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Special Luthuli Museum 20th Anniversary Edition

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Newsletter

About the Luthuli Museum



The house before being a museum

When Chief Albert and Mrs. Nokukhanya Luthuli built their house in 1927 when they got married, they never thought that it will one day become a place of education and heritage – a museum. During their lifetime, the house was a home to their children, grandchildren and many extended family members.

From 2004 the house ceased to be a home only for the family of Chief Albert Luthuli, but a home for the nation. The then Department of Arts, Culture, Science and Technology (DACST) joined hands with the Luthuli family and had the house restored and refurbished as a National Museum as part of the National Legacy Projects programme. Added efforts to transform the house into a museum included the local KwaDukuza Municipality, the United Congregational Church of South Africa (Groutville), local neighbours and the community of Groutville, the KwaZulu Natal Government led by then Premier Sibusiso Ndebele (a known champion of heritage projects in the province), and many other people who contributed their technical skills, time and resources.

The Luthuli Museum was officially opened to the public by then South Africa President Thabo Mbeki on 21 August 2004. The museum project included other local infrastructure development projects that included the upgrading of the road to the Museum and renamed 'Nokukhanya Luthuli Street', the upgrading of the grave of Chief Albert Luthuli and the Groutville United Congregational Church.

The Museum stands today in service to the public and in memory of both Chief Albert and Mrs. Nokukhanya 'MaBhengu' Luthuli. Its vision is about 'A Transformed Society inspired by the values and ideals of Chief Albert Luthuli'.

Apart from research and preservation of the legacy of Chief Albert Luthuli, their house is now a home to children's holiday activities, workshops, dialogues, conferences, literacy programmes, live music shows, training, arts and craft, fashion shows, curriculum enrichment programmes, and many more activities. It brings renewed hope to those who aspire to achieve more from life and broaden their horizons. For more about the museum visit www.luthulimuseum.org.za

May the Spirit of Luthuli Speak to All!

Luthuli Museum 20 Years Anniversary Public Lecture



Prof. Larry Shore delivering the Luthuli Museum 20th Anniversary Public Lecture at the museum on 21 August 2024. The lecture was titled, 'Chief Albert Luthuli and the American Anti-Apartheid Movement'. The lecture full script is available on the Luthuli Museum website www.luthulimuseum.org.za



Prof. Puleng Segalo, the Chief Albert Luthuli Research Chair with Prof. Larry Shore in picture during the launch of her book, *The Faces and Phases of Inkosi Albert Luthuli: Reflections* at the Museum on 22 August 2024.

The Chief Albert Luthuli Research Chair was established to much excitement and anticipation at the University of South Africa (UNISA) on 19 April 2019. This year marked a milestone for the Research Chair with the launch of a book on the many faces and phases of the life of Africa's first Nobel Peace Laureate, Chief Albert Luthuli. The publication is available for sale at UNISA Press.

ORDER Details:

Tel.: 012 429 429 / 3515

Email: UNISA-Press@unisa.ac.za

Remembered

Mrs. Nokukhanya ‘MaBhengu’ Luthuli



Mrs. Nokukhanya 'MaBhengu' Luthuli (1904 – 1996)

The date of 20 August 2024, during Women’s Month in South Africa, will mark an important day for the Luthuli Museum. A diverse group of women, including some of her granddaughters, gathered at the Museum for a Roundtable Discussion in her memory. Included in the gathering were two of her revered friends, Dr Gcina Mhlope, who delivered a poetical and song presentation titled, *‘The Power of History and Herstory’* and Ms Marlyn Aitken whose talk was titled, *‘Nokukhanya, a Message for the 21st Century’*.

The gathering became not only an opportunity for the Museum to reflect on the life of MaBhengu, but also a ‘think tank’ where ideas were presented on how the museum should reflect her life and legacy in its activities.

The objectives of the roundtable discussion were to document multiple perspectives and accounts on the life of Mama Nokukhanya Luthuli with the aim to integrate her life story into the Luthuli Museum’s site narrative and interpretation; creation of a permanent onsite and traveling exhibition in her memory and the republishing of the book, *‘Nokukhanya Mother of Light’* by the Museum in 2025.

Covenying all persons who personally knew MaBhengu, revered her, connected to her or worked on initiatives or projects in her memory, yielded more than what the museum expected!

In short, we can say that inputs and proposals from the audience on how to memorialize MaBhengu, included, agriculture and land use; early childhood development; how to profile her life and legacy creatively within the museum and beyond; education and literacy; and how her family can be involved in this renewed quest by the Luthuli Museum about her life.

The questions that demanded answers related to how to impart life lessons and skills to the young ones about MaBhengu; who to partner with in achieving this goal; and what activities and programmes can be implemented to change people’s lives for the better.

In practical terms, the audience proposed, activities that included holiday camps for learners and reintroducing food gardening at primary school level and institutionalizing such projects through the Land Bank of South Africa.

‘Children are inactive, bored to death and focused on social media’

Strong collaboration between schools and institutions of higher learning was encouraged for mutual benefit. Agency and self-sufficiency were encouraged if communities in South Africa intended to transform themselves

Communities need not ‘depend wholly on the system’. The museum was reminded that MaBhengu was an ‘action oriented’ person and therefore programmes in her name need to move and bring development to the community at large.

The commitment by the Museum and Ms Marlyn Aitken to republish the book *‘Nokukhanya Mother of Light’* in 2025 was received with much excitement by the audience. Ms Aitken committed to writing an additional chapter in the book documenting the last years of Mrs. Luthuli. This will include her meeting with Mr Nelson Mandela upon his release from prison, and the day of her funeral. The daughters of the late Mrs. Jane Ngobese undertook to look into their mother’s collection of books and documents, for further material for the book to be republished.

‘Nokukhanya, Nokukhanya, the fields are calling us’, boomed Dr Gcina Mhlophe’s rich voice as she roused the audience to join in song during her presentation. She reminded the audience on the importance of memory and praise for those who laid the path before us.

‘We must go back to the source, the spirit of togetherness, that recognised our interconnections – we are not separate, but connected differently’

The audience was reminded of *‘Mhlonishwakazi wase Afrika’*, the priase poem in honour of MaBhengu by Mam’Thoko Makhanya. She shared a few stanzas of her poem much to the appreciation of the audience. The Roundtable Discussion concluded with the signing of pledges by all those present on the day and the undertaking to convene a ‘task team’ to work with the museum in thre realization of the goals set by all on that day.

‘Nkosikazi yaMakhosikazi! Mama we Sizwe! Sibonga igama lamakhosikazi’.

BIG THANK YOU!

LUTHULI WALK AND RUN 2024



The Luthuli Museum is grateful for the support received again this year from the main partners and sponsors of the annual Luthuli Walk and Run. The financial sponsorship received from the KwaDukuza Municipality and the Enterprise iLembe, the district tourism and development agency, continues to make a big difference in organizing this cherished annual community event. Of course, we must not forget to thank the participants in this event, who registered and came in their numbers to enjoy a day of fun and encouragement of an active healthy lifestyle. For more on the Luthuli Walk visit the website www.luthuliwalk.org.za



Luthuli Museum

Opening hours:

Mon – Sat 08:30 – 16:00
Sun & public holidays: 11:00 – 15:00

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A big thank to our partners, stakeholders, funders and friends in our celebration of 30 Years of South Africa’s Freedom and 20 Years of Luthuli Museum’s service to the public.