

# 4 Glenariff,  
96 Umbilo Road,  
Durban - 4001,  
South Africa.  
TEL - 031 -213744

---

Saturday 5th July, 1997.

My dear Esther,

I dont know whether the Rothmans July Handicap has any meaning for you, if it did, it is on today. If you have your money on any of the horses do not ask me for advice. I might live in this town but am not aware of the horses that run in this years race. Sorry. It is holiday time for schools and so the streets are awash with kids and parents on holiday or shopping. So gamblers and holiday makers have taken over our streets routing out the thousands of squatters and hawkers.

Also since Durban is rated the warmest place in SA in Winter, everyone is bound for eThekweni. Hoboes leave JHB to take our Durban park benches even during the days when these benches read FOR WHITES ONLY OR NET BLANKES. However the cold has hit Durban and we are all freezing - holday makers and their children, squatters and street kids and comfortable residents and hoboes are all freezing.

However if one is to compare your weather with ours you are freezing in Johannesburg. Gonda says its warmer in Durban. Thats authority ne. I do hope you take good care of yourself in this weather and keep warm.

Together with your letter I had one from my favourite nun Sister Julian, probably around 80+ She knows that I am an atheist and has difficulty believing this. She believes that all good people must have a belief in God. I love her - her world is so simple. Besides being friends of Tutu they sheltered so many exiles/refugees. They kept vigil when we were bombed and prayed in relays.

In 1967 when the SB's would not let me use the train to go to Robben Island, Helen Suzman handled the negotiations with the then Minister of Justice. He insisted that I travel to CT by air. I could not afford it at R65.00. Can you believe this price. 30 years later its over R1000.00. Helen eventually sent me a ticket. The journey was incredibly beautiful. I vowed then that when we celebrated national occasions instead of a booze up I would send as many people who had never travelled by plane for a ride. Of course that was idealism/stupidity.

The ANC gave me a driver while I worked at the office Edward Tlaka. He was a great guy and became my friend. He drove Nelson, Walter and TG before me.

Amongst his many duties was to drive these guys to the airport and back - sometimes 2 or 3 times a day. He knew the officials at the airport. He parked where few parked. He picked up the tickets and got their baggage. They had no problems - Tlaka cleared them going in and coming back. He did the same for me. I cannot tell you how wonderfully he took care of me in JHB.

Oneday he picked me up when I returned from Durban, cleared my luggage and as I was getting into the car he asked, "are you not afraid when the plane comes into land".

I realised that Tlaka had never been on a plane. Can you believe this?

Well I said when next I go to Durban, I shall take him with me. But I had to retire from my job early and was not able to fulfil my promise to him. When the pension arrived I phoned him to ask if he would come. He was beside himself. He and his wife will spend a weekend with me over the weekend 18 -20 July. I truly feel so good about this and hope the trip is pleasurable for both of them.

I want to go to Cuba in December. Today my friends in the UK want to go with me. Phoned me and insist they want to come with me. Peter Jackson ex labour MP of the 60's anti apartheid, member of the Cuban solidarity committee. His partner Liz Henderson - one time party member, anti apartheid - worked with us in Lesotho.

Gonda brought Ayanda to Durban to celebrate her third birthday with her two aunts, and friends. She enjoyed sea world. We took Cde Docrat to have a meal with us. He was flattered at 82 being invited to a 3rd birthday.

How was your holiday? I hate Rhodes. I saw his arrogant grave in the Matoppos. It is like the British handing over Hong Kong and talking about Human Rights.

Must go now. Love you

Phyllis