



PORT SHEPSTONE TWINNING ASSOCIATION

074 – 004 NPO

**TIME TRAVEL EVENT – GAMALAKHE TIN TOWN 1968
A TOWNSHIP ARISING FROM THE APARTHEID GROUP AREAS ACT OF 1950**

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Sweden's anti-apartheid campaign and relationship with activists in our region led to the formalization of this relationship in 1994, resulting in the birth of the Port Shepstone Twinning Association. Over the years, Sweden's continued support during the transitional post-apartheid period resulted in many twin empowerment programmes. The Time Travel and Applied Heritage method was one of the programmes. Introduced in 2008 via Kalmar County Museum (Sweden), the Association sees this as a meaningful programme, and embraced it as the key focus area going forward with other subsidiary programmes.

Being locally based in ordinary peoples' life history and their heritage, the time travel methodology inspired our community. Volunteers across professions and ordinary community members realized that in rebuilding our country, the deep wounds of apartheid and the colonial legacy could be addressed constructively.

The time travel methodology is educational. In implementation, community challenges are addressed. Fundamental needs, such as opportunities for job creation and development of sites for tourism in rural areas are advantages. The methodology focuses on how our heritage can address present contemporary issues such as human rights violations, equity, equality, family and community values, gender and environmental issues, for example.

There are several processes: community consultation, identification of sites by local communities, developing partnerships, and formation of local committees.

This follows formal research and oral narratives. Based on historical facts, a single day in the past, an event and a specific year becomes the focus, and the scenario is then developed. These events are held at the historical site to support education, commemoration of national days or an historical event.

In essence the Time Travel method:

- **Is an educational method;**
- **Uses a local historic site in a learning process;**
- **Creates reflection of contemporary issues; and community building**



Thulas Mkhize, above left, an educator from Gamalakhe, Rosey Mudaly, centre, educator from Marburg and Howard Msomi, (right), community activist from Umzumbe were delegates to Sweden in 2010 as part of the Time Travel training programme.

"After this training in Sweden educators were driven to create Time Travels within their communities. The goal for the educators living in Gamalakhe was to develop a Time Travel in their area as there are many heritage sites within that are not recorded to allow the learners an opportunity to learn about local history that they are not aware of.

Gamalakhe Township was established in 1968 as a result of forced removals during the apartheid era. In researching this history, there were no documents in the local library on Gamalakhe, even at provincial level." Thulas Mkhize.



This followed the establishment of the Gamalakhe Time Travel and Heritage local committee in October 2010. The process started by identifying the elders in the area of the township. The first sites identified were:

- Gamalakhe Tin Town
- KwaMasemola Store
- The Bus depot at KwaXaba
- KwaShota

In the absence of information, oral history recording of Gamalakhe became the focal entry point.

After months of research, working together with Kalmar County Museum, Sweden and the team from Gamalakhe, the first Time Travel was pegged on the story of the Memela Family and based on the Group Areas Act of 1950.

Facts

South Africa introduced apartheid and race discrimination after the National Party came into power in 1948. The Group Areas Act of 1950 assigned racial groups to different residential and business areas. Blacks, Coloureds and Indians were excluded from living in the most developed areas. They were forcibly removed if they lived in the “wrong” areas and had to settle in a township, often far away from work and services. Black people also had to carry pass books to enter the “white” parts of the country. There were both passive and violent protests against the segregation and lack of human rights. The Sharpeville Massacre in 1960, when 69 persons were killed in a protest march, led to the creation of an armed wing of the struggle, *Umkhonto we Sizwe*, by the ANC. The ANC and PAC were banned in 1960, and in 1962 Nelson Mandela was taken prisoner. He was found guilty of terrorism in 1964 and imprisoned on Robben Island. The Black Consciousness Movement emerged in the mid-1960s which brought greater solidarity amongst black groups and a new sense of pride. The Freedom Charter of 1955 provided the core principles for the ANC, underlined by calls for democracy, human rights, land reform and more.

Gamalakhe Tin town

In the Port Shepstone / Margate region, a settlement for Black peoples was established 11 kms inland from the coast. The township was named Gamalakhe, after a former Mavundla chief. It was under Zulu government jurisdiction. Some of the families living in the Gamalakhe area were moved inland to make room for the new township.

People were moved from many places on the coast: Masinenge, Komiti, Umbango, Marburg, Albersville and other places to the new township. Our research indicates that there were families forcefully removed more than two times. They often had to move from their homes on very short notice. Their belongings were put on a truck and taken away, similar to this photo of what had transpired at Cato Manor in Durban.



Picture: Kwa Mhule Museum

The first people came to Gamalakhe in mid 1968. At that time, there was nothing: no electricity, water, toilets, services, schools, streets, etc. The people were just off-loaded at the house where they were going to stay.

The oldest area in Gamalakhe had a number of tin houses and was called Tin Town. One of the tins was used as a church for several congregations – Bantu Methodist, Church of England and Catholic.



Tin No 258: length 3.2 metres, width 4.5 metres and height 2.6 metres. *(Actual measurement by the Association)* The tin was referred to as an Industrialised Hut by the Department of Bantu Administration and Development, pre 1994. The Tin Huts were temporary accommodation, as per information from the national archive. It became a permanent home for many. Seven persons were accommodated at Tin No 258. Arising from this community was a youth group, known as the Group of 10.

Huge boulders surrounded the area; it was an uninhabitable land, with no resources. Prior to the first school being built in 1971, children had to walk to a make - shift school in Albersville, a distance of 20 km. The first clinic was established in the mid-1970s. There were no jobs in Gamalakhe. People tried to find jobs in town or at the coast, as servants, gardeners, cooks or in the quarries. There was one transport to town in the morning and one back in the evening. Black persons were not allowed in the white areas. The tin houses were supposed to be temporary houses but became permanent for most people for over 20 years. This was a very sensitive period in South African

The Association is a member of Bridging Ages International.
Ref: <http://bridgingages.com/>

history. The government was afraid of protests. No meetings were allowed. If the police found people in groups or crowds, they would be arrested. The secret police, the special branch, was active everywhere. Newspapers were not allowed in the townships. People who were considered suspicious were victimized and intimidated.



The small Memela family, of a single mother, Bonnie, and her two children, Smangele, 13, and Sdumo, 9, were moved from Albersville to Tin Town, Gamalakhe in October 1968. One morning, people came knocking on their door in Albersville, and they were told to leave immediately, along with two to three other families. They were moved to house **number 258 in Tin Town**, Gamalakhe. In Albersville, Blacks, Indians and some Whites were living together.

Albersville was then turned into an Indian area, and all the Black houses were demolished. The Memelas were Catholics and became active in the small church close to their new house in Tin Town.

The tin room they lived in was very small but soon another family arrived, and the Memelas had to share their house with this new family from Albersville. A thin bedsheet separated the family at night.

Scenario

New families were moving into Tin Town, Gamalakhe in October 1968. The truck came early in the morning to their homes in Albersville. A man shouted out surnames of the families who had to leave, Molefe, Daki, Sima, Mnguni, and he said the number of their houses in the new place. They are told to leave within an hour. There are no opportunities for protests. "Collect your stuff and do it fast," they are told. Their belongings are put on the truck. Some do not have time to get all their belongings. The truck drives away with the goods and the families, men, women and children on board. People are still not quite aware of what is happening. Everything is happening so quickly. Why do we have to leave our houses? Where are we going? When arriving in Gamalakhe, the families on the truck are astonished and increasingly worried. Where is this place we are going to live? So far away from the town. How can we survive here? No work, no shops, no schools, no streets.

They feel frustration and some of them, anger. They see children running around, women doing the laundry, older persons sitting silently. The truck driver is looking for the Memela family, house number 258. Where is it?

Key Questions

- How can we survive in Gamalakhe – no shops, no work, no transport, no electricity, no schools, no clinics, nothing? Can we improve the conditions?
- Why are we discriminated against? Can we do anything about it?
- How can we live together? In the small tin houses in Tin Town together with people we don't know?

Roles

The learners and their teachers are the (three/ four) families moving into Gamalakhe Tin Town. The leaders are people already living in Tin Town.

Ebbe Westergren: Time Travel Facts and scenario

Additional Facts: Association.

The Time Travel events are regularly held with local schools to support a specific section in the curriculum. The event is also held to commemorate human rights violations.

PARTICIPATION OF SETHEMBINKOSI PRIMARY SCHOOL

On 30 May 2018, grade 7 learners participated in the Gamalakhe Time Travel event. Most of the learners are living in this community and were unaware of their heritage.

"Gamalakhe Tin Town Time travel help our young generation understands their local history and heritage. The grade 7 learners learn about the Trans-Atlantic slave trade and its impact on West African countries. They also learn about "Colonisation at the Cape". These history topics speak to far places but with the Time travel, they understand the impact of Apartheid laws in the local communities.

The inputs by local adults, through their stories, empowers learners with a better understanding of their local history and heritage. Scenarios also assist with relevant comprehension passages for their reading and assessment at school. The local people feel honoured when their area is visited and their stories recorded and retold. These stories also help to heal the wounds of the past" Thulas Mkhize

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arts and culture

Department:
Arts and Culture
PROVINCE OF KWAZULU-NATAL

Prior to the event: The educator prepared the learners and linked the local heritage site to the curriculum.

The day commenced with a jubilant class, marching together with their educator and warmly welcomed by the Time Travel team.



Registration: Learners were excited to sign their name.



After dressing up, each learner received their role card. They also went through the facts and scenario.



In a time travel activity, there are two rules: They keep their age and gender.

The participants take on a character from the past, based on the research. There are no rehearsals and it is not acting. The participants are themselves in a different time period of the past. The role of the Facilitator and Activity Leaders

direct each activity group. During the activity, the discussion focussed on issues linked to the goal.

Initiation:

During the initiation process, background to the historical event and history of the site was communicated. They were taken back to 1968 with the beating of the drum.



The Old South African Flag” is a prop, a symbol.



Activities during the event: The facilitating team focusses on the key questions. This ensures that learning takes place.

The activities were:

- Clean the tin house,
- Furnish the tin house, fold curtains, a dividing sheet, to accommodate a new family
- Clean the garden with rakes, spades, wheelbarrow
- Make a bed for vegetables, plant and water.
- Children’s games – 3 tins, amagendi
- Prepare a meal: bread and stew
- Make a bench for the church and for the new family
- Bead Making – passing down traditional skills

The entire team followed a time plan. It was fun to learn while actively engage. Managing time and the objectives of the time travel was observed.

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/255407771164004/>



In 1968, every one assisted, even the neighbours children. The learners enthusiastically engaged in the activity. When the new family was “dropped” off, neighbours assisted. The Memela family welcomed them, even though two families now had to share a single tin. They had to find a way to survive.



Over the weekends and holidays, the elders passed on their knowledge and kept the young ones engaged. Traditional bead making was one such activity. Traditional dance, in traditional attire was also an activity. People from different communities, unbeknown to one another, adapted.



Benches were made for the church and the new family. People continued to practice their religion. There were no churches in the area. To accommodate all denominations, one Tin House was used as a church, shared by the Bantu Methodist, Church of England and Catholic. The key question? Is this still possible today?



Children played on the road due to the lack of space. Creative and innovative ideas emerged with the use of natural resources such as stones, tins, twigs, and sticks. The learners had forgotten about the modern times and had naturally “returned to 1968”.



Despite the lack of land, traditional ways of making use of the land continued. Gardening was an activity. Elders taught the younger to tend their own gardens. There were no fences and boundaries. Sharing was a way of life. Ubuntu



In times of community gatherings for a funeral or celebration, like Christmas, each family contributed. Here the Time Travel activity leader reflected and focussed on the **key questions** while preparing a meal.



A special guest, retired Director of Education, Dr SW Mpofana volunteered his service. It was exciting for the elders to meet again, to share their knowledge and pass down their experience. This gives the Time Travel activity authenticity. It is real.



Back to 2018. The learners were attentive. The class was well prepared. The educator reflected on the activity and linked the experience to a specific outcome in the curriculum.

The learners were captivated by Dr Mpofana's story of struggle and achievements. To succeed, commitment, perseverance and determination encourage one to keep progressing towards one's destiny. The learners were inspired and motivated to pursue their education. Discipline was an important virtue of life.

Time Travel and Education

This time travel is held regularly to support educational outcome. It is adapted to suit the curriculum. Partnership is most important.

Time Travel and Community Building

Local community unemployed members are trained as leaders in the various activities. All procurement, e.g. the tent, site maintenance and security are from the local community. This supports the local community and **job opportunities are created.**

Photos: page 3: Bo Hellstrom . Other photos are the property of the Association.

Compiled by: Gulshera Khan

Time Travel: Commemoration of National Days: Human Rights Day is commemorated at this site. This is dependent on funding. Target group: The local school, tertiary institution, community and various stakeholders, such as the local museum.

Time Travel and Gamalakhe Tin Town as a tourist route.

Tertiary tourism learners are also trained at this site to use the time travel activity, in creating sites in areas historically not in the mainstream for tourism. The local heritage, culture and history are the attraction. Working with the Tourism Association and linking all these partners is a boost for local economy.

Time Travel and Social Cohesion Outcome:

Learners' evaluation from a previous time travel.

"I've driven through Gamalakhe many times to Gamalakhe TVET College but had no idea about the lives of the people and how this town came to exist. I would have never imagined the pain and suffering until I participate in the Time Travel and can now appreciate the struggles of the people who live here."

Learner from Marburg Secondary

Mrs N.C Goba Principal of Sethembinkosi Primary School



We are highly appreciative to partner with Port Shepstone Twinning Association. A large percentage of our learners are from Gamalakhe Tin Town. The time travel method not only supports the school curriculum but always uplifts the heritage of our community. This restores and recognises that every community is important and should be treated as equals in post-apartheid era

Conclusion: Research on the history of Gamalakhe will continue. With funding, time travel activities and additional sites for learning and community building will be the focus. Hope to inspire members of the community & researchers to continue documentation of untold stories. "Isingenisiso"

Donation to support such programmes is welcomed:

Banking Details

Port Shepstone Twinning Association
First National Bank
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