects such as housecraft and woodwork would be taught in English.

In the peaceful protest march on June 16, the school students carried placards that read, ‘Away with Afrikaans’, ‘Amandla awethu’ (‘Power to the
people’) and ‘Free Azania’ (‘Free South Africa’). They sang the hymn ‘Nkosi Sikelel’iAfrika’ (God Bless Africa), now the basis for the national anthem of democratic South Africa.

On that morning, pupils gathered across Soweto to set off for Orlando Stadium. By mid-morning, over 5 000 students had gathered on Vilakazi Street and more were arriving every minute. It is estimated that over 15 000 students, dressed in their school uniforms and aged between 10 and 20, were marching that day.

On the way to the stadium they were met by police, who had formed a wall facing the pupils. Warning the students to leave, the police ordered them to end the march and disperse. A violent confrontation ensued in which students threw stones and police fired teargas and bullets. News of the events in Soweto soon spread, igniting uprisings around the country in which hundreds of people died. One of the first to be killed by the police was twelve-year-old Hector Pieterson. Newspaper photographer Sam Nzima was in Soweto that day, covering the protests and the riots that followed. His iconic image of Pieterson’s body being carried by high school student, Mbuyisa Makhubo with his sister, Antoinette Sithole running alongside, is a graphic representation of repression under the apartheid regime and has become an iconic image around the world of the senseless cruelty and brutality of the apartheid state.

In 1996, Antoinette Sithole testified at the Truth and Reconciliation Commission on events of the day: ‘When we arrived at Pafengeng there was confusion. There were police. They threw us with tear gas. We ran away and we hid ourselves... There was a gun sound. There was teargas and there was confusion. I saw people hiding themselves and then I hid myself too. While we were standing there I then – I was afraid because I didn’t know where Hector has gone to and people were holding something. And then I moved forward and I could not see properly, and I saw Hector’s shoe.’

They were helped to a clinic by journalists, but Pieterson was already dead.

In the days that followed, government buildings were torched, police were stoned, and many black school pupils and political activists abandoned their lives and families in South Africa and left the country to escape the police crackdown and to build a resistance against apartheid from neighbouring countries.

The effects of the Soweto Uprising changed the history of South Africa. The youth realised that they could stand up to the government. The deaths

The 1953 Bantu Education Act was one of apartheid’s most offensively racist laws. It brought African education under control of the government and extended apartheid to black schools.
of more than 100 Soweto children spurred resistance in other parts of the country. Youth political organisations grew with the formation of the Congress of South African Students (COSAS) in 1969. In many countries around the world, solidarity movements were roused as an immediate consequence of the revolt. The ‘anti apartheid movements’ gave their support to the pupils, putting pressure on the apartheid government to temper its repressive rule.

Another consequence of the Soweto Uprising was that thousands of young people left the country without finishing their education, having become disillusioned by the government crackdown and harassed by the police. Many chose to go into military camps and received military training by the African National Congress (ANC), others completed their education in foreign countries, often communist oriented countries. Most of the exiles finally returned home in the early 1990s after the unbanning of the ANC and other banned organisations, the release of ANC leader Nelson Mandela after 27 years in prison, and the birth of democracy in 1994.

Every year the nation remembers the day police shot at children marching in Orlando West in Soweto to protest Afrikaans as a medium of instruction in the then government’s ‘Bantu Education’ system. Vuyani Dance Theatre and Gregory Maqoma’s landmark 2002 work, Rhythm Colour was re-staged on 16 June 2016 at the Soweto Theatre in memory of the Soweto Uprising. Marking four decades since the children of Soweto mobilised against apartheid, it is fitting that Rhythm Colour, which evokes the sights, sounds and atmosphere of that fateful time, was now staged in the heart of the township where the tragedy unfolded.
The year 2016 marks 50 years since the forced removals in District Six in the Western Cape, under the apartheid government’s Group Areas Act. Demolished based on the notion that different races should be separated, District Six became the largest concentration of residents subjected to forced removals under the apartheid government’s Group Areas Act. Following this, in 1966 the absconded land was proclaimed as a ‘white’s only’ area under the afore mentioned law of 1950.

The area was named in 1867 as the Sixth Municipal District of Cape Town. The District Six neighbourhood is bounded by Sir Lowry Road on the north, Tennant Road to the west, De Waal Drive to the south and Cambridge Street to the east. By the turn of the century it was already a lively community made up of former slaves, artisans, merchants, bohemians and other immigrants. The population also consisted...
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Soon after the 1966 demolition, the area was renamed Zonnebloem. District Six, a pulsating communal hub was robbed of its entirety and its strong community foundation was difficult to reclaim in the Cape Flats, where certain groups were moved to. All that was left were the churches and mosques, which demonstrates the strong philosophy of coexistence in District Six.

Since the fall of apartheid in 1994, the South African government has recognised the older claims of former residents to the area, and pledged to support rebuilding.

Apart from being a major event in South Africa’s segregated history, District Six has provided a creative starting point for many South African artists who were all inspired to document this intricate story through their art. Dollar Brand (now Abdullah Ibrahim), Gerard Sekoto and, most direct to the content: David Kramer and Taliep Petersen who created District Six:...
The arts had always been a driving force for the community of District Six, for example: the Kaapse Klops (Cape Town Minstrel Carnival), various artists, intellectuals and writers played a role in helping the community flourish regardless of their environment.

Formally a Methodist Church, a communal sanctuary in District Six, the District Six Museum houses the last remnants of what was once a vivacious, assorted lucky packet of culture. The Museum desires to craft and use the memory of this mixed heritage instead of attempting to recreate this sensitive space that is still deeply entrenched in the entire beings of former residents. The Museum, which opened in 1994, focuses on the lives of the District Six residents and, specifically, the forced removals. These forced removals have become a prominent event in history, showcasing mass destruction of both homes and lives.

As one enters the Museum, one is confronted by a hanging display of street name signs that were kept safe by a member of the demolishing team. Metal and paint, yet they hold so much significance in such a tightly woven community, destinations that all speak of memories. There is a large map painted on the floor of the Museum, both this and the former represent the physical space of District Six. The entire Museum is crafted to reflect the delicate subject matter of people who owe their character to District Six. Inside the former place of worship, you will find a permanent exhibition: Digging Deeper, which opened in 2000. The exhibition finds meaning in the Museum space and how it is used and interrogated through the subject of memory. Digging Deeper is an interdisciplinary exhibition which uses the voices of ex-residents of District Six as its primary source. The exhibition, however, penetrates the surface of its content in order for visitors, especially ex-residents, to engage with our past as South Africans and how it affects our present. Some of the installations are replicas of bedrooms and other living areas in District Six homes. The joy in this is seeing a familiar doily draped over a coffee table and a porcelain dog perched on it politely. Domestic installations such as this create a sense of reality and allow us to reflect on the past just for a moment.

Fifty years later, it is evident that the Museum is an attempt to restore but also to reconnect with ourselves as human archives and each other in contemporary South Africa.
Albertina Sisulu and Helen Joseph at a meeting of the Federation of Transvaal Women (FEDTRAW) in 1987. Albertina Sisulu, wife of fellow activist Walter Sisulu, was a life-long political activist fighting against the injustices of apartheid. She was arrested and jailed numerous times for her political activities and was banned for most of the 1960s. On 9 August 1956, Sisulu joined in the 20 000-strong march led by Lillian Ngoyi, Helen Joseph, Rahima Moosa and Sophia Williams-De Bruyn to the Union Buildings in Pretoria.
The historic march in 1956 was a turning point in the role of women in the struggle for freedom and society at large. Since that eventful day, women from all walks of life became equal partners in the struggle for a non-racial and non-sexist South Africa.

The march was coordinated by the Federation of South African Women (FEDSAW) and led by four women anti-apartheid activists, Lillian Ngoyi, Helen Joseph, Rahima Moosa and Sophia Williams-De Bruyn.

Lillian Masediba Matabane Ngoyi ‘Mma Ngoyi’, was the first woman elected to the executive committee of the African National Congress (ANC), and helped to launch FEDSAW.

Ngoyi worked as a machinist at a textile mill and joined the Garment Workers Union (GWU) under Solly Sachs, she soon became one of its leading figures. Impressed by the spirit of ANC volunteers, Ngoyi joined the ANC during the 1950 Defiance Campaign and was arrested for using facilities in a post office that were reserved for white people.

Ngoyi’s energy and her gift as a public speaker won her rapid recognition, and within a year of joining the ANC she was elected as president of the ANC.

On 9 August 1956, more than 20 000 women marched to the Union Buildings in Pretoria to protest the extension of Pass Laws to women. In commemoration of this significant event, following the advent of democracy the Government of South Africa declared 9 August Women’s Day and August is celebrated annually as Women’s Month.
Women’s League. When FEDSAW was formed in 1954, she became one of its national vice-presidents, and in 1956 she was elected president.

In December 1956, Ngoyi was arrested for high treason along with 156 other leading figures, and stood trial in 1961 as one of the accused in the four-year-long Treason Trial. While the trial was still on and the accused out on bail, Ngoyi was imprisoned for five months under the 1960 state of emergency. She spent much of this time in solitary confinement.

Ngoyi was first issued her banning orders in October 1962. They lapsed in 1972, but were renewed for a new five-year period in 1975. She died on the 13th of March 1980 at the age of 69.

Helen Joseph was born 1905 in Sussex, England. Her service as an information and welfare officer in the Women’s Auxiliary Air Force during the Second World War, and her subsequent decision to become a social worker, exposed her to some of the realities of South African life after she came to settle and marry in Durban.

She was arrested on a charge of high treason in December 1956, and banned in 1957. Joseph’s life became a long saga of police persecution. She was the first person to be placed under house arrest in 1962, and she survived several assassination attempts, including bullets shot through her bedroom window late at night and a bomb wired to her front gate. Joseph was diagnosed with cancer in 1971, and her banning orders were lifted for a short time before being reinstated for two years in 1980. Joseph passed away on 25 December 1992 in Johannesburg.

Sophia Theresa Williams-De Bruyn was born 1938 in Port Elizabeth and rose from working in the Van Lane Textile factory to become an executive member of the Textile Workers Union in Port Elizabeth. She was a founding member of the South African Congress of Trade Union (SACTU), the predecessor to the Congress of South African Trade Union (COSATU). She is the last living leader of the historic Women’s March and is currently a provincial legislator in Gauteng Province for the ANC.

Rahima Moosa was born in the Strand, Cape Town on 14 October 1922. Moosa and her identical twin sister, Fatima became politically active after they became aware of the unjust segregationist laws that ruled South Africa. In 1943 Moosa became the shop steward for the Cape Town Food and Canning Workers’ Union. She moved to Johannesburg and became involved with the Transvaal Indian Congress and thereafter the ANC as the Indian Congress and the ANC had signed a pact for a common struggle. In 1955 she played a significant role in the organisation of the Congress of the People, where the Freedom Charter was adopted. In the early 1960s, Moosa became
listed, a status that she remained in until 1990 with the unbanning of the African National Congress. She died in 1993, a year before independence.

These women leaders delivered petitions to the then Prime Minister JG Strijdom’s office in the Union Buildings together with 20 000 fellow marchers. Women throughout the country had put their names to these petitions, indicating their anger and frustration at having their freedom of movement restricted by the hated official passes. Women from all parts of the country arrived in Pretoria, some from as far afield as Cape Town and Port Elizabeth. They then flocked to the Union Buildings in a determined yet orderly manner. They filled the entire amphitheatre in the bow of the graceful Herbert Baker building.

Women’s month is a tribute not only to the thousands of women who marched on that day in 1956, but also a tribute to the pioneers of the women’s movement in this country, dating back to 1913, when women like Charlotte Maxeke led the way in establishing the ANC Women’s League and encouraging women to engage in the struggle for freedom. Pioneers include Cissie, Jaynab and Amina Gool who were amongst the leaders of the National Liberation League and the Non-European United Front of the 1930s. The names of Ray Alexander Simons, Elizabeth Mafekeng and Elizabeth Abrahams will always be associated with the struggles of women.

Women’s Month also serves to recall and recognize the work of the stalwarts of the 1950s, who led militant women’s formation for the rights of workers and the rights of women.

There were also the women who formed the Black Sash and who were the first to protest against the disenfranchisement of the coloured voters during the 1950s. The coloured voters played an important role in the united front of anti-apartheid forces that developed in the last three decades of apartheid.

Since the advent of democracy and freedom, South Africa has seen a number of women taking up leadership positions in areas previously dominated by men. One of the success stories of our democracy is that of the representation of women in political and decision-making positions. Involving women in governance processes constitutes one of South Africa’s globally acclaimed success stories.

The election of Dr Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma in July 2012 as the first woman in Africa to chair the African Union Commission; the appointment of Dr Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, former Deputy President of the country, as the Under-Secretary-General and Executive Director of UN Women; and the positioning of other South African women such as Ms Geraldine Frazer-Moleketi, Special Gender Envoy to the African Development Bank; Ms Rashida Manjoo, Special Rapporteur on Violence against women, its causes and consequences; and Judge Navi Pillay as the High Commissioner for Human Rights and formerly as a judge in the International Criminal Court (ICC) is an indication of the impact that women in decision-making have in winning the trust and confidence of citizens in South Africa, on the continent and internationally.

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One of the few tangible reminders of the old Sophiatown is the Anglican Church of Christ the King, where Trevor Huddleston was rector.

Sophiatown, or Sot’own or Kofifi, in the suburbs of Johannesburg, was one of the last places in the city where people of any race could live or do business together. It became known for its bohemian lifestyle and vibrant music scene. Sophiatown flourished, attracting entrepreneurs, lawyers, activists and teachers, while the mix of cultures that became characteristic of the suburb inspired musicians, writers and artists.

Sophiatown, a portion of the farm Waterval, was bought in 1897 by Hermann Tobiansky to originally be developed as a suburb for whites and was established in 1904. But before 1913 blacks had freehold rights and they bought properties here. It was originally called Sophia, after Tobiansky’s wife. After 1919 it became known as Sophiatown, and later dubbed by its residents as ‘Kofifi’, and journalist Ntatemoholo Phahlane claimed this as his name for the suburb.

Phahlane says in his 2010 Bantu World article entitled ‘On the Natives and Gang-culture’: ‘Well, my coining of township nick-names began at my place of birth in Sophiatown, which I named Kofifi in 1943. To me, the Kofifi name means a cosmopolitan little black colourful town.’
Dr Xuma’s house now forms part of Sophiatown The Mix, which also incorporates the Trevor Huddleston CR Memorial Centre. Dr A.B. Xuma was a medical doctor who had trained in the United States and the United Kingdom. He was a local celebrity, President of the African National Congress and Chairperson of the Western Areas Anti-Expropriation and Proper Housing Committee. His house was a landmark in Sophiatown (73 Toby Street) and was declared a National Heritage Monument on 11 February 2006.

By the 1920s, many whites had moved out of Sophiatown, leaving behind a vibrant community of blacks, coloureds, Indians and Chinese. After 1913, blacks lost their smallholdings and farms in the country and flooded cities like Johannesburg. The suburb’s facilities simply couldn’t cope and by the 1940s Sophiatown was a ghetto – overcrowding and desperate poverty were evident on every street corner.

As in any ghetto, gangsters emerged, taking on names like the Americans, the Russians, and the Vultures, that they’d seen in American movies. The streets of Sophiatown were the scenes of fierce fighting, with many young men dying by knife or gun.

Sophiatown was the ‘Chicago of South Africa’, but it was also a vibrant community that produced not only gangsters and shebeen queens but also leading journalists, writers, musicians and politicians. It gave urban African culture its rhythm and style. By the 1940s, this historic suburb was a living example of South Africa’s potential for a multicultural society.

In the 1940s and ’50s, the multiculturalism of the multiracial inhabitants of Johannesburg’s Sophiatown kept the dreams of a true South African society alive. These dreams showed in the music, art and writing of a talented group of Sophiatown’s intellectuals like Oliver Tambo, who taught at Sophiatown’s St Cyprian’s School, the largest primary school in South Africa. It also inspired Gerard Sekoto, who captured the spirit of Sophiatown in his art; and journalists like Henry Nxumalo, who worked for Drum magazine, a publication that was in some ways the barometer of the time.

Further images of Sophiatown were built up in literature by a generation of South African writers: Can Themba, Bloke Modisane, Es’kia Mphahlele, Arthur Maimane, Todd Matshikiza, Nat Nakasa, Casey Motsisi and Lewis Nkosi who all lived in Sophiatown at various stages during the 1950s. They all shared certain elements of a common experience: education at St Peter’s School and Fort Hare University, living in Sophiatown, working for Drum magazine, exile, banning under the Suppression of Communism Act and, for many, the writing of an autobiography.

Into this colourful community came a young Anglican missionary priest from England, Trevor Huddleston, who belonged to a community of monks called the Community of the Resurrection (CR). Arriving in 1943, he soon immersed himself in the daily lives of the people of Sophiatown. Father Huddleston joined the protests against forced removals and completely won over the beleaguered community he served. He earned the nickname Makhalipile (the dauntless one).
During the next five years, Father Huddleston stood with Sophiatown. After he was recalled to England in 1955, he wrote *Naught for Your Comfort*, a scathing critique on the oppression of black South Africans by the government of the day. In 1981, the now-Archbishop Huddleston became president of the Anti-Apartheid Movement in the UK.

Of course, there was the music of Sophiatown, kept alive by jazz musicians like Hugh Masekela, Abdullah Ibrahim, Jonas Gwangwa and Miriam Makeba. They went on to become some of the most respected jazz musicians in the world. Sophiatown’s jazz musicians’ artistic and political influence radiated from South Africa, reaching the African diaspora and beyond. It expressed the ideals of freedom and equality that Sophiatown was famous for. In doing so, it helped engage the world in the struggle against apartheid.

The musical *King Kong*, sponsored by the Union of South African Artists, is described as the ultimate achievement and final flowering of Sophiatown multi-racial cultural exploits in the 1950s. ‘King Kong’ was a Sophiatown legend who gained popularity as a famous boxer, notorious extrovert, a bum and a brawler. The *King Kong* musical depicted the street life, the illicit shebeens, the violence, and something approximating the music of the township: jazz, penny whistles and the work songs of the black miners. When *King Kong* premiered in Johannesburg, Miriam Makeba, the vocalist of the Manhattan Brothers, played the female lead role. The musical later went to London’s West End for two years.

When the neighbouring white suburbs of Westdene and Auckland Park were expanding, demands were made on the government to extend white residential use into Sophiatown. Sixty years ago, as part of the apartheid government’s forced removal programme, Sophiatown was earmarked for destruction to clear the multiracial neighbourhood and turn it into a whites-only area. Two thousand policemen moved in with force, moving the black families to Meadowlands, Soweto while other ethnic groups were also moved under the ideologically designed laws of apartheid. Coloured people were moved to Eldorado Park in the south of Johannesburg; the Indian community to Lenasia; and the Chinese people to central Johannesburg.

The people of Sophiatown resisted the removal, but over some eight years the 65 000 residents were forced to relocate and Sophiatown was flattened while the area became a whites-only suburb called Triomf – Afrikaans for Triumph – by the government. They tried to create a suburb for the white working class but instead, Triomf became a suburb housing mainly poor white Afrikaners.

The Johannesburg City Council took the decision to re-instate the old name Sophiatown for the suburb and in 2006 Mayor Amos Mosondo reverted the name of Triomf back to Sophiatown. 

Mural ‘Sekoto in Sophiatown’ depicts Archbishop Trevor Huddleston walking the dusty streets of the famous suburb.
The University of Fort Hare was founded only six years after the establishment of the Union of South Africa. Its achievements since that time are truly remarkable. The DAC have supported the University of Fort Hare’s centenary commemorations for 2016.
The University of Fort Hare has come a very long way since it first opened its doors on the site of an old British fort in the Eastern Cape. In spite of its roots in a racially segregated society, including the heritage of being the first institution originally designed primarily for black people in South Africa and the ethnic restrictions imposed under apartheid, it has played a significant role in the education and development of individuals who later became part of our African academic elites and many who have played a decisive role in Africa’s political struggles.

This University has been the alma mater of many great historical figures in South African and Southern African development and the struggle for freedom. Nelson Mandela, who spent two years at Fort Hare, said in his biography that, ‘for young black South Africans, like myself, it was Oxford and Cambridge, Harvard and Yale, all rolled into one.’ Robert Sobukwe and Oliver Tambo, prominent figures in the South African struggle for freedom, were also educated there.

In spite of its history as a racially based college, it has become a respected Pan-African institution of higher learning, with a reach that spans the continent. African alumni include Robert Mugabe, who went on to liberate and subsequently lead the people of Rhodesia, now Zimbabwe, and Sir Seretse Khama, the first president of Botswana. In addition, Fort Hare has produced a number of notable academic figures. These include Loyalso Nongxa, a world-class mathematician who was the first black South African Rhodes scholar and later became Vice Chancellor of the University of the Witwatersrand.

Fort Hare is the custodian of precious documents that describe the roots of liberation movements such as the African National Congress and the Pan-African Congress. These are invaluable historical records of Africa’s political development and the struggle for freedom.

The site of the fort where the University was built lies between Lovedale and Alice in the Eastern Cape. Originally known as the South African Native College, it was opened in 1916 by then Prime Minister, General Louis Botha. Various missionary organisations played a decisive role in the establishment of this, the first African college meant primarily for black people. The original land was donated by the Church of Scotland. Here, the foundation of a highly important African academic tradition was laid.

Alexander Kerr was the college’s first principal and he, together with Davidson Don Tengo Jabavu, as the college’s first lecturers, worked tirelessly to prepare African students for matriculation and integration into higher education. Jabavu held a BA degree from London University and was one of the most highly educated black Africans in the Eastern Cape at that time. It was a visit to the Tuskegee Institute founded by Booker T. Washington in Alabama in the United States that particularly inspired his passion to impart Afro-centric values as well as a part of higher education.

Jabavu was not only a major contributor to the administrative and didactic activities in the growing institution, he also extended his accomplishments as a violinist, pianist and conductor to establish the Fort Hare Choir that, for instance, sang for the British Royal family during their visit in 1947. Awarded an honorary Doctorate in Philosophy, Jabavu stayed
on past his retirement in 1957 as Professor Emeritus whilst continuing to enrich academic and literary fields with a number of publications, including *The Black Problem* and *The Segregation Fallacy*, on racial discrimination.

A year after the college was declared an institution for higher education under the Higher Education Act of 1923; Zachariah Keodirelang Matthews became the first African student to obtain a BA degree. Matthews went on to become the first African to hold a Bachelor of Laws degree and subsequently, a Masters in Anthropology from Yale University in the U.S. He returned to the institution in 1936 as a lecturer in Social Anthropology and Native Law and Administration. At the same time, he made major contributions towards the Royal Commission of Inquiry into Higher Education for Blacks in British East Africa and in the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan.

Z. K. Matthews developed an influential academic voice as a member of various boards, including the Native’s Representative Council established during the Hertzog Bill deliberations, assuming the role of spokesperson for African interests. By the time both the Land Act and Native’s Act of 1935 had been enforced, Matthews had been promoted to the post of professor and head of African Studies at Fort Hare. He went on to concern himself more and more with political affairs and he played a major part in the formulation of the 1955 basic Freedom Charter by the South African Congress Alliance.

The progressive transition from South African Native College to the University College of Fort Hare under the Rhodes University Act of 1949, followed by its recognition as the University of Fort Hare was an important achievement. However, its transfer to a government institution under the Bantu Education Act of 1959, as well as the edict that it should only serve students of Xhosa ethnic backgrounds, jeopardised its core values: that it should be a racially and ethnically inclusive institution. The importance of addressing this, along with the rich African academic and political heritage of leadership at Fort Hare, are among the reasons that Fort Hare became an important priority for the new democratic government in the transformation of universities and the journey towards unity.

The strategic plan introduced in 2000 provided a firm foundation for re-establishing public confidence for the University’s operations and ability to offer quality education. The institution’s operation plan of 2004 served to guide the path of transformation, while the current strategic plan for 2009 to 2016 establishes a path through which transformation can be best effected. The strategy is to integrate the University’s heritage, rich in the development of influential leaders and academics, with modern initiatives as we move into the new information age. Fort Hare will uphold its traditions in addition to introducing new ideas in the academic, political and art spheres across the African continent. This is a crucial heritage of vital importance in achieving reconciliation and ultimately integration across every facet of South African life and culture.
Native Life in South Africa emphasised the effects on black South Africans of being excluded and made to feel alien in the land of their birth. The document holds great significance as its content was presented in a very precise and intelligent manner and today serves as a clear narrative of those events.

100 YEARS SINCE
SOL PLAATJE’S
Native Life in South Africa

‘Awaking on Friday morning, June 20, 1913, the South African Native found himself, not actually a slave, but a pariah in the land of his birth.’ A powerful opening line for a highly influential piece of literature crafted by a literary pioneer, Sol Plaatje.

This great South African writer was born on the 9 October 1876 on the farm Doornfontein in the Boshof district in what is now the Free State. He was given the second name Tshekiso. In Tswana this means, ‘that which you do for advantage or gain’. His parents Johannes and Martha Plaatje, who were employed by Christian missionaries, certainly wanted their son to seek advantage for himself and, in spite of the adverse circumstances, he managed to do exactly that and so much more. Plaatje came from a humble background. After the age of four he grew up on the mission station at Pnie where he enjoyed a few short years of formal education. This was a mission of the Berlin Missionary Society, and here his love of learning was nurtured by the missionary, Ernst Westphal and his wife, Wilhelmina. His love for learning and linguistics continued as he studied further on his own initiative. After he started work in the Kimberley post office, Plaatje passed the highest clerical examination in the Cape Colony, beating every other candidate.

His home language was Tswana but he grew up to master many languages and to express profound ideas in several of them. In fact, he became fluent in eight languages, including English, Dutch, German and the main Southern African languages. This earned him a position in court as an interpreter and clerk to the administrator of Native Affairs during the Siege of Mafeking from 1899 to 1900.

The Mafeking Diary of Sol T. Plaatje, first published only in 1997, is a vivid and unique report of the Siege of Mafeking by a black South African. Plaatje’s personal record contained an experimental and playful approach to prose, combining original figures of speech with quirky humour.

He went on to become a journalist after the Anglo-Boer War, and later became editor and assisted in establishing the first Tswana language
newspaper at Mafeking, Koranta ea Becoana. After moving to Kimberly, Tsala ea Becoana became his new project. This new newspaper that he established was later renamed to Tsala ea Batho: 'The Friend of the People'.

In 1912 this scholar, postman, clerk, interpreter and now journalist became involved in politics to try to defend the rights of black South Africans. He was appointed the first secretary general of the South African Native National Congress (SANNC), now the African National Congress (ANC), upon their formation. Plaatje became particularly active in the

SANNC in order to relay the views of the knowledgeable and property-owning Africans in South Africa to the British people. In 1913, when the Native Land Act was introduced, it prohibited any black African from owning land except in areas allocated to them, which only amounted to ten per cent of the entire land surface of South Africa.

Plaatje was determined to use his mastery of language to show the British and American people the injustice of the proposed law and how was an absolute perversion of human rights. His book, Native Life in South Africa was born during Plaatje's trip to Britain to make the Imperial Government aware of the nature of this barbaric law. Native Life in South Africa emphasised the effects on black South Africans of being excluded and made

to feel alien in the land of their birth. The document holds great significance as its content was presented in a very precise and intelligent manner and today serves as a clear narrative of those events.

Sol Plaatje associated himself with people from all walks of life, from the elite to the poor, and this informed his writing. He was a very special kind of journalist, one who effectively articulated complex ideas and based his work on a close identification with his own people, combined with a broad humanitarianism. His work encourages the humanity in us all, and stands as witness to a life and work dedicated to his people. Plaatje is known as one of the early freedom fighters who fought with his pen and paved the way for others to follow.

Plaatje's mission was to use his education and his knowledge to enlighten both the oppressor and the oppressed and although freedom for his people only came in 1994, his expressive and ingenious way of using his abilities with both language and ideas are an inspiration to both policy makers and ordinary citizens in the new South Africa. They emphasise and underline the importance of education and culture in the development of the full potential of all South Africans.
Paul Emmanuel’s *The Lost Men France*, the third in a series of site-specific outdoor installations, follows on from *The Lost Men Grahamstown* and *The Lost Men Mozambique*. *The Lost Men France* was a temporary, public artwork that formed part of the official World War One centenary in 2014 and was installed in France, adjacent to the Thiepval Memorial to the Missing of the Somme. These photographs of Emmanuel’s body printed onto silk bore the names of servicemen who fell on the Western Front during World War One – South African, French, German, British Commonwealth and its Allies. Their names were pressed into Emmanuel’s skin with no reference to rank, nationality or ethnicity. *The Lost Men France* also questioned the exclusion of black South African servicemen’s names from the walls of Thiepval Memorial.
In memory of the South African soldiers who lost their lives in the Battle of Delville Wood in France in July 1916, the Delville Wood South African National Memorial in France has been refurbished to also represent black soldiers who died during this bloody battle. The memorial now includes the names of every South African who fought during the war without exception.

It is little known that a century ago South African troops from all races fought in one of the bloodiest battles in World War I.

The Battle of Delville Wood took place in France, in July 1916. It was a series of engagements in the 1916 Battle of the Somme between the armies of the German Empire and the British Empire and was the first major clash South Africa undertook during the Great War. The commander, Brigadier General Lukin, received the order to 'take and hold the wood at all costs' from 14 to 20 July 1916.

Out of 3,153 men who entered Delville Wood, only 142 walked out alive. Black soldiers who enlisted formed the South African Native Labour Corps (SANLC), but its contribution has largely been ignored in military records.

'The SANLC has hardly received any attention in South African histories,' noted the Department of Defence and Military Veterans. 'Nor did they receive any medals for their participation in the war.'

The original Delville Wood South African National Memorial was inaugurated in 1926 at Deville Wood, built on a 63ha piece of land bought by author and politician Sir Percy Fitzpatrick, and presented to South Africa. 'The representation of Africans during the war is very minimal and it distorts the important role they played in various theatres of war,' said the department.

Paying tribute to the unsung heroes of the 1916 Battle of Delville Wood, Minister of Arts and Culture, Nathi Mthethwa said, 'South Africa’s colonial and apartheid governments had excluded the recognition of black South Africans who were enlisted to serve in France during the First World War (WWI) as part of the British Empire.

'The year 2016 marks the centenary commemoration of the Battle of Delville Wood that took place in July 1916. The centenary provides an opportunity to address the injustices of the past and rewrite South African military history to include the contribution of the 90,000 black South Africans who served in the various war campaigns in Africa and Europe and especially the 21,000 black South Africans who served in France during WWI. The black soldiers were not acknowledged at Delville Wood Memorial Museum along with their white counterparts, despite having formed a significant proportion of the Labour Force available in France during the War.

'The Department of Arts and Culture, in partnership with its institution, the South African Heritage Resources Agency (SAHRA), is leading the transformation of the Delville Wood Memorial to portray an inclusive free and non-racial South Africa. The Department of Defence and Military Veterans, the Department of Public Works and the Department of Higher Education are also playing an integral part in this initiative. The transformation includes the reconstruction of the memorial and the interpretation of the museum narrative thorough redesign and...
reconstruction of the exhibitions in galleries, the development of new murals in the museum depicting the involvement of the South African Native Labour Corps in the Great Wars as well as the Sinking of the SS Mendi and a memorial wall bearing the engraved names of all South African Forces who fell during the WWI as well as a Garden of Remembrance for those who fell yet whose bodies were never recovered.

‘The transformation is necessary in order to incorporate the missing aspects of the South African military history. This site transformation will ensure that the historical role played by the South African in the First and Second World Wars is documented and our heritage landscape is transformed for generations to come.’

Prior to the commemorations of the 1916 British of Deville Wood Centenary, on 11 July 2016 during the State Visit to France Minister Mthethwa signed the Programme of Cooperation (POC) between the Department of Arts and Culture and the French Republic. The POC was developed largely as an outcome of the SA-French Seasons and seeks to consolidate and build the goodwill that has existed between the two counties. Minister Mthethwa also officially concluded the symbolic handover of the Rivonia Trial dictabelts – flexible vinyl cylinders holding the recordings of the Rivonia Trial that took place in Pretoria between October 1963 and June 1964 – as well as hard drives with all the digitised preservation files. ▲
CELEBRATING
OVER 150 YEARS
OF INDIAN CULTURE IN SOUTH AFRICA

Between 1860 and 1866 (when the Natal government discontinued the immigration of Indian labour) some 6,455 Indians had arrived in Natal to work as indentured labourers. Immigration resumed in 1874 and continued uninterrupted until 1911. Today, South Africa boasts the largest population of people of Indian ancestry of any country outside India and they have made enormous contributions to the country’s economic, political and cultural life and achievements.

Apparently a farmer called Rathbone was the first to import labourers from India. They were introduced onto a farm in Natal in 1849 but 1860 marked the actual arrival of the first major group of some 300 indentured labourers. They were brought to Natal from Madras and Calcutta on the ship S.S Truro after the passage in Natal of Law no. 14 of 1859 which provided specifically for indentured labourers to travel to South Africa from India. When they arrived in South Africa the Indian people brought with them colourful and culturally rich traditions. In spite of all the evils of the indentured labour system many of the immigrants were able to create opportunities and to improve their lives and those of their families and definitely of many of their descendants.

This law was passed because the farmers in Natal had a critical need for labourers to work in the sugarcane plantations and labourers were available in India. The servitude involved in indentured labour was close to slavery but this must be seen in the context of the times. At this time (1859), the abomination of human slavery was still legal in the United States. In fact, it was only in 1863 that Abraham Lincoln promulgated the Act of Emancipation.
freeing all slaves in the United States. Slavery had only become illegal in most of the British Empire in 1833 and in India itself in 1843.

The American Civil War broke out in 1861, and a global depression was in place by its end five years later. Britain’s two colonies in Southern Africa did not escape the downturn, and by 1866 were struggling to survive financially. European fortune-hunters and pioneer entrepreneurs had departed en masse to new fields of opportunity, and the Natal Government discontinued the immigration of Indian labour. It’s estimated that 6445 Indians had arrived by 1866. Paradoxically, the Colony’s infant sugar industry was booming, exports increasing four-fold to a hundred-thousand Pounds in the single year prior to 1864.

Two pivotal events marked the year 1871: economists declared the global depression over, and the first official complaints were made about the treatment of Indians in Natal. The latter were laid with the Protector in Madras by ten ex-indentured labourers who had returned aboard the Red Riding Hood the first ship to carry repatriated Indians back to the subcontinent. And when she reached Calcutta, further complaints were lodged there, too. All were referred back to the Colony, and 1872 witnessed the first ever report published on the condition of Indian immigrants in Natal. The charges laid against Colonial employers ranged from flogging and assaults to irregular payment and rations, unwarranted salary deductions, extra working hours, poor medical facilities and non-payment of termination monies to those seeking repatriation. All allegations were denied, and it would appear the resulting Commission of Inquiry paid little regard to equanimity in its gathering of evidence. With economic matters back in full swing and employers seeking the reintroduction of indentured labour, the Natal Government tightened-up its immigration laws and conditions of employment to appease the Indian Government, and on 25 June 1874 the Jason arrived from Calcutta, heralding uninterrupted immigration until 1911.

The whole idea of indentured labour is anathema to our human rights culture with its similarities to slavery. Despite this archaic system, many of the Indian people managed to create opportunities for themselves. They managed to make some material economic progress in spite of the increasingly restrictive racial laws and, after 1948, the burden of apartheid.

At last the fetters were removed in 1994 and in modern, democratic South Africa the community has blossomed and now makes a very large contribution to the country’s public, civic, sports and cultural life.

In 1893 a particularly notable event occurred as the great Mahatma (Mohandas) Gandhi arrived in South Africa at the age of 24 to represent a wealthy Muslim businessman in a law suit. The introduction in Natal of a bill to disenfranchise people of Indian origin in the next year started Gandhi on his political career as he began to organise a series of protests against this injustice. Gandhi spent a total of 21 years in South Africa and it was during this period that he developed the system of satyagraha (the force of truth) or non-violent civil disobedience that, for example, strongly influenced Martin Luther King during the Civil Rights Movement in the United States. Although he achieved a great deal in South Africa, including the founding of the Natal Indian Congress, his greatest successes came after he left South Africa. His career as an activist culminated in the achievement of independence for India itself in 1947.
During the Second Anglo-Boer War of 1899-1902 Gandhi, who working as a lawyer for Muslim Indian Traders in Natal, formed a volunteer Ambulance Corps for the British Army.

The Natal Indian Ambulance Corps, led by Gandhi, was composed of 300 free and 800 indentured labourers sent by their employers. It was immediately employed in carrying the wounded from the Battle of Colenso. The bearers were then stationed at Estcourt before being summoned on the eve of the battle of Spion Kop. During the big battle there on 24 January 1900, when British suffered heavy casualties, the Natal Volunteer Corps saved the wounded under fire and the Indian Corps carried them from Spion Kop to the base hospital at Frere, more than twenty miles away.

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As a country of unity and diversity, South Africa’s Indian population has grown to be what is acknowledged as the largest of these communities outside of India itself. Indians continue to contribute enormously to South Africa and to excel in many areas, such as politics, sport, entertainment and business. Amongst many notable South Africans of Indian origin there are Ananth Singh, award-winning film producer, and Hashim Amla the first player of Indian descent to play test cricket for South Africa. As we look back on more than 150 years since the start of this saga, when the first indentured labourers were imported to South Africa, we see how good can prevail in spite of evil and for South Africa it is an honour to be the beneficiary of this heritage that has contributed so much to this country’s rich cultural diversity.

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