CHAPTER 5
THE SUNDAY TIMES HERITAGE PROJECT

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The Sunday Times is reported to be one of South Africa’s largest weekly national newspapers. According to recent statistics produced by the South African Audience Research Foundation, in 2009 the newspaper had an average weekly readership of 4 229 000 people. These numbers have been in steady decline, and by 2011 these numbers had dropped to 3 659 000 (http://www.saarf.co.za/amps-readership/2011/Magazine%20&%20Newspaper%20Readership%20Jun11.pdf, accessed December 1, 2012). MediaClubSouthAfrica.com reports that distribution networks for the Sunday Times extend across South Africa and beyond South African borders into Lesotho, Botswana and Swaziland (http://www.mediaclubsouthafrica.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=73%3Apress&catid=36%3Amedia_bg&Itemid=54, accessed December 1, 2012). It is a subsidiary of Johannesburg Securities Exchange listed media and entertainment company, Avusa Limited, where a large part of South Africa’s traditional, digital and entertainment media companies is concentrated (http://www.avusa.co.za). In celebration of its centenary in 2006, the Sunday Times initiated the “Sunday Times Heritage Project”, which was initially conceptualized as a series of artist-commissioned memorials in four provinces of South Africa. The intention was to install 40 street memorials, in
honor of selected liberation struggle heroes and heroines, prominent sportspersons, prominent figures in popular culture, and in a few instances prominent events. The heritage project website reads as follows:

“To mark its 100th year of publication, the Sunday Times embarked on a project to erect a trail of memorials to some of the remarkable people and events that made our news century. We wanted to show how quickly news becomes history. We wanted to think in fresh, imaginative ways about our past, shared and separate, painful and proud. We wanted to add a stitch to the fabric of our streets and communities. The story of what happened starts here” (http://heritage.thetimes.co.za/, accessed on 10 February 2012)

Sunday Times publicity on the Sunday Times Heritage Project (STHP) positions the project as one of ‘giving back’ to its’ readership, and as an expression of thanks for sustaining the newspaper over 100 years. The project therefore implicitly speaks to many of the political upheavals of this period, while aspects of it also pay attention to popular culture and sports. Keywords that emerge from articulations about the heritage project by those responsible for it are community, accessibility, ownership, and visibility. In a description of the project’s beginnings, project director Charlotte Bauer writes that,

“The great thing about the memorials is that they are all freely accessible and visible to the public. If our story site is a school, we install our memorial outside the gates. Several times we had to resist the temptation to place a memorial inside the gates at the invitation of the building owners themselves who were, if anything, more worried about vandalism than we were” (Bauer 2008).

Heritage scholars and critics have argued that in contemporary South African heritage discourse and practice, processes of public memorial making have been conceptualized, implemented and controlled by the state, in some cases in partnership with the private sector. Often cited examples include government managed legacy projects, such as Freedom Park, and the re-naming of streets and public stadiums after well-known

Mokwena and Segal (2006) emphasize this point in a report written for the Atlantic Philanthropies on the potential for a heritage sector collaboration with the Sunday Times on its memorial initiative, using it to justify the significance of the Sunday Times memorial project, and to contribute to the rationale for an innovative memorial communications campaign. In this lengthy report on the state of South Africa’s heritage sector, the authors write that,

“Currently, the majority of memorialisation initiatives are initiated and driven by the government – both national and local. This can lead to a situation where memory and memorialisation become controlled and dictated by the state creating a narrow and restrictive vision of memorialisation. As the only provider of resources, the state will hold and exercise power in the representation of the past” (Mokwena and Segal 2006, p.18).

Marschall later emphasized the diversion of the Sunday Times Heritage Project from government-managed models and processes of memorialization, but note that “the Sunday Times did not position its project as countering, but rather as complementing, the public-sector efforts at memorializing the South African past” (Marschall 2010b, p.36). With reference to earlier comments made by the Sunday Times Heritage Project director, Marschall notes that the Sunday Times Heritage Project “clearly aimed to substitute the conventional monument’s sense of weighty presence and self-conscious importance with one of lightness and even fun, albeit without being frivolous” (Marschall 2010b, p.43), and that “many Sunday Times memorials have been installed in townships and other neglected areas where such markers were not previously found” (Marschall 2010b, p.44).

In the bigger landscape of post-1990 memory practices in South Africa, the Sunday Times Heritage Project is different in the sense that it was initiated in the private
sector, with fixed monetary and staff investments over a fixed period of time. While the official Sunday Times centenary date was February 2006, it was expected that all memorials would be completed by December 2006. According to Sunday Times newspaper editor at the time, Mondli Makhanya, “we had been working on our national heritage project since late 2005 and had hoped to have installed our 40 memorials by the end of 2006, our centenary year” (http://heritage.thetimes.co.za/article.aspx?id=570377). This is not the way in which the project ultimately evolved. The first statue, that of popular South African musician Brenda Fassie, was unveiled on 9 March 2006 outside the Bassline Jazz Club in Johannesburg (Bauer 2008), and this process continued through 2007 and beyond. The installations of the memorials extended for at least two years from the initial project launch and the unveiling of the first memorial in 2006. The site of the 1961 All-in-Africa Conference at which Nelson Mandela delivered his last public speech prior to his arrest was one of the last memorial unveilings, and this took place in July 2008 (Bongani Mthethwa, Sunday Times July 20, 2008, p. 5).

Sabine Marschall (2010) pertinently notes that up until the initiation of the Sunday Times Heritage Project, the private sector had “been reluctant to invest in the process of memorialization and heritage more generally” (Marschall 2010, p.36). While there are notable exceptions, as in the case of the Robben Island Museum, the Nelson Mandela Foundation, the Freedom Park Trust and the South African Democracy Education Trust, a major difference in the case of the Sunday Times Heritage Project is that it was largely unsolicited by the heritage sector. It is a heritage project that originated with a national media carrier. Project records show that the Sunday Times ‘investment’

The roles of the Atlantic Philanthropies donor agency and the South African History Archive (SAHA) can be seen as an intervention in the trajectory of the Sunday Times Heritage Project, and a major catalytic influence on the ways in which the project evolved. Through sponsorship from the Atlantic Philanthropies, a complementary component of the Sunday Times Heritage Project was targeted at raising the profiles of the memorials through a range of dissemination strategies, aimed at promoting public dialogue, and connecting the project with contemporary heritage sector practices and discourses. The Atlantic Philanthropies grant was approved in June 2006, three months after the unveiling of the first Sunday Times memorial of the prominent musician Brenda Fassie. The grant confirmation letter to the director of the South African History Archive records the approval of R5,016,300 over a one year period, and clearly stipulates the purpose of the grant.

“The purpose of this grant is to develop strategies to communicate and disseminate information about past human rights abuses and anti-apartheid struggles, as a contribution to reconciliation through a collaboration with the Sunday Times Heritage Project” (McCrea 2006).

Interviewee B3 emphasizes further that the communications and dissemination aspect of the Sunday Times Heritage Project was initiated by The Atlantic Philanthropies, implying that memory and heritage was being utilized as a vehicle for promoting the reconciliation and human rights work of The Atlantic Philanthropies.

“… the initiation came from … the Atlantic Philanthropies [which] commissioned sort of a profiling study which Lauren Segal conducted … in which she looked at how they might be able to engage with a national heritage carrier … or national paper, like the Sunday Times. And during the course of that research, I suppose, the idea for the project emerged, of
how Atlantic could support or work through [the] S[outh] A[frican] H[istory] A[rchive]. I already had a relationship with the South African History Archive, and this seemed a useful way of trying to gel ... a national project from a newspaper like the Sunday Times with a small N[on] G[overnmental] O[rganization]. So I mean it was brand new for both ... organizations, very, very different organizations ...” (B3).

Building upon the Sunday Times memorial installations on public sites in four provinces of South Africa, the communications campaign generated a series of tangible products such as radio programs, publications, and an interactive DVD-ROM. It also contributed research content to the project website maintained by the Sunday Times, and a special newspaper supplement that coincided with National Heritage Day on September 24, 2007. In less tangible ways it facilitated the creation of community histories via a schools oral history project, and the installation of a limited number of memorials in provinces that were not widely represented in the Sunday Times’ list of memorials.

5.2 PROJECT MOTIVATIONS

Official project documentation currently archived as the Sunday Times Heritage Project Collection (Accession number: AL3282) at the South African History Archive provides indicators of the motivations for the Sunday Times Heritage Project, from the perspectives of both project partners, the Sunday Times and the South African History Archive. Specifically, these include pre-project proposals, project reports, and interviews conducted as part of an extensive project evaluation commissioned by The Atlantic Philanthropies in 2008.

According to project records, the STHP in the first instance was spurred by the intention of the Sunday Times to mark its centennial in 2006, by “giving back” to the
people and communities that sustained the newspaper over 100 years. Editor of the Sunday Times at the time, Mondli Makhanya, positions the project as a journalistic memorial effort with implications for memorial making in heritage sector-initiated projects, rather than as a heritage sector-inspired project. Makhanya emphasizes that the main criterion for each of the memorials was its newsworthiness, and therefore the ability of each to provide meaningful talking points for its’ observers. Some of Makhanya’s statements on the STHP appear below, in which he attributes the project’s inherent political dimensions to South Africa’s recent political histories.

“… what we didn’t want to do also was merely to put up statues. We wanted whatever memorials we put up to actually be alive, to tell a story and not just a political story, a story of broadly kind of sports, arts and obviously politics since we are a very much political society as South Africans. We have a political history. So that was the primary driving force behind us deciding to start these memorials” (Mondli Makhanya interview, Sunday Times Heritage Project Collection, South African History Archive).

“Basically we wanted to get into the situation where every town and village in the country had a memorial that said something happened in this town. We wanted to get to a situation where every South African wherever they are they should believe that their particular residential area, their particular village has a story to tell about the history of South Africa” (MM).

Despite the vision of a Sunday Times Heritage Project presence in “every town and village in the country”, the memorials were ultimately placed in four main provincial centers, namely Gauteng, the Western Cape Province, the Eastern Cape, and KwaZulu-Natal.

Sunday Times Heritage Project director, Charlotte Bauer, who was tasked by the Sunday Times editor to “dream up and drive a project to mark some of the newsmakers and news events that became history in public spaces in South Africa” (Charlotte Bauer
interview, Sunday Times Heritage Project Collection, South African History Archive)

frames the project motivations in terms of public accessibility.

“… people like in a lot of other cities in the world can be standing waiting for a bus, grabbing a taxi and can look behind them and see a plaque … and say, wow, something happened here a long time ago. Right where you are standing, some kind of history happened … so the idea was to make the history come alive through anecdotal actions. On this day, in this year, something happened here. What was it? Why is it interesting? And that span many subjects … from the arts, sports, politics, science, etc.” (Charlotte Bauer interview, Sunday Times Heritage Project Collection, South African History Archive).

In addition then to marking the newspaper’s centennial, the particular form of memorial making was based on a public accessibility imperative where, as previously noted, the memorials would not be installed behind locked gates.

The accompanying Sunday Times branding to each of the memorials can be read as a mechanism by which the Sunday Times has inserted itself into South African history of the previous 100 years. This is not a stated intention of the Sunday Times. To the contrary, the project’s website notes that branding is used to provide links to additional resources, and as an accountability mechanism:

“Our branding on the plaques is discreet: this is not a ‘revenue driving’ exercise for the Sunday Times; it’s a self-funded “give back” project. The small logo on our plaques is there partly to direct visitors to our website and, as importantly, to announce that we are accountable for the choices we have made” (Bauer, http://heritage.thetimes.co.za/article.aspx?id=570519)

The February 2006 Atlantic Philanthropies-commissioned report on SAHA’s role in the Sunday Times Heritage Project positions Atlantic Philanthropies as an active mediating influence. Motivated by the agency’s belief in reconciliation and human rights, Atlantic Philanthropies issued terms of reference in which the report’s authors were
requested to provide the sponsorship rationale, produce well-defined objectives, “outline potential community involvement”, “create discourses for hidden histories”, “create an archival platform”, identify an institutional home for the project in a non-governmental organization, create non-monetary partnerships, particularly with the government Department of Education, and look at how Atlantic Philanthropies could contribute to already existing monetary investments in the project (Mokwena and Segal 2006, p.5).

This process informed SAHA’s articulations of its role and motivations for participation in the Sunday Times Heritage Project. It is captured in a mission statement that extends notions of reconciliation and human rights to a more specifically defined heritage sector context:

“SAHA will collaborate with the Sunday Times and other partners to engage South Africans with stories of our past. The project will become a catalyst for the process of healing and reconciliation as well as contribute to the building of a dynamic heritage sector” (SAHA’s Vision, Mission and Objectives for Its Collaboration with the Sunday Times Heritage Project).

The idea of facilitating public participation in the Sunday Times memorial process, and in this way making it meaningful to as broad a range of people as possible was therefore part of the early conceptualization of the communications campaign. Interviewee B1 notes that in the early conceptualization stages of the communications campaign, the project team talked about “somehow broadening it out and making it more grassroots-ish” and that the focus was on extending the Sunday Times Heritage Project “beyond those four provinces” that most of the Sunday Times memorials were located in (B1).
5.3 THE MEMORIALS

Twenty-seven out of thirty-one memorials profile individuals. Others commemorate political events and issues such as race classification, deaths in political detention during the apartheid era, and mass protests against apartheid. Table 5.1 provides a current listing.

As public art installations produced by different artists and commemorating different people or events, each of the memorials is different. The memorial of Cissie Gool, for instance, is a seating area of different sized bollards, each of which contains inscribed text that documents aspects of her political career (Segal and Holden 2008, p.63). The memorial of Brenda Fassie, on the other hand, is a life-sized bronze sculpture. The race classification memorial is a construction of two public benches, one marked for whites and the other for non-whites. The Lilian Ngoyi memorial is a sculpture of her sewing machine, made from recycled metal. All of the memorials are located in public spaces, and fully accessible to the public.

The building of the memorials was primarily the responsibility of the art management company, Art at Work, who was commissioned by the Sunday Times project team to identify artists, oversee the process of working with artists, and to oversee the production and installation of the memorials.
# Table 5.3.1: List Of Sunday Times Memorials And Sites

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MEMORIAL</th>
<th>SITE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1  Olive Schreiner</td>
<td>Kalk Bay, Western Cape</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2  Mohandas Gandhi</td>
<td>Fordsburg, Gauteng</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3  Reverend Isaac Wauchope and the sinking of the SS Mendi</td>
<td>Cape Town, Western Cape</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4  Enoch Mgijima and the Bulhoek Massacre</td>
<td>Queenstown, Eastern Cape</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5  Nontetha Nkwenkwe</td>
<td>King William Town, Eastern Cape</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6  Raymond Dart</td>
<td>Johannesburg, Gauteng</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7  First Transafrica Flight</td>
<td>Cape Town, Western Cape</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8  Albert Luthuli</td>
<td>Durban, KwaZulu-Natal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9  Bethuel Mokgosinyana and Orland Pirates Football Club</td>
<td>Soweto, Gauteng</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 Cissie Gool</td>
<td>Cape Town, Western Cape</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 Alan Paton</td>
<td>Isxopo, KwaZulu-Natal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 Race classification</td>
<td>Cape Town, Western Cape</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 Bessie Head</td>
<td>Durban, KwaZulu-Natal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 Nelson Mandela’s arrest at Howick</td>
<td>Pietermaritzburg, KwaZulu-Natal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 Raymond Mhlaba</td>
<td>Port Elizabeth, Eastern Cape</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 George Pemba</td>
<td>Port Elizabeth, Eastern Cape</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17 Duma Nokwe</td>
<td>Johannesburg, Gauteng</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 Lilian Ngoyi</td>
<td>Soweto, Johannesburg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 Athol Fugard</td>
<td>Port Elizabeth, Eastern Cape</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 John Vorster Square and Death in Detention</td>
<td>Johannesburg, Gauteng</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 Basil D’Oliveira</td>
<td>Cape Town, Western Cape</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22 Happyboy Mgxazi</td>
<td>Mdantsane, Eastern Cape</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23 Ingrid Jonker</td>
<td>Cape Town, Western Cape</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24 Tsietsi Mashinini</td>
<td>Soweto, Gauteng</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 Brenda Fassie</td>
<td>Johannesburg, Gauteng</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26 Ladysmith Black Mambazo</td>
<td>KwaMashu, KwaZulu-Natal</td>
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<tr>
<td>27 Archbishop Desmond Tutu</td>
<td>East London, Eastern Cape</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28 Abdullah Ibrahim</td>
<td>Cape Town, Western Cape</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29 The Purple March</td>
<td>Cape Town, Western Cape</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 Sunday Times Memorial Bench</td>
<td>Johannesburg, Cape Town</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31 Nelson Mandela Memorial</td>
<td>Pietermaritzburg, KwaZulu-Natal</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Lesley Perkes of Art at Work describes that there were different processes for each memorial, given the fact that each memorial was different, each was undertaken by a different artist, and each document a different story. According to Perkes,

“All of the memorials have been made on the site, others and most of them in fact have been a combination of site work and work off site, either in factories like metal working factories or casting foundaries…” (Lesley Perkes interview by Sharon Cort, Sunday Times Heritage Project collection, South African History Archive).

As is evident in the Table 5.1, 31 out of the planned 45 memorials were installed. Not all of the memorials have an explicit political focus, but all of the stories profiled by the memorials were impacted to greater or lesser degrees by South Africa’s apartheid context.

5.4 REPACKAGING AND DISTRIBUTING THE MEMORIALS

The partnership between SAHA and the Sunday Times increased the visibility of the Sunday Times Heritage Project as a whole, and of individual memorials, by producing and distributing a series of stand-alone “products”, and by establishing local history projects in four provinces that were not represented in the Sunday Times’ list of memorial sites. From the outset, the Sunday Times organizers expressed that they wanted the memorials to be visible and accessible. As noted by Makhanya,

“One of the key rules was that they had to be publicly accessible to people. So we’ve tried as hard as we could to make sure that they were not behind walls and that basically everybody can go and see and read … and obviously the fact that there is a story that goes with everything, that’s the other element” (Mondli Makhanya interview, Sunday Times Heritage Project Collection, South African History Archive).
SAHA’s communications campaign extended these notions of visibility and accessibility by increasing and diversifying the project’s audience beyond engagement with the physical memorials. Using traditional print-based, audio, and interactive media, the project produced a series of memory resources that were distributed in the media genres of radio, newspaper, publications, Internet and interactive DVD. The focus was on spreading the message of the memorials, and promoting public dialogue by supplementing the physical memorials with talking points on themes of reconciliation and heritage. The Sunday Times was not directly involved in how SAHA implemented the communications campaign. An interviewee notes that,

“We had some very specific projects, which again related to the monuments … but we had a wide berth in terms of doing what we wanted to with the development of the content” (B3).

In addition to identified activities and outputs of the communications campaign, the campaign was also viewed as a way of reflecting on the collaborative nature of a project between the non-profit and private sectors to mediate public impact.

“… this is why I talk about dissemination strategy, and I think this is a generic problem for non governmental organizations, in particular, that they don't really put enough investment into [dissemination], where ... they make their products but then they don't think of where they can use them effectively, and get maximum value” (B3).

Specifically, the campaign’s tangible outputs took the form of a series of radio programs, publications and online resources. Intangible deliverables primarily included the forms of grassroots community engagement and relationship building that occurred in conceptualizing and implementing a schools oral history program, and in derivative activities such as workshops with school educators and learners. SAHA’s role in this process, as noted by a project member, can be seen as testing ground for which public
dissemination strategies and processes were most effective in the context of the Sunday Times Heritage Project, and as contributory to broader heritage sector practices and discourses on public engagement with memory.

“Almost all of these different interventions were little demonstrations of what could be done. So we saw it as part of a broader role that SAHA could and should be playing as a catalyst around issues rather than being the best at this or the best at that … We can now show and demonstrate different ‘methodologies of engagement’ … be experimental, be daring, be cutting edge … and I think that was the unique and perhaps really exciting thing … between this sort of little NGO that punches way above its weight and is a little bit controversial, working with an institution like the Sunday Times, but with a set of core characters, an issue, some of which had profile but some of which didn’t have profile” (B3).

Another way of thinking about the communications campaign aspect of the Sunday Times Heritage Project is that it helped to situate the memorial process locally by providing avenues for more people to participate in and contribute to different aspects of memory making. Along these lines, an interviewee stated that the role of the SAHA team was, “about somehow broadening it out and making it more grassroots-ish in some way” (B1).

The Sunday Times’ direct involvement in this repackaging effort was limited to its continuing content contributions and maintenance of the project website that it had launched as an “online museum” in the early phases of the project, and its production of a special heritage supplement to the main newspaper in September 2007.

Table 5.2 provides a full list of the complementary products that were produced as part of the communications campaign.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TITLE</th>
<th>GENRE</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1  Lilian Ngoyi</td>
<td>Radio documentary (Full length + short feature)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2  The Langa March</td>
<td>Radio documentary (Full length + short feature)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3  John Vorster Square</td>
<td>Radio documentary (Full length + short feature)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4  Orlando Pirates</td>
<td>Radio documentary (Full length + short feature)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5  Race Classification</td>
<td>Radio documentary (Full length + short feature)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6  Nontetha Nkwenkwe</td>
<td>Radio documentary (Full length + short feature)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7  Purple March of 1989</td>
<td>Radio documentary (Full length + short feature)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8  Abdullah Ibrahim</td>
<td>Radio documentary (Short feature)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9  Athol Fugard</td>
<td>Radio documentary (Short feature)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 Happyboy Mgxaji</td>
<td>Radio documentary (Short feature)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 Raymond Mhlaba</td>
<td>Radio documentary (Short feature)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 Nontetha Nkwenkwe</td>
<td>Radio documentary (Short feature)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 Bulhoek Massacre</td>
<td>Radio documentary (Short feature)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 Cissie Gool</td>
<td>Radio documentary (Short feature)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 Ingrid Jonker</td>
<td>Radio documentary (Short feature)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 John Vorster Square</td>
<td>DVD-ROM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(An interactive DVD on deaths in political detention at John Vorster Square police station)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17 Great Lives, Pivotal Moments</td>
<td>Book</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 Voices From Our Past</td>
<td>Education guide</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 Sunday Times Heritage Supplement</td>
<td>Newspaper supplement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 Preparatory workshop</td>
<td>Educator workshop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22 Community reference groups</td>
<td>Barberton; Bethel; Kroonstad</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5.5 FRAMEWORKS OF MEDIATION

5.5.1 Choosing Memorial Themes And Sites

The selection of events and individuals that were given coverage in the project was primarily a Sunday Times affair. As noted by project director Charlotte Bauer,

“We selected the stories for our own sort of journalistic criteria – how to make history rock and roll, why is it juicy, why is it exciting – because we’re going to tell you it in a racy pacy, short and sharp, anecdotal, newspaper style” (Charlotte Bauer interview, Sunday Times Heritage Project Collection, South African History Archive).

The types of selection decisions that were made included who and what to memorialize, where and in what specific locations, and by which artist. For each of its initially proposed memorials, of which it is stated that there were many (Charlotte Bauer interview, Sunday Times Heritage Project Collection, South African History Archive), selection was informed by baseline research that helped to boost the case for particular memorials, and to filter out those that were infeasible. Responding to questions about the selection of the memorials in terms of both content and location, project director Charlotte Bauer notes that several criteria were considered, and that,

“some [potential memorials] got the chop for very practical reasons, like the story of the Ellis Park tragedy¹. After exploring the possibility of building a memorial at Ellis Park, we discovered the stadium was earmarked to be extensively renovated for [the] 2010 [soccer world cup], meaning our little memorial would probably have been rubbled” (Charlotte Bauer interview, Sunday Times Heritage Project Collection, South African History Archive).

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¹ In 2001 a stampede at the Ellis Park football stadium resulted in more than 40 deaths. The crowds were there to witness the soccer match between two Soweto-based football teams, Orlando Pirates and Kaizer Chiefs. The Soweto-derby, as the clash between these teams is also known, is a major highlight of the South African football calendar. This event was devastating to the South African football fraternity, and to many South Africans.
Another example of an infeasible site was for that of a planned memorial for Steve Biko.

Bauer notes that,

“One of the stories we had to walk away from, we wanted to tell a story of Steve Biko’s interrogation in room 619 in Port Elizabeth in police custody and we actually went to look at the building and it was just a slum, really, sort of broken windows, it was under a freeway … so I mean that just wasn’t going to be a site where the thing would hold up. So we had to be partly practical as well. So everything had to come together, or not coming together were artistic, technical, bureaucratic, political and financial [factors]” (Charlotte Bauer interview, Sunday Times Heritage Project Collection, South African History Archive).

Responding to a question about whether the memorials were chosen because of the individuals OR the associated context of events that inspired the memorials, Bauer notes that no particular rules guided selection in this regard.

“… in different cases it happened differently. You think it would be great to tell a story about Mohandas Gandhi who spent 20 … formative years politically in South Africa. So in that case we started with Gandhi and there were many, many [associated] stories, so it was a matter of which story and we only had to choose one to make history very alive and very simple and accessible for the most possible peoples. So twenty or thirty stories, and you sort of fine tune it … we said … let’s find a story that happened in the city preferably where people drive and walk and live. So that happened variously, sometimes we start with the place, sometimes we would start with an event” (Charlotte Bauer interview, Sunday Times Heritage Project Collection, South African History Archive).

With regard to memorials that were very different from the politically motivated Gandhi case, Bauer makes reference to the memorial of the first trans Africa Atlantic flight from London to Cape Town in 1920. Bauer notes that,

“Its not a political story. Quintin Brand and Pierre van Ryneveld have no particular immediate community who kind of worship at the shrine of them on Sundays … but we thought it was sort of like a really pacy news story” (Charlotte Bauer interview, Sunday Times Heritage Project Collection, South African History Archive).
These examples demonstrate how the memorials were chosen and justified. It is clear that the newsworthiness of particular stories was a significant determining factor. Citing particular memorials, both Makhanya and Bauer state that selections of memorial sites were guided by thorough and invaluable research looking to find something “unique”.

“Lots and lots of stories were researched and thrown out because there wasn’t anything that was particularly unique. For instance, we wanted to tell a story of Lilian Ngoyi and the [1956] Women’s March. You could easily have done something in Pretoria, we could have done something else … but in the course of researching the story we discovered that throughout those years she was banished alone. Her best friend was her sewing machine. And therefore that’s the story we wanted to tell. And so the memorial that is outside her house is a sewing machine, and every single piece that we have done actually has this very unique thing, a jam within a story” (Mondli Makhanya interview, Sunday Times Heritage Project Collection, South African History Archive).

Instead of going the fairly obvious route of erecting a memorial in Pretoria to draw attention to the 1956 Womens March for which Lilian Ngoyi was a leading figure, it was decided to profile a site that would draw attention to Lilian Ngoyi’s banishment. The memorial was erected outside her home in Soweto, Johannesburg.

The arts management company, Artists at Work, oversaw an artist selection process, as well as the physical construction of the memorials. Based on the Sunday Times research summaries for particular memorials, Artists at Work was tasked with,

“… fitting the stories to artists who were available, who had some track records in making public art, and who ideally had some emotional or intellectual recall with the story that they were being asked to realize, and who could work within timeframes, budget and criterion to make the pieces …” (Charlotte Bauer interview, Sunday Times Heritage Project Collection, South African History Archive).

The Sunday Times also claims to have gone through processes of community consultation, where such consultation was seen to be appropriate. Interviews and project
reports indicate a mix of extensive consultation, and non-existent or inadequate consultation. An example of inadequate consultation surfaces with regard to the Olive Schreiner memorial in Kalk Bay, Cape Town. Olive Schreiner was a writer and women’s rights activist in early 20th century South Africa. According to Bauer (2007), “far less well known was her participation in the movement to give women the vote” (p.36). The choice of Kalk Bay, Cape Town as the Schreiner memorial site was linked to its significance as a frequent venue for meetings of the Women’s Enfranchisement League (Segal and Holden 2008, p.9). Bauer notes that,

“Of all the people we consulted around that story we somehow overlooked the Kalk Bay Ratepayers Association2. And so our piece went up, allegedly before they were aware of it, and they are to this day trying to take it down … we didn’t know that they didn’t want it, until they got it, and now they don’t want it, and there are moves as we speak to help get the Schreiner memorial removed” (Charlotte Bauer interview, Sunday Times Heritage Project Collection, South African History Archive).

Emerging from this section is a complex mix of issues that informed the selection and development of the memorials. Guided by the political, social and cultural relevance of particular stories that had strong potential for attracting the public imagination, the project took account of practical concerns, the support of “stakeholders”, and the “appropriateness” of the chosen site (Charlotte Bauer interviewed by Josef Talotta, Sunday Times, September 24 2006). Deeper analysis, as demonstrated above, reveals that important concerns and stakeholders were sometimes overlooked, as in the case of the Olive Schreiner memorial. However, subsequent selections using these criteria formed the baseline for the evolution of the Sunday Times Heritage Project over at least the following two years.

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2 An association representing the interests of homeowners in Kalk Bay.
5.5.2 Finding Common Ground: The Partnership Between The Sunday Times And The South African History Archive

The partnership between the Sunday Times and SAHA emerged after the Sunday Times had already engaged with researching and selecting its memorial themes and sites. At this time Sunday Times project staff and Artists at Work were already involved in the construction and installation of the memorials, and it is reported that the initial high level support from the Sunday Times editorial management was waning. According to Bauer, this added to the “complexity” of the partnership between the Sunday Times and SAHA.

“During the course, my project had a lot of resources changed … there was huge excitement in the first few months … [but] it changed over time, and by the time it was a year and a half, I had lost an administrator, project manager (I got a part-time replacement), and all the researchers were gone. By the time SAHA was getting in, it was just me left and our wonderful service providers were putting up the memorials. It became very difficult. Resources were withdrawn, and literally three weeks after budgets were signed off, the budget was cut by 25 percent, and then I was told to cut it by 50 percent” (Bauer, as quoted in the SAHA/Sunday Times Heritage Project Evaluation, p.8).

This statement is indicative of an asymmetrical partnership, and shows that while the Sunday Times was winding down on its centennial project, the SAHA team was gearing up to implement their vision of the Sunday Times Heritage Project. While this may have decreased the potentials of the partnership, there is no question that SAHA’s involvement extended the longevity of the Sunday Times Heritage Project by “broadening it out” (B1), by deepening the content for selected memorials, and by initiating the production of a series of complementary resources over a two year period. As noted by Lauren Segal,

“We were going to do an extension on the stories they had chosen for the memorials, and we were going to do those multi-media products essentially independently, but with the cooperation of Sunday Times. Their biggest role and promise to us was distribution and access and communication” (SAHA / Sunday Times Heritage Project Evaluation).
SAHA entered the partnership bound by its contractual obligations to Atlantic Philanthropies. It was therefore compelled to work through a series of partnership difficulties with the Sunday Times. To this end, one of two “request requirements” highlighted in the grant cover letter from Atlantic Philanthropies references the signing of a legally binding agreement between SAHA and the Sunday Times in which the commitments of both SAHA and the Sunday Times are detailed.

Interviewees expressed both frustration and their perceptions of the significance of the project partnership. The selectiveness of the SAHA team, or perceived lower quality engagement with some memorials, comes across as an issue of discontent for the Sunday Times. From the Sunday Times perspective, Bauer expresses this tension, noting that excellent research was produced for some of the memorial themes while,

“On the other hand, there were other packages that I was disappointed with … SAHA was less capable, maybe disinterested or less bothered, or there was [a] personal agenda [in relation to] the later stories – for example all the non-political stories. So I was terribly disappointed in the archive package that they delivered on Orlando Pirates and and Bethuel Mokgosinyana, the founder. Obviously it wasn’t anything that anyone there was particularly specialised or interested in. That should have been the easier one: it’s current, the characters are still living, there must be a million match reports, fantastic photographs – and we got very little” (Bauer, as quoted in the SAHA/Sunday Times Heritage Project Evaluation, p.24).

The fact that SAHA was more equipped to deal with overtly political stories reflects both organizational strengths and weaknesses, and reveals a flaw in the “history from below” approaches that were espoused by many in the project team. However, more than one interviewee drew attention to project limitations, most notably the need to spread the approximately R5 million budget over a wide range of project components. One SAHA interviewee notes that more could have been done to deepen the coverage of certain
memorials, such as Brenda Fassie, and that the “interviewing was never done … sufficiently,[or] systematically …” and hints at limited expertise in the project based on the values of historical production rather than journalistic criteria (B1). Another SAHA team member, in relation to archive research, admits that,

“In retrospect … it was thin, it was weak, it wasn’t systematic, there wasn’t quality control … we should have been thinking … much more carefully about archiving. [The question is] uh, could we really do detailed archival research in this context with the resources that we had available … there’s a mixed response to that, and I think with some issues we got lucky …” (B3).

Further tensions can be ascribed to the many asymmetries between a small non-governmental organization on the other hand, and a large-corporate stock exchange listed media subsidiary on the other hand. One SAHA-aligned interviewee notes that they were “dealing with a corporate and commercial entity who is looking at bottom line all the time on everything” (B3), bottom line in this instance meaning commercial profit. In a self-critical approach to what worked well and what didn’t, the same interviewee makes a statement that,

“… you can’t rely on intentions and good intentions and so forth … I think that’s perhaps one of the problems that we have in the NGO sector is that we are fairly flabby about some of that stuff. And quite clearly, in the commercial sector, if you don’t lock it down, dot the i’s, cross the t’s, you’re not gonna get these things. So we may have had some unrealistic expectations about what the Sunday Times would bring to this in terms of its, what we would envisage as its corporate social responsibility, you know that it would make sense for it to help distribute more of these things, or to subsidize X, Y and Z” (B3)

SAHA’s non-profit culture on the other hand is reflected in the example of the coffee table book Great Lives Pivotal Moments, where it chose to forego royalty
payments and to opt instead for 150 free copies from the publisher (Memorandum of Agreement between Jacana Media and the South African History Archive).

Another issue of dissatisfaction emerged in relation to how the Sunday Times dealt with the surplus material that SAHA had planned to distribute in its communications campaign.

“… we had something like 10 000 surplus copies, or 15 000 surplus copies of this supplement, maybe even more. And I’d made an arrangement that they would be distributed through to the schools through the [Sunday Times] Avusa network. And because they weren’t picked up by a courier … it literally didn’t wait for 3 hours, they pulped the entire [surplus], so that none of those went to the schools … you wouldn’t pulp that, you’d pick up the phone to say well where is your guy … but they just went ahead and pulped all of that stuff” (B3).

SAHA also had the expectation that the Sunday Times would tap into its own service networks to support the communications campaign. However this expectation was often not met, as noted by an interviewee.

“ … for example … Struik publishers who were attached to the Sunday Times weren’t the ones who could offer us any kind of deal on making the publication. We went to Jacana [Media] … to do it. You would think that they would want first bite on a coffee table book profiling their monuments … and the stories behind their monuments, but commercial considerations overtake everything else. They didn’t see the value of that in terms of profiling the Sunday Times. So they saw the heritage side of things I suppose as perhaps part of their corporate social responsibility, paying back as opposed to the potential commercial value that they could get from profile and so forth” (B3).

The nature of the partnership between the Sunday Times and SAHA also threatened to alter relationships with third parties, particularly the South African Broadcasting Corporation. In SAHA’s negotiations to broadcast the series of radio documentaries via SABC radio, the status of the Sunday Times as a commercial initiative
led the SABC to expect that the Sunday Times would pay them for airtime (B3). This ultimately did not happen but arose as an unexpected issue for the communications team.

Two examples illustrate commercial branding concerns that emerged as the project unfolded. The heritage project website, and a printed newspaper supplement were two major items of Sunday Times publicity on the Sunday Times Heritage Project, and the two project components that both the Sunday Times and SAHA actively contributed to. Two independent evaluators note the devaluation of SAHA’s role through prominent Sunday Times branding and limited coverage to SAHA (Evaluation of the SAHA / Sunday Times Heritage Project, Appendix 4, Heritage Specialist Reports). In solicited feedback, Professor John Wright of the University of KwaZulu Natal responded that “the supplement comes across as mainly a Sunday Times product” (Evaluation of the SAHA / Sunday Times Heritage Project 2007). Similarly, Chantal Kissoon of the South African Human Rights Commission notes the absence of contextual information in the supplement about the project and its partners.

“Read in the context of an individual piece this may be adequate but viewed as a whole, a brief but specialized information excerpt on each of the partners, their contribution, objectives, resources and their own collaborative work/commissions in the development and execution of the project would have significantly enhanced ‘brand identity’ and an understanding of the context of the project. Mention is made of these issues, but these references are interspersed in the content of the various articles throughout the supplement” (Evaluation of the SAHA / Sunday Times Heritage Project 2007, p.102).

A prominent member of the project team also notes that,

“we had to fight tooth and nail about things like getting SAHA profiled on their website and all these kinds of things, and … there was a certain amount of tension between a corporate entity and an NGO. We had obviously had very different values. We had very different approaches to things. But by and large I suppose it sort of worked out …” (B3).
Similar concerns are raised in relation to the project website, and Wright notes that “there is actually very little on SAHA” (Evaluation of the SAHA / Sunday Times Heritage Project, Appendix 4, Heritage Specialist Reports, p.93).

It is evident from these kinds of concerns that the project agreement between SAHA and the Sunday Times overlooked certain accountability aspects. The base line here appears to be that the heritage project was a Sunday Times-owned project, and that it was reluctant to compromise its business values in the interests of maintaining a partnership with an NGO. This power dynamic also surfaced in the Sunday Times approach to community consultation in which it was very clear that the Sunday Times team were the decision makers. As noted by Bauer in regard to the latter,

“So we would be in the nicest way possible telling them what we are going to do, not asking them. So once they had given us their blessings for the idea we didn’t really give them the freedom to sort of say, well that’s quite a nice concept, but I’m not quite sure … because it would just become an endless and self-defeating process. And again, for instance, everybody in [the] immediate communities understood that, and they were very accommodative” (Charlotte Bauer interview, Sunday Times Heritage Project Collection, South African History Archive).

The tensions or partnership asymmetries described above, are constructively acknowledged by one member of the SAHA project team, who notes the differences between a journalistic memory initiative and a memory project implemented by historians.

“I guess we were more interested in deepening the account than the Sunday Times were … you know they weren’t and they’re not historians, they journalists and they’ve got a particular kind of … to my mind they’re looking at particular kind of color, they’re looking for certain excitement, they’re not very good at any kind of explanation. And we were conversely looking for explanations, not color … riveting episodes, we were looking for some explanation. So I think between us we didn’t do a bad job … those tensions were necessary …” (B1).
Another participant described the project as “an experiment in profit and non-profit partnerships in heritage” (B2), noting the potential opportunities and setbacks of this approach, and that the South African commercial sector should take more responsibility for heritage funding in South Africa that is so often “coming from internationals” (B2).

An important lesson from the partnership concerns the need for clarity from the outset, on “project outputs and respective responsibilities” (B2). Evidently, there were several partnership roles, as illustrated above, that were overlooked in the conceptualization phases of the partnership between SAHA and the Sunday Times, including the implications of SAHA’s monetary investments into existing Sunday Times initiatives such as the project website, and it’s once off newspaper heritage supplement.

5.5.3  **Securing Community And Other Stakeholder Support**

Forging relationships with community members and other stakeholders was a common feature in the making of each of the memorials. While memorial selection, representation and location were decided on by the Sunday Times based on the preliminary research of project staff, a different kind of community and stakeholder engagement was attached to making the memorials meaningful to the individuals being commemorated if still living, their family members or close friends, and the communities in which the memorials were to be placed.

Project members consulted with individuals being commemorated, or with immediate family, and this typically involved the checking of the Sunday Times’ research briefs or checking the memorial profiles for accuracy. This was not a permission-seeking process (Mantombe Makhubele interview, Sunday Times Heritage Project Collection, South African History Archive). According to Bauer, outside
stakeholders were not given “the option to go any further with determining what the artworks or the memorial might look like” (Charlotte Bauer interview, Sunday Times Heritage Project Collection, South African History Archive).

In instances where some level of stakeholder permission was deemed to be essential, methods of consultation were determined by the conditions associated with each memorial or with each planned memorial site. In an interview, Makhubele explains that this often resulted in the Sunday Times securing approval from municipal managers who informed their community constituents.

“… if you go through the community first, its gonna be a nightmare you know. People are going to say, no we don’t want it blue, we think it should be green … because everyone wants to feel that they are important. So it’s always better to start with the municipal manager, get his buy in, then he will trickle it down. By the time you go and erect it, and when people ask you why are you here, you just show them the document to say we have permission to do this” (Mantombe Makhubele interview, Sunday Times Heritage Project Collection, South African History Archive).

In the case of the Nelson Mandela memorial in Howick Pietermaritzburg, ward councilor approval led to the involvement of different community agencies, including the road agency and the traffic department. Makhubele describes a site meeting with representation from both of these agencies that were there respectively in attendance to discuss the construction of a viewing platform, and appropriate road signage.

In other examples, more complex issues of consultation that resulted in the delayed installation of some memorials are highlighted. In regard to the memorial of South African marathon runner, Bruce Fordyce, the project stalled because the proposed site of the Durban City Hall is a national heritage site protected by national heritage laws. The Sunday Times was therefore asked to illustrate that the memorial would firstly not become an obstruction in the city center, and secondly to seek permission from the
provincial heritage agency, Amafa. Furthermore, the Sunday Times needed to issue a formal commitment to maintaining the memorial. According to Makhubele,

“With putting up a memorial on a national heritage site you need to tell them how you going to maintain the artwork, what if something happens, so you need to give your commitments in terms of that, and also you can never take it down. If it falls down, you have to re-erect it …” (Mantombi Makhubele interview, Sunday Times Heritage Project Collection, South African History Archive).

The Sunday Times clearly demonstrates a business approach to community and stakeholder participation predominantly focused on an end result, as compared with heritage sector concerns of building and sustaining community relationships. In some cases, as with the Bruce Fordyce memorial, the extent of consultation and commitment required was unanticipated. It was also clear that community interactions were based on decisions that had already been made, and represented just one step in the process of realizing an end goal.

5.5.4 Mobilizing Expertise For The Communications Campaign

SAHA’s involvement in the Sunday Times Heritage Project increased the involvement of other stakeholders. In addition to its partnership with the Sunday Times, SAHA initiated another level of partnerships with ‘experts’, by co-opting organizations such as the Wits History Workshop into the project. The Wits History Workshop has a long track record of engaging with radical, “history from below” ways of producing community histories that dates back to 1977. According to an interviewee,

“We had a sort of formal relationship with them to inform the research process, so they would help identify potential areas to find research and so forth” (B3).
SAHA also drew on the services and expertise of other organizations such as Doxa Productions, Jacana Media, independent consultants, and the South African Broadcasting Corporation. To this effect, an interviewee makes the point that,

“… we have long-standing ongoing relationships with a crew of consultants and practitioners that we would pull in on a project like that. So, I mean its all essentially down to funding … for example, we partnered, um, on the Sunday Times Heritage Project very successfully with the History Workshop of course, which is affiliated with the University of Witwatersrand History Department … Another, particularly with the schools project, oral history project that we did” (B2).

Project records located at SAHA also provide a sense of the terms of reference for partnering with, or subcontracting work to organizations such as Jacana Media for publishing and Doxa Productions for producing interactive video. This mobilization of resources and expertise increased the capacity of the communications campaign to deliver on its mandate.

A team of researchers, deployed from organizations such as the Wits History Workshop, the South African History Archive and others, accessed the archives of mainly Gauteng-based institutions. In terms of still image research, an interviewee noted that, “we were limited because some of … the best sources are commercial sources, and they’re expensive” (B3). In terms of the value that SAHA was able to contribute to the research process, there is an acknowledgement of both strengths and limitations:

“You know certain things we had an inside track on, so [Archbishop] Tutu and the Truth Commission … [and] we had inside tracks on access to certain documents and those kinds of things … but you know SAHA didn’t have any experience of dealing with older history, so … I’m not sure what value the institution brought to investigate … [Mohandas] Gandhi … I mean it was down to individuals finding stuff of course … and with a different set of researchers you might have had a completely different configuration of issues that were brought to the table. But the point of the project though was to, I suppose, open people’s eyes to different aspects of the history” (B3).
5.5.5 Working with Educators And Learners: Facilitating High School Oral History Programs

A major component of the project’s repackaging and dissemination strategy was directed at schools, in many cases, building on networks and expertise in oral history methodologies that had already been established. Through project partners such as the Wits History workshop, the project was able to capitalize on its strengths.

As noted by an interviewee, the rationale for a schools oral history project was based on an identified need for a “community memorial aspect” to the Sunday Times memorial processes (B3). This “community memorial aspect” can be seen as a catalyst for creating awareness of and engagement with the Sunday Times memorials and its related content, for skills development at educator and school learner levels in creating oral histories, and for encouraging participation in the making of local histories. Under the direction of SAHA and the Wits History Workshop, the schools oral history project was implemented in “eight schools located in four South African towns”, amongst grade 11 and 12 educators and learners (The Sunday Times Heritage Project Collection guide, p.1). Providing a simple definition, an interviewee notes that school learners,

“… identified and developed memorials as part of that project. And … we structured … history workshops with secondary educators through the Gauteng Department of Education, initially through their Race and Values Directorate” (B2).

The SAHA team deliberately chose to work with high schools in the Limpopo, Mpumalanga and Free State provinces of South Africa. These provinces were not represented in the Sunday Times memorial list, and the idea for a project involving grades 11 and 12 high school educators and learners was “to go to the sort of less privileged and less profiled provinces” (B1). Echoing the “reconciliation” motives
outlined in early project documentation, an interviewee emphasizes that the high schools project was intended to stimulate dialogue amongst divided racial groups, and notes that,

“By that stage … very clearly … the dialogue across racial boundaries had broken down … what had started off very promisingly in 1990 had completely collapsed, people weren’t talking to each other … if they talked to each other they were guarded … across racial lines, and so that kind of conversation … we thought a good place might be the schools … so that was part of the social and political rationale” (B1).

Paying attention to representation rather than inclusion, the project team selected high schools in communities where they believed they could make an impact, by promoting “reconciliation between learners who would not ordinarily come into contact with each other in the course of their daily lives” (The SAHA/Sunday Times Heritage Project report, p.16). In some cases, as with Kroonstad in the Free State province, existing networks and relationships, particularly of the Wits History Workshop, were used to set up the school programs (B1). Schools with different racial compositions were selected as representative of the apartheid-assigned racial categories of African, Indian, Colored, and White (B1). This, the organizers believed, would help to promote meaningful conversations in planned workshops for participants from different schools, different races, and different community backgrounds. Speaking to this point, an interviewee noted that,

“What we wanted to do was to have a kind of workshop at the end of it where all of the schools, or representatives, people who had been doing these projects in the schools … would present their projects to each other. Now obviously they’d probably be racially grounded in a certain way … reflect their own background” (B1).

The methodology for the schools oral history project was based on a number of steps. These included: establishing contact with schools and within communities; face to face
meetings; archival research on the identified communities; filtering of archival research into several possible community themes; final selection of themes by school educators; a weekend seminar for school educators in oral history methodologies; and, community oral history projects. However, this methodology was often complicated by factors that the project staff had little control of, and that required interventions. Reflecting on the kinds of interventions that became necessary, an interviewee reports that,

“… some of the schools were a nightmare basically … some of the teachers we brought up [to Johannesburg] for the workshops, they just disappeared … they went to another school … or something or other, or nothing happened. Now you know if the headmaster wasn’t actively supporting you as well, they get transferred from that class to another class at no notice … so that was difficult. Those were the real difficulties” (B1).

It is clear then that there were practical difficulties in implementing a school oral history programs. As an interview respondent noted, the status of history education in schools was problematic, and at least one school earmarked for inclusion did not have history in their curriculum. However, there are also several validating reports of the enthusiasm that the oral history programs inspired in participating schools, as well as of the strengthening of relationships with the national Ministry of Education. An interviewee made the point that,

“I think we've made a significant contribution to the potential for schools to deal with oral history work. I do think … that’s been a really important contribution, that the relationship with the Race and Values Directorate in the Ministry of Education on this was very valuable. They got very excited by this thing” (B3).

In addition, many people were involved in the making of the schools oral history project: the SAHA management team; the Wits History Workshop; a team of educational consultants who produced an educator guide; graduate student researchers who conducted
archival research, secured copyright clearances, and were key point people with the selected schools; the school learners and educators themselves; provincial archives; and, interviewees in the respective communities.

While the schools oral history component was difficult to manage because of constraints within the schools and communities themselves, it was able to demonstrate successful short-term outcomes. At the same time it underscored several factors for considering direct partnerships between the heritage and education sectors, and the benefits of heritage sector investments in education. It is clear that the project provided the means and resources to enable the making of local histories in specifically selected communities. What remains in question, though, is the extent to which the project was able to re-ignite waning interest in history at high school levels. An interviewee notes that a key recommendation from the Sunday Times Heritage Project evaluation identified the need for strengthened relations and work with the national Department of Education.

“How can we replicate this model? And the only way you can replicate anything with education is to work with the Department of Education, which I mean comes with its own set of challenges” (B2).

A strong case for education investments by the heritage sector is therefore made and demonstrated through the schools oral history project.

5.5.6 Producing Resources and Tools

5.5.6.1 Radio Programs

Radio programs accounted for 75% of the memory resources that were produced. Of this number 47% have been produced as both full-length and short feature documentaries. The remaining 28% were produced as short feature documentaries only, with running times of under five minutes. Why radio? The final project report highlights
the ability of radio programs to keep the project within the realm of the national media, specifying that,

“… an audio history series would ideally maintain the sharply defined ‘news’ focus of the Sunday Times Heritage Project thus ensuring a strong story-driven approach that makes for compelling radio” (The SAHA Sunday Times Heritage Project Report, January – December 2007, p.4).

The decision to pursue the production of a radio series was also framed by SAHA’s contractual obligations to Atlantic Philanthropies. As noted previously, one of the two request requirements highlighted in the grant approval letter from the Atlantic Philanthropies to SAHA called for a formal agreement between SAHA and the South African Broadcasting Corporation (Letter from Colin McCrea to Piers Pigou. June 30, 2006). This formal agreement was to ensure national media coverage outside of the Sunday Times partnership. A series of radio programs aired on the South African Broadcasting Corporation’s SAfm radio station between August and October 2007, part of a campaign to observe National Heritage Day on September 24th. As noted by an interviewee,

“… we had the radio series that we put together which ended up being 7 half hour documentaries, and then a series of three to five minutes of vignettes, and we then made a deal with the S[outh] A[frican] B[roadcasting] C[orporation] to broadcast those during Heritage Month, which we did … based on the heritage trail, that was based on old archive and interviews. And building those I would say into radio documentaries …” (B3)

In terms of the content of the radio programs, they

“include recordings of interviews with the central character being commemorated as well as friends, associates, relatives and colleagues. Where relevant, the documentaries include archival sound from the SABC Archives and other sources … [and] … where possible interviews were done “on site” – at a place relevant to the central focus of the story” (The Sunday Times Heritage Project Report, January – December 2007, p.5).
One of the major oversights and limitations of the radio series is also a concern relating to the dissemination project as a whole, that English was the dominant language of production, in a country where English medium radio station “SAFM has an average listenership of half a million compared to [the isiZulu medium radio station] iKhwezi [FM] which is five million” (B3). This issue is explicitly acknowledged in project reports and the final project evaluation as one that profoundly influenced the ability of the project to extend its reach. Chantal Kissoon of the South African Human Rights Commission, in a contribution to the final project evaluation notes that,

“statistics indicate that radio in SA is still the most widely used means of acquiring information by the majority of South Africans, especially in rural areas. The accessibility of the information shared would also have been increased had the information been provided in other official languages” (Draft Evaluation Report, February 2008).

Despite the specific limitations identified here, the radio programs drew in a number of participants who were directly involved with or affected by the people and events being memorialized. At this level, the project clearly demonstrates a commitment to inclusive processes of documenting and sharing what remains largely undocumented in official records.

5.5.6.2 Between Life and Death: An Interactive DVD-ROM

The production of a DVD-ROM about deaths in political detention at John Vorster Square Police Station in central Johannesburg drew in the participation of former political detainees, family, lawyers, individuals who were active in detainee support groups such as the Detainees Parents Support Committee, former warders and former security police. Former detainees and members of the security forces were taken back to
John Vorster Square to relate their experiences. Expressing the significance of the John Vorster Square project, the final project report states that,

“The history of this sinister prison has never been written or recorded in any form and we believed as a team that the story was very important to research and preserve” (SAHA/Sunday Times Heritage Project Final Report, 2008).

The DVD facilitates a virtual experience of John Vorster Square, using a three-dimensional production format combined with interviews and other archival material. An interviewee remarks that,

“… it’s not something you just put in and watch. You’ve got to move with it. You’ve got to navigate around the building, you’ve got to press on the interviews or the archival material … it gave an unprecedented opportunity to go inside a place that most people will never go inside … to hear the stories of people first hand, talking about their experiences in those cells, taking them back to the cells, taking cops back … to the 9th and 10th floors of the security police, doing profiles of those deaths in custody …” (B3).

The eyewitness accounts provided through the interviews were able to supplement a dearth of available information about John Vorster Square. An interview respondent noted that the status of security police records remain in question, and is widely thought to have been included in the sustained destruction of apartheid era records from the late 1960s onwards, and the mass destruction of government records in the early 1990s. Those records that do exist, the interviewee notes, remain difficult to access (B3).

“We needed to look at some stuff from the state archives if you could get stuff out of the state archives relating to the deaths in custody in particular” (B3).

Oral history interviews therefore provided the content upon which the traumatic history of John Vorster Square was reconstructed, and as noted by one interviewee, “that takes it
so far beyond the original idea of just simply having a memorial” (B2). Interviewees noted both the difficulty of the DVDs content, and the innovativeness of the medium.

“As a[n] exercise in looking at a tool that can deal with temporal and spatial issues …, and allows the user to navigate, I think it’s quite revolutionary … “ (B3).

The documentary film production and interactive design company, Doxa Productions, was commissioned by SAHA to produce the DVD. The agreement between the two organizations included a clause giving SAHA final approval of the DVD and its final content (Memorandum of Agreement entered into between the South African History Archives and Doxa 2007).

Since the DVD is available only through limited distribution points, and therefore has limited accessibility, it was not available to the general Sunday Times readership and the public in the same way as other derivative products. In this regard an interviewee notes that,

“… I don’t think that it was either effectively picked up on by the Sunday Times or by SAHA … but we did manage to get a good distribution, or relatively good distribution. But I think that largely that we should have had a much better dissemination strategy … we used up to a point the vehicle of the Sunday Times and its link with Avusa … its education arm. But I think a lot more could have been done with that” (B3).

This statement is reflective of a more general concern about dissemination strategies, applicable in varying degrees to all of the outcomes of the communications campaign of the STHP. A project interviewee noted that since heritage work “wasn’t mainstreamed into the broader thinking of the [Sunday Times] paper” (B3), there were no guarantees about how the partnership could benefit distribution. Reflecting on some examples that might have been beneficial, the same interviewee notes that,
“… so all of those things should have been locked down [at the beginning]. So we should have been promised that over a two year period we would get [to write] 15 articles [for the newspaper] or whatever. We should have space, we should have done that, a lot more of that kind of stuff” (B3).

The DVD in fact was distributed to very particular audiences, one such audience being theatregoers to a musical performance of the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission hearings at Johannesburg’s Market Theatre in 2008. As is noted, this implies that it is highly likely that a supportive audience would have received the DVD:

“… and so two shows at the Market Theatre, and we packaged, we did an exhibition at the Market Theatre of shots from inside John Vorster Square … and we handed out to everyone who attended free of charge, a very nice little gift of the John Vorster Square DVD and the radio MP3 CD. [There is] no idea whether that was used or how it was used or whether it simply went on to people’s shelves … you know it was an audience that we knew that would respond to those issues and would have an interest in those issues, but again whether it’s simply like so many of these products, they end up on the shelves of the converted anyway …” (B3).

5.5.6.3 Voices of our Past: Educator Guides

Based on educator workshops with representation from the eight schools involved in this program, the project produced a teaching guide to accompany the series of radio programs that had been produced. After a series of workshops with educators, the guidebook was produced in response to an identified need for oral history teaching aids by workshop facilitators and educators. This project was endorsed by the national government Department of Education (The Sunday Times/ SAHA Heritage Project Report, p.17), which used it as a resource for its’ annual national oral history competition. A project participant noted that,

“… inside SAHA, we all have our little favorite bits of the products that came out of it, but I think that’s one of the things we’re most proud of …
because it’s a long-term investment which can hopefully keep paying back for the foreseeable future, it’s a very useful guidebook” (B3).

5.5.6.4 An ‘Online Museum’: The Heritage Project Website

The STHP website was launched in the early stages of the project, and overseen directly by the Sunday Times. The site was re-launched with new content in October 2008, after the project had formally ended. All of the ‘products’, except for a few such as the John Vorster Square DVD-ROM are available online. Currently, it provides “quick links” to detailed information on 25 of the memorials, archival photographs and artwork galleries, audio clips, video clips, and interactive timelines. These contain biographical information about each of the memorials, primary source materials, and information about the artists (Sunday Times Heritage Project: A Quick Guide to Our Website, http://heritage.thetimes.co.za/article.aspx?id=570518, accessed 4 May 2012). The website was initially conceptualized as an online museum that would extend the reach of the memorials. SAHA’s main role was in developing website content, as is evident in much of the website’s multimedia content, in the archival stories, and in the lesson plans for educators. This being said, the website remains semi-functional due to a number of inactive or error producing links, particularly affecting the availability of multimedia resources on the site. Project staff, particularly those concerned with its continuity at the South African History Archive, are aware of these problems, attributing many of these technical difficulties as symptomatic of working with a national newspaper carrier that sees the project as done.

An interviewee notes that most staff of the original Sunday Times project staff have left the newspaper or have moved on to other projects (B2). For the Sunday Times therefore, this was a fixed project with clearly defined parameters of time, space and
budget. Beyond their initial significant investment in the construction of the memorials, the newspaper did not concern itself with mechanisms to address issues arising post the construction of the memorials. The latter task became and still is the domain of the South African History Archive, which has expressed a commitment to the dissemination of the materials, and to finding ways of “rolling out” the range of products as educational resources for high school learners. Particularly acknowledging the “digital divide” issues that are still reality in many regions of South Africa, SAHA undertook to ensure that all of the “products” are available on removable media in the form of books, compact discs, digital video discs, as well as through the broadcast media of radio and television.

Some of the interviewees were particularly critical of the site’s structure, which in several respects can be seen as a promotional tool for the Sunday Times that foregrounds their desire to ‘give back’.

“… the architecture is incredibly difficult, and from my perspective I can’t strictly speaking fathom who they thought the audience was going to be. Because if you look at the top level of the website, it’s all very editorial, Sunday Times, this is our vision for the project which isn’t actually what you need at the top level of a website. Whereas if you think of it from an educator’s point of view, you would definitely raise the level of the memorials, and the lesson plans so that it was much more evident … you know you can do so much more about structuring for an education website, and I think they missed an opportunity in terms of packaging the incredibly rich material there, so that it would be useable into the future, because the people who primarily are going to use that kind of site are going to be learners and educators …” (B2).

As a long-term resource, the fact that the website remains in private hands seriously limits its ability for reference and educational purposes. This clearly illustrates differences in and tensions in the practices between two very different organizations, one that is fully profit-making and the other non-profit and civil society based. Bound up in
the institutional arrangements of the Sunday Times newspaper, the website has become static.

5.5.6.5 The Heritage Newspaper Supplement

The production of a heritage newspaper supplement to the Sunday Times weekly newspaper coincided with National Heritage Day in 2007. Produced as a joint venture between the Sunday Times and SAHA, concerns were later expressed by interviews about a newspaper supplement as an effective dissemination strategy, given the limited longevity of a newspaper supplement.

Noting the asymmetry between production of tangible outputs and their actual usage or reception, or perhaps a tension between intended and actual usage, an interviewee notes the following:

“And I think product-wise we were able to produce a reasonable amount of material but I still have questions in my mind as to whether we effectively utilized that stuff. But I don’t know if I have unrealistic expectations about that as well ... you know if you produce a supplement in a newspaper, I see what I do in newspapers, they pile up and they get thrown away or recycled, or whatever. We didn’t produce something that people would want to follow up and keep ... you know that probably just got thrown away en-masse ... as opposed to someone would want to keep that” (B3).

5.5.6.6 Great Lives, Pivotal Moments

The book, Great Lives Pivotal Moments, was authored by Lauren Segal and Paul Holden, and published by Jacana Media in 2008. It takes the form of a series of ‘portraits’, of 24 memorials. These portraits include biographical information derived from interviews, archives and published literature, historic stills, images of archival
documents, information and photographs of the physical memorials, and information about the artists.

5.5.7 Mediating Impact

In my analysis, I did not set out to evaluate or measure the impact of the Sunday Times Heritage Project. I am otherwise interested in the extent to which the project organizers thought about possible impacts of their initiative, the ways in which impact considerations were built into the initial project design, specific activities that were undertaken to assess project impact and where applicable, summaries of the results of these activities. A project interviewee pertinently notes that, “it is always difficult for us to know about public reception” (B2). Since the Sunday Times Heritage Project (STHP) was informed by several distinct but interrelated sub-components, it is necessary to assess each separately in terms of its audience reach and impact. While this is beyond the scope of my dissertation, and calls for a longitudinal research design, it is possible to determine the extent to which project participants were thinking about reception and impact in the initial project design, in reflecting on the project, as well as highlight specific steps that were taken towards a more nuanced understanding of impact and reception. Highlighting the essential role of time in understanding impact and reception, and with specific reference to the physical memorials, Lesley Perkes notes that,

“… the scale is in the volume of the memorials. There’s so many all happening at a very very short space of time actually over a few years, and they spread out over such a large area, and you talking about a different kind of scale, and I think those issues are so complex really in terms of our sector that we not really gonna know the answers to what we are saying until people have lived with these memorials for longer …” (Lesley Perkes interviewed by Sharon Cort, Sunday Times Heritage Project Collection).
Different levels of impact emerge from my analysis of the project, some of which were unanticipated. One level of impact is on the individuals or surviving family members of individuals who were being memorialized in the project, particularly when personal and painful memories were evoked. Project director Charlotte Bauer notes that,

“... even as a journalist, and as a reporter I have often found in the beginning my surprise where even knocking at the door of a family who have just experienced a terrible tragedy or loss, nine out of ten people want to let you in because they need to talk about it, and they need their story or their pain to somewhere be publicly acknowledged. And almost without exceptions the families in these stories were whole hearted and I think it was very generous of them because we didn’t really given them the option to go any further with determining what the artworks or the memorial might look like” (Interview with Charlotte Bauer, Sunday Times Heritage Project Collection, South African History Archive).

Several preliminary indicators of impact are expressed in interviews and project documentation. Sunday Times newspaper editor, Mondli Makhanya, for example notes the importance of the Sunday Times Heritage Project as an intervention in the South African heritage sector, and therefore as a catalyst for a different approach to monument production that is not solely about putting up a statue:

“I think a major contribution of this project is that it had actually got the cultural community, heritage community and government as well to start thinking differently about memorializing our history, start thinking differently about monuments and I don’t think it’s something that would change immediately but I think as we go forward the era of the static monument may be something that will become the past” (Mondli Makhanya interview, Sunday Times Heritage Project Collection, South African History Archive).

There was general consensus amongst interviewees of educational inroads made, and the extent to which the project enabled and solidified relationships with important educational partners.

“I think we’ve made a significant contribution to the potential for schools to deal with oral history work. I do think that’s been a really important
contribution, that the relationship with the Race and Values Directorate in the Ministry of Education on this was very valuable. They got very excited by this thing” (B3).

Several of the interviewees also note that the content generated through archival research and interviews, and in the final products themselves, were a major accomplishment of the Sunday Times Heritage Project, despite the fact that feedback thus far has been largely anecdotal.

“... I do think the radio doccies [documentaries] were … as I said I’ve had anecdotal feedback about how they loved, people loved aspects of those documentaries, and I think that it’s something that the S[outh] A[frican] B[roadcasting] C[orporation] can draw on every year or every 5 years, and they can pull out you know the documentary on The Purple Shall Govern, you remember … and getting the guy who did that being interviewed … The 1960s P[an] A[fricanist] C[ongress] march with Philip Kgosana and interviewing Philip on his farm outside Pretoria … so you know there were some really nice [content] … so I thought those, personally, were great and I imagine for anyone listening to them … who wanted to engage with them … but I don’t know who listened to them and that’s, that’s what I find quite sad, but we did try and make sure that they also got distributed … into cultural heritage places … and we tried to get some to schools …” (B3).

Segal and Mokwena report that in 2005, the Sunday Times and its related websites were receiving “on average a combined 3.3 million page impressions and 240 063 unique users per month … there are 43 000 readers subscribed to the weekly Sunday Times online newsletter, 5 500 subscribers to the weekly Sowetan Online newsletter and 2 000 subscribers to the Reporter newsletter, which are used for promoting content and services”, and that the Sunday Times online audience is increasing rapidly (2006, p.11).

As part of its reporting requirements to the Atlantic Philanthropies, the South African History Archive went to great lengths to evaluate the communications campaign of the project, including its reception by specific audiences. Despite the fact that members of the Sunday Times project team were consulted and interviewed for the
evaluation, this was specifically a SAHA effort in which each aspect of the communications campaign was evaluated separately. It solicited the services of an independent agency, Helene Perold and Associates, to perform the evaluation between September and December 2007 (Evaluation Report, 2008). Five distinct components are assessed in the evaluation report: “the effectiveness of the collaboration” between SAHA and the Sunday Times; “contribution to innovation in the heritage sector”; “assessment of the discourse about the past”; and, “the SAHA Schools Project” (Draft Evaluation Report, February 2008). The evaluation protocols and instruments on which the report is based includes: interviews and focus groups with members of the Sunday Times and SAHA project teams, as well as with high school educators and learners; a quiz administered to schools; the report of a content and discourse analysis conducted by the Media Monitoring Group; and reports from “heritage specialists” (Draft Evaluation Report, February 2008).

In a commissioned analysis of the Sunday Times/SAHA Heritage Project, Jabulani Sithole (2007) of the University of KwaZulu-Natal Pietermaritzburg talks about the potential impacts of different aspects of the communication campaign – the Orlando Pirates documentary, the Race Classification documentary, the John Vorster Square documentary, and the project website. Addressing the general nature of the project as a whole, Sithole stresses the project’s ability to ‘deepen discourse of the past’ through the balanced selection of a wide range of memorials that are reflective of the “divided and yet linked” (Sithole 2007, p.6) nature of South African experiences. Memorials dedicated, for example, to four prominent women in South African political history and culture, from different class and racial backgrounds – Olive Schreiner, Cissie Gool,
Lillian Ngoyi, and Ingrid Jonker – have the potential to stimulate conversation, taking account of similar but different perspectives framed by the same repressive political system. Despite the fact that Sithole’s assessment of impact is based largely on anecdotal evidence, and on personal perceptions informed by his active involvement in the heritage and academic sectors, it helps to provide the weight of academic credibility to the project’s communications campaign.

Speaking specifically of the Heritage Supplement produced in September 2007, Prof. John Wright provides a somewhat different view of potential audience impact, noting that the supplement “widen[s] discourse about the past, but does little to deepen it” (Evaluation of the Sunday Times Heritage Project 2007, p.89). The rationale here is that “the deepening of discourses about the past will not happen without addressing of the politics of how these discourses are made in the present” (Evaluation of the Sunday Times Heritage Project 2007, p.89).

Speaking more generally about the intended impact of the project, an interviewee described the project’s most important role as that of promoting social cohesion towards reconciliation:

“… this is glue, this is all glue for a conversation which underpins reconciliation in this country, and we haven’t had that … this notion that there’s been reconciliation in this country hasn’t been a conversation about our respective pasts. So this is an important contribution … to starting that off around some areas. But I don’t want to overstate our impact, and that’s why I think that our role must be evaluated for it’s catalytical value more than anything else” (B3).

Given therefore the reconciliatory agenda and a complex external context of how recent traumatic and violent episodes are remembered in the public sphere, impact is perhaps an evasive concept. Expressing this complexity, an interviewee notes that:
“… there are professors of memory at Yale and various places like that, that look at countries that have undergone these kinds of transitions from violent conflictual pasts … they go through what they call the memory gap which is a period of anywhere between 15 and 20 years, depending on the conflicts, but it’s around those … generations who simply consciously disengage from their immediate history, and one only comes back to it later on. You could argue that some of the processes that we’re engaged in are really long-term investment processes …” (B3).

Newspaper reports between 2006 and 2010 provide an overwhelming sense of vandalism as one of the critical consequences to the production of the memorials. While the exact motives and causes of this vandalism are currently unknown, there has been much speculation in media reports. In June 2009 *Business Day* reported that “South African public sculpture has been hard hit by vandalism and theft”, and that “many of the public sculptures installed as part of the nationwide Sunday Times Heritage Project … have been vandalised, stolen or defaced”. Commenting further on the social context in which these problems have occurred, the same article notes that South Africa is “a country where the raw materials are more valued by some citizens than the aesthetics of the artwork” (Alex Dodd, *Business Day* 20 June 2009, accessed on LexisNexis January 3, 2011).

5.5.8 Media Monitoring

As part of its systematic efforts to understand what was being communicated to the public about the Sunday Times Heritage Project, a media monitoring component was included in the final project evaluation conducted by Helene Perold and Associates in 2007. As with the remainder of the evaluation, media monitoring was conducted over a limited time period, between 29 January 2006 and 30 September 2007. It included a content and discourse analysis of the initial project website that was re-launched in
October 2007, and 151 print articles that appeared in the Sunday Times (Evaluation of the SAHA/Sunday Times Heritage Project, Appendix 3, p.67). A key finding of the media monitoring report was that “the Heritage Project contributed substantially to increasing the amount of coverage on heritage” (Evaluation of the SAHA/Sunday Times Heritage Project, Appendix 3, p.74) in the national media. Quantifying this finding, it is reported that 48% of coverage dealt with the event being commemorated, 17% was on the commissioned artworks or artists, opinion pieces accounted for 18%, analysis of relevance in the present accounted for 3%, and general heritage coverage that was unrelated to the Sunday Times Heritage Project amounted to 19%. While these findings are significant, the impact of an increased heritage focus in the national media remains untested.

Despite the fact that SAHA’s primary goal for the communications campaign was to contribute to reconciliation, the media reports provide little sense of the extent to which this may or may not have been accomplished. 8% of the articles dealt explicitly with reconciliation, but there is no sense of what this might be attributed to, particularly since the reports contain limited reference to SAHA (Evaluation of the SAHA/Sunday Times Heritage Project, Appendix 3, p.71).

According to the final evaluation report, the key messages communicated in the web and print media were:

- Reconciliation: 3%
- Commemorate the past: 39%
- Contribute to an active understanding of the past: 10%
- The impact of past heroes and villains on South Africa: 23%
• Reaching a large audience: 10%
• Telling less well known stories: 9%
• Other key messages: 6%

In my own analysis of media coverage between 2006 and 2010, I noted that the 45 articles produced by a LexisNexis search emerged as articles that had been published in the Sunday Times group of newspapers, except for one, a review of the book Great Lives, Pivotal Moments as published in the Cape Times of 23 January 2009. 25 of the reports were produced in 2007, at the peak of the Sunday Times memorial process, nine were produced in 2006, 10 were published in 2009, and 1 was published in 2010.

5.6 ARCHIVAL CONTRIBUTIONS

5.6.1 Archival Possibilities and Challenges

Given the uniqueness of the STHP model in South African heritage contexts, the project can be thought of as a test site for connecting archives to the social and vice versa. Reflecting on the role of the South African History Archive, a project interviewee remarks,

“… you know what’s so attractive for me about SAHA is this notion that it has this mandate to challenge official versions of history ... and to get under the skin of these things. And this is, this makes a lot of traditionalists in the archival world, historians and so forth, extremely uncomfortable … because it requires an engagement with the politics of archive as well, which many people in the sector are not prepared to engage on” (B3).
Despite the different dimensions of archives that emerge from my analysis of the STHP, not all of the project team members were ready to declare the project’s archival engagements as a major success. In the opinion of a leading project team member,

“… you know, in retrospect again, it was thin, it was weak, it wasn’t systematic, there wasn’t quality control. Again all of these things, in retrospect, we should have been thinking about much more carefully about archiving, how we were gonna archive that, how we were gonna access the archive that had already been generated by the Sunday Times, and pull that together … [and] could we really do detailed archival research in this context with the resources that we had available” (B3).

This statement suggests that the full potential of the project’s archival impacts were not reached mainly as a result of ineffective planning, and a lack of prioritization in relation to the scope of what would be needed for an effective archival intervention.

More than one project team member alludes to incongruities in the respective approaches of the Sunday Times and SAHA to historical research, as partly informing of less than adequate archival contributions and roles. These incongruities or tensions were understood as necessary and inevitable by most in the project team, but also managed to cause a great deal of frustration. A team member remarks,

“… so I think and I guess we were more interested in deepening the account than the Sunday Times were … you know they weren't and they're not historians, they journalists and they've got a particular kind of … to my mind they're looking at particular kind of color, they're looking for certain excitement, they're not very good at any kind of explanation. And we were conversely looking for explanations, not color … [or] riveting episodes, we were looking for some explanation. So I think between us we didn't do a bad job … those tensions were necessary …” (B1)

Another team member was highly critical of the content contributions made by the Sunday Times to the project as a whole:

“The Sunday Times around content really brought very little to the table. That was my sense, is that they’d done some of their own preliminary research but they certainly weren’t opening the door to their own archive.
I mean their own archives are pretty badly organized as far as I can make out. And so they didn’t really use those very effectively. And I think that they didn’t really have much of a vision about what this was about” (B3).

By the sheer involvement of the South African History Archive (SAHA) as a major partner in the heritage project’s communication campaign, there is an overwhelming sense that archives, and archival issues, were central considerations in the conceptualization and delivery of at least some of the project outputs. This is evident in the Sunday Times Heritage Project (STHP) collection of 30 archival boxes that has been formally integrated into the archival holdings of SAHA. As is evident in the finding aid, the collection provides a detailed record of the processes of setting up and implementing the STHP. The collection is also an institutional home that provides access to archival records that surfaced and were generated in the process of researching particular memorials.

5.6.2 Identifying and Filling Gaps in Official Archival Records

In the South African heritage sector, there is general consensus on large gaps in South Africa’s archival record. While these gaps are virtually impossible to quantify, they have been acknowledged in national laws such as the National Archives and Records Service of South Africa Act (1996, as amended)\(^3\), the National Heritage Resources Act (1999)\(^4\), and the Cultural Laws Amendment Act (2000)\(^5\), amongst others. Deacon et al. (2002) also provide details on the state of South Africa’s heritage sector, including archives, in a publication on behalf of the Human Sciences Research Council.

\(^3\) National Archives and Records Services of South Africa Act (Number 43 of 1996), as amended by the Cultural Laws Amendment Act (Number 36 of 2001)

\(^4\) National Heritage Resources Act (Number 25 of 1999)

\(^5\) Cultural Institutions Act (Number 119 of 1998)
Archival processes of research and interpretation for the Sunday Times Heritage project were based on partnerships involving archivists, researchers, and historians. An historian working on the project describes the process of identifying and filling gaps in written records via interview material (B1), as well as processes of verifying archival sources by “investigating the purpose of the document being there in the first place”, so as to be able to “critically appraise it” and “decode it” (B1). The same interviewee notes that,

“On some of the figures, there was very little in the archives … there was very little documentary materials, it just wasn’t there, it wasn’t the kind of thing that gets captured in the archives” (B1).

This statement is reflective of a broader heritage sector concern on the status of personal archives, and how they are configured within public archive systems. An interviewee noted that “[since] the Sunday Times was commemorating individuals … you really had to go searching for that … or else you had to interview” (B1). Examples cited here included records on Eastern Cape prophetess, Nontetha Nkwenkwe and popular musician Brenda Fassie for whom very little could be found in existing archival records. Recently this problem was highlighted in a Mail and Guardian article that drew attention to the fact that most personal literary archives have been transferred to institutions outside of South Africa including the archive of Athol Fugard (http://mg.co.za/article/2012-09-21-00-how-to-keep-sas-literary-treasures-in-the-country). In acknowledgement of archival gaps pertaining to the themes that were being researched, a combination of archival research and interviewing therefore formed the foundations of the memorial research process. In the words of a project team member,

“Well, it was archives and interviewing. Basically we went to the archives for newspapers, and we interviewed. And we got very rich stuff” (B1).
One interviewee notes that much of the archival research for the project took place in one province, despite the fact that the project was of a national scale. Primarily then, archival research was “Gauteng-focused”, and engaged most meaningfully with archival collections at “[Wits] Historical Papers … and the SAHA collections, and then beyond that to a certain extent” (B3). This Gauteng-centric approach to research, and the extent to which it may have impacted upon interpretations, probably represents one of the most significant weaknesses of the project. It would appear that the critical question related to the project team’s ability to “do detailed archival research in this context with the resources … [that were] available” (B3). However, it also suggests that archival research on the Sunday Times Heritage Project was not as exhaustive as it could or should have been, and not as exhaustive as is often claimed. Finally it underscores the inherent weaknesses, and limited usability of fragmented archives, and the need for more focused archival documentation strategies that transcend regional and sometimes national boundaries.

5.6.3 Releasing Archives

Interviewees report that the communications campaign succeeded in securing the release of previously classified documents by using access to information laws. The examples cited include government records pertaining to John Vorster Square from the Directorate of Security Legislation (B3), as well as personal files in the national archives for which access permissions were needed from relatives.

5.6.4 Creating Archives

The archive that emerged from the heritage project is a mix of institutional and historical records. The institutional records comprise detailed records of how the project
unfolded, from the Sunday Times’ processes of memorial selection and research briefs, to SAHA’s engagement with school educators and learners in their community memorial projects. Oral history interviews were generated specifically to support the production of the series of radio documentaries. Oral history participants were therefore targeted for their ability to shed light on specific people and events: race classification, the purple march in Cape Town, the 1960 PAC march in Cape Town, Nontetha Nkwenkwe, Ingrid Jonker, Abdullah Ibrahim, Tsietsi Mashinini, Ladysmith Black Mambazo, and Orlando Pirates. In the case of the DVD-ROM on John Vorster Square police station, interviews were conducted with former political detainees, legal representatives of detainees, members of the Detainees Parents Support Committee, and members of the security police (SAHA / Sunday Times Heritage Project report 2008). In regard to the Schools Oral History project, the finding aid to the Sunday Times Heritage Project collection at the South African History Archive lists different series’ of interviews conducted in Polokwane (Limpopo Province), Kroonstad (Free State Province), Bethal (Mpumalanga Province), and Barberton (Mpumalanga Province) that help to construct the local histories of these particular communities. Importantly, the records that document the process of constructing the Sunday Times Heritage Project are themselves archival. These would include planning meetings, correspondence and reports, as well as recordings of community consultations that helped to shape how specific project components evolved and who was earmarked to be interviewed in specific communities.

With the exception of the schools oral history project, selection of themes to be documented was given specific direction by the Sunday Times’ selection of themes or people to be commemorated in the memorials. In this way, the Sunday Times contributed
to an archival process in which it was not directly involved in, but certainly helped to shape.

5.6.5 An Approach to Archival Outreach

In the final project report to the Atlantic Philanthropies on behalf of the South African History Archive (STHP), Lauren Segal reports on several “unique finds” of archival material in existing university archives, government archives, private archives, family archives and personal collections. The Sunday Times Heritage Project (STHP) therefore provided and seized the opportunity to profile archival materials that had rarely, if ever, been profiled in the public sphere. Several examples are cited in the final report, including: institutional records at the Johannesburg Bar Association that document perceptions of whether Duma Nokwe had the ‘right’ to be admitted to the Johannesburg Bar; rarely accessed personal correspondence at the Wits Historical Papers Archive, between Lilian Ngoyi and her international correspondents Belinda and Donald Allan, written during the period of her house arrest and banishment to Soweto; security police surveillance files that reach the public only in rare instances, this time about Lilian Ngoyi; and, personal papers and memorabilia of Philip Kgosana who led an historic Pan Africanist Congress march from Langa to central Cape Town in 1960 (SAHA / Sunday Times Heritage Project report 2008). Given quite an extensive research process undertaken by the SAHA project team, these are just a few examples that explicitly foreground the transmission of rarely accessed archival records into public discourse, under the auspices of the public dissemination campaign of the STHP. Importantly, these included archives that were not sourced from institutions, such as the Philip Kgosana personal collection.
The medium of English radio was central to archival outreach, as is evident in the seven full-length programs that were produced, and eight shorter radio features. The Schools Oral History Project also provided a venue for the community to construct its own archives, using oral histories. This kind of engagement with archives took place in schools where this would otherwise have been unlikely for reasons that range from limited resources, limited skills, very little or no incentives, declining interest in history as a school subject, and limited ability and motivations to connect with schools outside of ‘jurisdictional’ boundaries. An interviewee emphasizes that these processes also influenced SAHA’s approach to educational outreach, resulting in workshops about how to use primary source materials in the classroom that extended beyond the Sunday Times Heritage Project.

“Out of this … the sense that we needed to think about other points of intervention with education became apparent, and primary sources … how do you work with primary sources in the classroom. And … we developed other resources apart from, outside of the Sunday Times Heritage Project that look at primary resources … [and] we pulled in things like the radio documentaries … and then started offering primary source workshops. And the interesting thing about the radio documentaries is that they are low cost resources to distribute, they can be used in almost any environment as long as you got a CD player” (B2).

Glancing at SAHA’s history, it is clear that the organization has worked with school learners at different levels in the past, through projects such as “SAHA in the Classroom” that produced a series of high school learner guides. Educational outreach has therefore been a key component of SAHA’s work, historically. However, the Schools Oral History component of the Sunday Times Heritage Project is unprecedented for a small archival NGO such as SAHA in many ways, most particularly in the extent to which it paid attention to process concerns, transcended provincial boundaries, actively
engaged community members in selecting community participants and themes, and as a well-resourced project that was able to pay attention to project continuity over a predetermined time period, and most likely into the future using the products and guides that were generated as part of the Sunday Times Heritage Project.

An interviewee notes that a major prerequisite to successful outreach in schools was based on establishing strong relationships with the national Department of Education. With the idea that the Sunday Times schools oral history project model would be replicated in other schools, the interviewee notes that, “the only way you can replicate anything within education is to work with the Department of Education, which I mean comes with its own set of challenges” (B2). A similar approach was adopted through setting up working relationships, and in some cases formal partnerships with organizations that would strengthen the reach, impact and continuity of the project. One such organization is Shikaya, an NGO that develops educational resources for teachers and learners, on the themes of reconciliation and human rights (B2).

5.7 SUMMATION

The Sunday Times Heritage Project offers important insights on how public memorials can be used as a way of commemorating people and events. It also demonstrates formal processes of memory mediation, and the atypical association of a national media carrier and a non-governmental organization in mediating memories for a public audience. A third dimension of the Sunday Times Heritage Project is its creation of long-term archival records often where such records did not exist, and it’s extensive
engagements with existing archives, that helps to substantiate how archives serve and can be served by larger processes of public memory production and recovery.

Despite the partnership difficulties between the Sunday Times and SAHA, a heritage partnership of this nature is unprecedented in South Africa, and the project was able to maintain its functionality with defined areas of responsibility, and a common nationalistic commitment to the project’s success. From the Sunday Times’ perspective, as part of its centenary celebrations, selected memorial themes were intended to “elicit pain and pride” (Charlotte Bauer interview, Sunday Times Heritage Project Collection, South African History Archive) in South African heritage. SAHA, on the other hand, was the vehicle for promoting the reconciliation and human rights interests of Atlantic Philanthropies. It looked to add value to the Sunday Times Heritage Project by increasing and diversifying its audience, and by implementing different models of community engagement. Importantly, SAHA engaged with the project as heritage practitioners rather than as journalists, and the project in itself allowed for testing the parameters of heritage discourse in the public realm. With different organizational motives on the part of the Sunday Times and SAHA, the partnership was designed as a mediational effort aimed at making significant inroads into public engagement with memory and heritage.

Rather than focus on one particular methodology, the project employed a range of working methodologies for a wide range of outputs and outcomes. One could analyze the project methodologies in terms of its conceptualization, processes of consultation, its research, and its implementation of more specific project components. In all four of the aforementioned areas, with a few notable exceptions, there were explicit divisions of responsibility between the Sunday Times and the SAHA team.
Through processes of research, the dissemination campaign therefore added a depth to the series of memorials that were installed by the Sunday Times and Art at Work. Furthermore this research was curated into the public sphere. The communications media of choice, rather than the traditional institutional frameworks of museums and exhibitions, used the everyday media of radio, Internet, printed publications, and face-to-face interaction with educators and learners.

The considerations raised by the Sunday Times Heritage Project are especially important when understood in the light of a particular social context that is still deeply shaped by apartheid’s legacies. There have been many concerns about the outcomes of South Africa’s 1996 – 2001 Truth and Reconciliation Commission. Terry Bell and Dumisa Ntsebeza, for example, while not denying the important inroads of the TRC in many areas, note that the TRC “often obscured more than it revealed” (Bell and Ntsebeza 2001, p.1), and foreground three cases that are exemplary of the TRC’s “unfinished business”. McEwan (2003) writes about gender-based exclusions from the TRC and alternative modes of expression in a KwaZulu-Natal based memory cloths program.

Many South African archival and heritage projects aim or claim to fulfill a reconciliatory agenda, but this is hardly measurable in a country that continues to see the ebbs and flows of political and economic turmoil, and that continues to feel the burdens of apartheid’s legacies. The relevance and importance of the Sunday Times Heritage Project and its related communications campaign that was fueled by the reconciliatory agenda of Atlantic Philanthropies, needs to be assessed and understood with this background in mind.