

JANUARY 2014

Fri 3

Events in 1984, regarding the Thatcher governments attitude to South African politics and London's attitude to the jailed leader of the African National Congress, were very different as to its attitude towards Nelson Mandela who died in 12/'13.

With the release of the cabinet papers, for that year, under the 30 years rule the government was more interested with the then apartheid states PW Botha. During the two leaders meeting there was no plea from the British leader for the release of Nelson Mandela. This shows the lie of both Sir Norman Tebbit and Charles Moore who noted, during the praise session for the recently passed away 'notable', that “the release of Mandela was the strongest and most specific of all her demands.

Close reading of the papers also indicate that president Botha made attempts for the British courts to deal favourably with four South African diplomats linked to an underhand arms deal between Armscours and British engineering firm based in Coventry. Such a deal would break a United Nations rule of no arms sales to the apartheid state.

These two issues were linked by Thatcher 's guest as best left to the laws of both countries. He also called for the closure of the the ANC 's offices in London to be closed. The request was refused as “there was no evidence that office personnel had been guilty of illegal activity.”

Sat 5

With the release of the Nelson Mandela biopic, the Long Walk To Freedom noted for 11/13 (qv 15/6) and showing in this diarists home town from 2/1, aspects of it are questioned by the writer. During the lifetime of the counties first black president NM was deified and the role of his long suffering wife; separated from her husband, bringing up their children on her own, harassed by the security authorities and when not detained by the state continuing the fight against the apartheid state.

It may be that the role of Winnie Mandela was sidelined after the 1990 release of her husband as a result of the publicity surrounding the deaths of Stompie Maketsi (qv), for the greater good of the fight against the apartheid regime.

“The policy of apartheid was not just about keeping Africans apart from Europeans, but it also separated African husbands from their wives. Perhaps if Winnie and Nelson had stayed together things would have been different. “

Thurs 9

The committee of the British Academy of Film Awards has announced the list of films that will be considered for one of its annual awards. Among the nominees, hoping to be awarded, is the Nelson Mandela biopic (qv 5/1).

The film that depicts the early life of the recently buried former president, is competing, for the Bafta for the Best British Film, against films titled Gravity; Philomena; Rush; Saving Mr Banks and the Selfish Giant.

The films second nomination is for the Best Song used. The statues will be awarded on 16/2

Mon 13

In an attempt to raise funds, to protect the endangered animals in Namibia has led to the auctioning of a permit to end the life of a single post breeding black rhino in Namibia. The Dallas Safari Club staged the event recently. While officials expected the permit to fetch \$250, 000 to \$1m only \$350, 000 /£213, 000 was raised.

With a Namibian game warden in attendance, to make sure the right vintage of rhino was killed; one that no longer contributes to the growth of the population because of old bulls being aggressive and killing younger animals that stray into their territory. Such is the anger from animal rights groups that a 75, 000 strong petition has been submitted on line to try and end the permits sale.

Latest figures of rhinos, existing in the wild, put the number at 25, 000 with the majority;20, 000 being black. Most of these live in South Africa or Namibia and in both there are organised culls , for payment, where proceeds go to conservation funds.

Tues 14

The Hollywood Foreign Press Association 's Golden Globe award ceremony, that rivals and gives an indication as to which 2013 film will win a film Oscar have made their judgements. The lone award for a UK funded film, was bestowed on the biopic of the early life of Nelson Mandela; Long Walk to Freedom was awarded for the Best Song. Sung and performed by the Irish group U2 along with the singer Danger Mouse and titled 'Ordinary Love.'

Obituary S Uys 27. 4 1922 – 11. 1. 2014 born in Coalbrook, a town in the Orange Free State with both parents, Dirk and Francina, members of the Dutch Reform Church. First employed on the Rand Daily Mail in 1941 later upgrading as assistant editor on the Liberatas magazine followed by a short return to the RDM before taking the position of drama critic on the Johannesburg Sunday Times.

Unsuited for the position, critical reviews not well received, a sideways move to political writing was offered. Working from Cape Town, the paper by then had increased its readership 500, 000, his writings did little to mask his 'hatred of the inhumanity of the Afrikaner racist revolution' and the quality of the party's MP 's; one tried to open a window on a plane.

Other media outlets were blessed with his writings, in Britain the Guardian and Observer; this diarist knowledge and usage stems from these, along with the Press Trust of India. Internal publications, The Cape Town journal South also benefited from his observations.

Around 1962 he gained a degree from the University of Cape Town where he lectured in government and law and tutored in social anthropology. In the 1980's London became his home as he ran the office of the South African Morning News group. Also there was work on the BBC to fill time.

As the apartheid era came to an end and with the demise, from politics of Nelson Mandela, there was no love lost between 'apartheid's fiercest critic' and those that came afterwards Thabo Mbeki and Jacob Zuma, both of whom were targets of his home based web blog Everfasternews.

Comment on the 2010 ANC plan to limit the South African press he noted that “it was mind blowing.”

Fri 17

The threat to the developing world, as exemplified by patients in South Africa suffering from tuberculosis, is still an ever present danger a Cape Town physician notes after the study carried out by his team was published in the medical journal The Lancet.

Professor Keetan Dhede of the hospital department of medicine, noted that his findings showed that patients diagnosed with TB were regularly being discharged from the hospital still infectious. Thus the common drugs, used over the recent years, have become ineffective in the fight to stop the disease spreading to the rest of the local community.

The strain of the TB bacillus [XRD] that causing so much infection was found in patients from the KwaZulu Natal province. Patients sent home; 42%, were thus free to infect/re infect those they came in close contact with.

Obituary C Eglin 14. 4. 1925 – 29. 11. 2013 a leading light, during the 1980's, in the fight to have the apartheid era ended. His time in parliament began in 1958 after joining the relative moderate Conservative Unity Party. Dissatisfied with their stance against their hard policies he, and a few like minded MP 's formed the Progressive Party. By 1961 's general election end all had been ousted from parliament except Helen Suzman (qv) who carried the fight, for the ending of the apartheid regime, alone.

Using Colin as a sounding board during here lonely times and the advancement of Eglin to party leader in 1971. There were 6 PP members by 1974 and 17 by 1977 putting him as leader of the official opposition now renamed Progressive Federal Party.

1979 after a dispute with the organisations sponsors, the Anglo American Corporation he was replaced by F van Slabbert in a 'civilised relationship.

1987 renamed the Democratic Party, and once again led by C Eglin led the party.

1988 Anglo American pressure say him forced out of the leadership roll for another company acolyte Zach de Beer.

1989 General election with 33 seats the Democratic Party.

Brought up, from the age of 8 after the death of his dad; Carl. With mother;Elsie in the Sea Point suburb of Cape Town. Moved to the Orange Free State town of Hobhouse on the mothers sister 's farm. Matriculation success at De Villiers Graffe High School Villersdorp by the age of 14. Saw WW 2 service in North Africa, Italy; Monte Sole outside Florence. His time in the country endured it to him; returning throughout his life time.

Back in Cape Town training as a quantity surveyor; eventually a partnership with the Bernard James company; an association he kept up with through his political career.

Sun 19

Through the work of the countries Oral History Archive the deeds of a French businessman J Y Ollivier, who inserted himself as a negotiator between the apartheid regime and the black African states fighting the apartheid regime. One of his achievements was to negotiate the release of a member of the South African military, W Du Toit, who was being held as a prisoner of war by the military forces of Angola

The work of the OHA has caused a documentary, Plot for Peace, to be produced. The film award winning tale will be released on 14/3

Wed 22

The Petra Diamond mining company has unearthed an uncut “exceptional “acorn sized stone at one of their mines outside Pretoria. Those in the know indicate that once the stone, with a rating of 29.6 carats, emerges on the international market its value will be in excess of twenty million dollars.

Without the option for public recognition of their work of a nine foot tall statue of the late Nelson Mandela and under an obligation for a swift end to the project the sculptors, A Prinsloo and R J van Vuuren hid a tiny bronze rabbit in the former presidents ear.

The two Afrikaner's, knowingly used the rabbit as a silent protest, as in their native language the word rabbit means haste.

News item, the cultural department of the African National Congress government has ordered the two artists who made an unauthorised addition to a statue of Madiba to remove it.

Fri 24

The much troubled mining industry has erupted once again into chaos as the platinum miners, members of the Mineworkers and Construction Union, have been called out on strike by their executive committee. In a show of strength tens of thousands of strikers gathered outside the Lonmin mine (qv) near the town of Rustenburg.

Addressing the crowd union president, J Mathunjwa noted that their sought for monthly pay of R12,500 /£685 was less than the mine bosses spent on their pets. One company, Impala Platinum, offered to improve its underground workers salaries from £480 to £600 over a three year period. A second, Anglo American Platinum, noted that the number of workers who had turned up for shift were well below expected.

Wed 29

With the realisation that the new political party;Agang, formed in 2013 (qv 19/1), Mamphela Ramphele has joined the Democratic Alliance party which is led by Helen Zille. The former associate of the Black Conciseness leader Steve Biko will then be the Opposition party 's candidate to challenge Jacob Zuma for the post of president of South Africa. The election is due later in 2014.

There were various reasons why Agang could not establish itself as a political party; the lack of organisational skills and there was no one among its small membership who could gain any traction among the wider public. Also the party was broke.

Giving a joint press conference in Cape Town it was explained that what this former employee of the World Bank brought to the perceived white exclusive party a platform for those moderate blacks who wanted an alternative to an ANC government but could not see themselves voting for a white dominated party.

In the mind of this writer despite the falling support for the ANC as a government, polls indicate that their support at the next election will only be between 56% to 53% depending on the polling organisation you believe. This new challenger will not be enough to unseat Zuma unless the 'black vote' for Agang moves with its founder to the Democratic Alliance.

Thurs 30

As is well known the rite of passage, from boyhood to manhood for a member of Xhosa clan included; in times past a tribal elder performing a circumcision on each enterent into adulthood. Whilst in recent times legislation has been passed that the operation must be carried out by a medically qualified person, there are still occasions when non medically trained persons wield the knife.

So concerned is Dr D Rijeken from the Eastern Cape, the province where the practice is most common; it being the ancestral home of the Xhosa people, that he has taken upon himself to expose the consequences of the many botched operations that arrive in hospitals for corrective surgery where it can be carried out. Through the use of the internet the medic has set up a web site to show the failings of “dark secrets of the ritual” which can lead, at the very least deformity of the male organ or the inability of the person to produce children. In rare cases individuals die.

Since 1995 825 initiates have died from complications after non medical practitioners wielded the knife. Such is the anger of the tribal elders that they have appealed, to the South African Film and Publication Board for an order that the web site must be closed down. The grounds; the display represents a breach of the cultural heritage of the Xhosa people.

The much anticipated trial of the para Olympian athlete Oscar Pieterse accused of the murder of his girlfriend in 2013 (qv 7/2) , due to be heard in the North Gauteng high court from 3/3 is due to have its own television channel relaying 24 hour coverage. As of yet the 'pop up' MultiChoice Channel, to be launched on 2/3, has not been told whether it will be allowed to operate this depth of coverage.

Fri 31

News item, a judge, at the high court in London, has granted the South African police permission to extradite Shireen Dewani to a court in Cape Town on a charge of the murder of his wife Annie. The only proviso was that if, at any time in the next twelve months the Bristol care home owner shows signs of the mental illness that has kept him out of court since the wife 's death, he must be returned home.

FEBRUARY 2014

Sat 1

With the announcement that the South African police will be to begin court proceedings against Shiren Dewwani (qv 31/1) lord chief justice, Lord Thompson, as the most senior of the three judges who finally ruled the extradition of the Bristol care home owner gave some indication of why the South African legal process can now take its course.

It was noted that it would “not be unjust and oppressive” to have the man accused of complicity in his wife 's murder returned to the Cape Town court provided there were assurances that the proviso of a swift return to the UK for the accused if his mental health suffered a deterioration.

There is a chance that the Dewani legal team will now appeal to the highest court in the land; the supreme court.

Mon 3

“The South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission, while a model of how of investigate and understand past wrongs, also relied on a narrow definition of victimhood, excluding those who lost their land or were subject to forcible resettlement. As such it left, largely an unjust economic and social system. As Ronnie Kasrils wrote of the post apartheid era “optimism overlooked to tenacity of the international capitalist systems.”

Diarists note; written as a response to the implied argument that descendants of those taken as slaves and by their labours enriched the descendant's of those family 's living as of this time. Such a question arises after the narrative written in 1841by Solomon Northup who was kidnapped into slavery from Washington DC USA and sold into the slave owning southern United States. In 12 Years a Slave, a Bafta winning film, the tale is told from capture to his eventual release.

Tues 4

The last will and testament of the late Nelson Mandela has just been made public. For one of the world 's iconic persons the amount to be distributed as to his wishes among his remaining relatives, comes down to as little as R 46m /£2.5m, is seen as a modest amount.

One of the biggest shocks is that there is no cash for his second wife, of 38 years, Winnie Madikizela Mandela. Due to the fact that his two children, born born to the women who kept the spirit of the apartheid struggle alive inside South Africa during Nelson 's imprisonment, were gifted \$300, 000 /£184, 000 each whilst he still lived there are no other bequests mentioned.

His wife, at death, Graca Machel, will by her own admission no financial reward for the time they were man and wife. However, in lieu, she has been gifted four residences in Mozambique and other assets; vehicles and her jewellery. If events move in this way her two children, from her first marriage, will benefit by R3m.

Other bequests; R50, 000 /£2,730 each to names named staff members including his secretary Zelda la Grange and housekeeper Albetina P Dima. Two grants, of R100, 000 will go to the two universities that the former president attended. Bursaries, valued at the same amount, will be distributed to 3 other schools, to finance scholarships for deserving pupils. The ANC could receive between 10% to 30% of the royalties gained from his writings and other commercial ventures

surrounding his image.

Of far more financial importance, and interest, will be how named executors; D Moseneke deputy chief justice of the constitutional court, George Bizos lawyer and long time friend and Thembisa Sangoni the chief justice in the Eastern Cape. It will be up to these persons, as well as family members, to decide if Mandla Mandela; who has had recent brushes with the law, can receive the \$300,000 bequest.

The short time since M Ramphela and the leader of the opposition Democratic Alliance came together to announce that the Agag party leader would challenge Jacob Zuma for the position of president (qv 29/1) has come to an end.

At two separate press gatherings in Johannesburg both leaders gave their reasons for this ending. The former lover; and mother of his children Steve Biko, noted that the ideals of using the mainly white member DA as a vehicle for a black person to challenge for the role of president of the country 'was an idea too far' as of this time.

Across town Helen Zille, who had been worried even as the black/ white challenge for Zuma's position was being announced, as the Agag leader noted that the message to the media was that the former World Bank employee wanted to stay 'leader of her own party.'

Sat 8

Such is the media interest, in the forthcoming trial of Oscar Pistorius for the murder of his girl friend Reeva Steenkamp, which begins on 3/3, that the girl's parents have relocated to a small village outside the away from what was before 2/13 their family home in Port Elizabeth.

Now relocated to the village of Greenbush 12 miles inland from the Indian Ocean port city where husband Barry raises horses and the wife June runs the village pub. It would seem that the residents, in this sleepy location, have come together to protect the reputation of the model turned television personality who left the coastal location and made it big in Johannesburg.

Mon 10

Within days of the announcement; by president Zuma of the date of the general election – 7/5 – one of his children has been accused of causing the death of a female driver after their vehicles collided on the first of February.

One of the president's sons, Duduzane, who was driving his high powered Porsche in the Johannesburg suburb of Sanderton, is alleged to have caused the death of the driver and injury to two passengers of a minibus taxi. The son faces charges of culpable homicide or negligent killing.

While police, out of the sensitivity of the investigation, initially failed to name those involved, alleged political influence was brought into play at this sensitive time. It is said by those opposed to the current government that the president's son was not given a breath test. It is also said that the damaged vehicle was removed from the scene instead of being taken away by the investigating police as evidence.

Tues 11

As the date for the trial of Oscar Pistorius nears (qv 8/2) the trial, that will involve one hundred witnesses which include his sister Aimee, ex policeman Hector Botha who who resigned from the

police force in 2013 (qv 8/3). Medical and forensic experts and neighbours of the Olympic athlete from the Pretoria estate of Silver Woods.

However, according to the South African police the most critical pieces of evidence may be locked inside the two iPhones and 2 Blackberrys found at the crime scene. As of this time the investigations team need the cooperation of the American company Apple to supply the ID code to log in to the iPhone 5. A request for assistance has been made to the FBI from Pretoria.

Sat 15

As Mr and Mrs Steenkamp, parents of Reeva joined Oscar Pistorius; her alleged killer remember her life ended twelve months ago to the day the para Olympic athlete broke his silence about his feelings at the death of his girl friend in 2012.

A statement on his website indicated that there were no words that could express his feelings of remorse at this devastating accident ... "the pain and sadness .. especially for Reeva 's parents, parents family and friends." Overall he is consumed with sorrow.

Sun 16

News item, a number of miners have been trapped underground in the mine workings outside Johannesburg.

Mon 17

News item, it is now known that at least twenty persons, all illegally working the abandoned mine outside Johannesburg, (qv 16/2), face arrest when they are brought to the surface by their police rescuers.

As of this time eleven miners have been brought to the surface after descending into the abandoned mine workings on 16/2. It has now emerged that they were trapped underground by a rival illegal workers who were attempting to steal any of the gold that had already been found. There are still workers underground who refuse to come to the surface for fear of being arrested by the police.

Thurs 20

With the intention of preserving the lives of of the endangered leopard a religious sect based in eastern KwaZulu Natal has changed its ways after a century of slaughtering the animal for its skin. Within the Shemba religious community the men wear the spotted skin as a symbol of pride and loyalty/royalty. For the past four months only faux fur has been used says Lizwi Ncwane. Thus bringing awareness among our people.

Fri 21

For a country that has written into its 1994 constitution that the sexuality of all those who reside in the country are sacrosanct the recent actions of the South African government leave a lot to be desired.

Under a minor visa irregularity; it being a day out of date, the gay rights activist, Ugandan born Doctor Paul Semungoma was refused permission to return into the country through Johannesburg airport; even though has lived in the country after returning from a trip to Zimbabwe.

The authorities wanted to return him to the land of his birth despite the fact that country, as well as many other others on the continent are not well disposed to the gay community. In the end, because of the threat of legal action from fellow South African activists, the doctor was granted a 4 year exceptional skills work permit in return for him dropping his claim for asylum.

Mon 24

The family of the dead asylum seeker, Angolon national Jimmy Mubengo, in which the inquest chairman forced the hand of the CPS to have them look again at their decision not to prosecute three G4S employees in 2013 (qv 10/7) have been rebuked by one of his sons for taking such a long time in doing so.

In a letter, to the recent newly appointed Director of Public Prosecution, Alison Saunders, Rowland Mubengo aged 19 indicates that the length of time being taken for a decision is forcing the family to “remain desolate.” In response a department spokesman noted “The CPS has been thoroughly reviewing all the evidence and seeking experts opinion. is now in its final stages and make a decision in the near future.”

Tues 25

News item, a South African judge will allow the television camera 's into the Pretoria courtroom that will stage the trial of Oscar Pistorius.

Wed 26

Historic note; Long has been the puzzle as to who killed Norwegian prime minister and fierce opponent of the apartheid system Olaf Palm outside an Oslo cinema in 2/86.

Now has been uncovered details of how the police came to pick up a suspect. The name was hidden among boxes of files kept by the then relatively unknown Norwegian author Steig Larson who died in 2004.

They are now lodged with his partner Eva Gabrielson and with the help of a reporter from one of Oslo 's leading newspapers Svenska Dagbladet the name of a former Swedish military officer Bertil Wedin a known right wing sympathiser. Now the 73 year old lives in Cyprus where he moved soon after the prime ministers death. He was spoken to at the time and cleared of any involvement.

Details have emerged of the limits, imposed by Mr Justice Dunstan Mlambo, on the three remote controlled cameras “placed in unobtrusive locations”during the high court trial of Oscar Pistorius. The pictures will come live from the court room but the defendants testimony and that of his witnesses will not be allowed to be broadcast.

In the opinion of this judge to allow cameras into a South African court will show to the people of a relatively young democratic nation could dispel the long held perception that the justice system treats the rich and famous with kid gloves.

Fri 28

Historic note continued after further investigation by the Swedish written media (qv 26/2) an alibi that cleared on of the suspects, A Enerstrom, has been rubbished by his then partner Gio Petrrre. The former psychiatric patient, a known opponent of the countries prime minister and one who shoots police women, now aged 83, dismissed his former partners comment as nonsense.

MARCH

Sat 1

At the time of the trial, deemed trial of the century, by the South African media news, some of the details of the defence's strategy has been released. It would seem that Oscar Pistorius has, at his own expense, hired an American forensic animation firm to digitally recreate the crime scene. In addition there will be four forensic scientists coming to the North Gauteng high court in Pretoria to plead his case of not guilty of the intentional killing of his girl friend Reeva Steenkemp almost 12 months to this day in 2012.

Still the debate goes on as to whether this trial is the one to open to the world the fairness of the South African justice system, as author and journalist Mandy Weiner who has written Behind the Door: Oscar Pistorius and Reeva Steenkemp Story where the case to back up this argument is made.

The case will be heard by Ms Justice Thokozile Masipa and two assessors without a jury: a normal occurrence in the country's legal system. In her early life this, the second female on the Transvaal bench specialising in the rights of women who have suffered violence, only began her legal career at the age of 43 after being a journalist – scourge of the apartheid regime – and then a social worker.

Prosecution team is led by Gerrie Nel, who has for the past 30 years prosecuted high profile cases; 2008 prosecution and then later conviction of Jackie Selebie the corrupt first black police commissioner. This came after a 20 strong police raid upon his residence and arrest in front of his wife and children on, it was later deemed in 2010, trumped up charges.

Defending 'Blade Runner' will be a team led by Barry Roux who came to the Johannesburg Bar in 1982. Already with experience of the legal tussle ahead; acted at the magistrates court and destroyed the evidence of the police through his questioning of the officer in charge Hilton Botha – a man who later resigned from the police force under questionable circumstances.

Sun 2

The prosecution's case against 'Blade Runner' will involve 107 witnesses. Those called by the lead state attorney, include former girl friends of Oscar Pistorius, who are expected to show an inclination towards a short temper and outbursts of unreasonable behaviour; the discharge of a firearm while the athlete was a passenger in a friend's vehicle in times past.

Tues 4

As the first prosecution witness takes the stand in Courtroom D of the Gauteng province high court in Pretoria, the court appointed interpreter takes flight and rushes out of the building seemingly overwhelmed by the ranks of press gathered. When proceedings resume, after a new interpreter has arrived, at 11.30, the testimony of Oscar Pistorius's nearest neighbour was heard.

Michelle Burger a university lecturer, of Afrikaner ethnicity, who resided 117 metres away from the home of the athlete was questioned as to the events of the fateful night when Reeva Steenkemp died. There are tales of hearing three gunshots after a woman's screams were heard.

The last legal barrier to the extradition of Shrian Dewani, wanted by the South African police as a willing accomplice in the murder of his new wife Annie, after a panel of three high court judges refused his legal team permission to appeal to the supreme court.

At an earlier court hearing, on 31/1, a single judge ruled it would not be “unjust and oppressive” to return him to face trial if the authorities in Pretoria promise to return him to Bristol if his mental condition deteriorated during the Cape Town trial. The appropriate assurances have been given for his return if required.

Wed 5

On Day 2 of the 'trial of the century' as some have deemed Blade Runner 's trial to be, neighbour witnesses were once again under the spotlight and intense questioning by defence council. The second resident of the gated complex in Pretoria, Estelle van de Merwe living only 100 metres from the killing zone. Of an alleged argument, defence council Roux, noted that the Afrikaner women did not hear it ... only a women 's voice and could not hear the language spoken.

It then became clear that between court appearances an experiment was carried out between 2 – 3am, to ascertain whether a voice could heard screaming and whether the voice was male or female and how far it travelled.

Things of note: on day one of the trial the mother of Reeva Steenkamp was not acknowledged by Oscar Pistorius at all. In an unscripted interview, for ITN news 18. 30 to 19. 00 on 4/3, she also wanted just one thing “the truth to come out of this trial.” Presiding judge Ms Msipia has ordered an investigation after, one of the streamed courtroom pictures, of one of the first witnesses questioned in the case, fro eNews Channel Africa appeared in the written media. The former social worker deemed this a “clear violation of court rules.”

In an advertising campaign, launched by the betting firm Paddy Power based in the United Kingdom, is to be investigated by the Advertising Authority for a breach of its rules.. As of this time the arbitrator, of what is or what is not decent in the advertising industry, has received 46 complaints over the companies use of the athletes image. His head is imposed on an Oscar statute. The wording accompanying indicates that bets will be taken on whether he will be found guilty or not. If freed all bets will be refunded.

The writer makes a case that dismisses the media 's claim that the above trial is the 'trial of the century' even though surely the Rivoena trial of nelson Mandela and his associate members of the African National Congress was of more significance than that of a sportsman. The words spoken, in his defence, by the man himself that he was prepared to die for the belief of the cause was something he was prepared, rather than wanted, to do.

Thurs 6

The UK based betting firm, who inspired by the trial of Oscar Pistorius, (qv 5/3) has been ordered by the industries governing body to withdraw the offer of the return of punters stake money if the athlete is convicted. As of this time 5, 200 complaints from the public have been made.

The prosecution case, against Blade Runner, has moved away from the neighbourhood re telling of the night of the model/media personality Reeva Steenkemp, and this day focussed on the mind set of the accused'

The incident, of him firing a pistol, during a gathering of friends at an eating establishment in

Johannesburg was told. With this happening Oscar asked a friend to take the blame for the incident because the athlete said "I don't want any tension around me." According to states council Geeri Nel such an incident shows that the man has a quick fire temper.

Observing the proceedings were members of the ANC 's Woman 's League alongside the Gauteng premier Nomvuly Mokonyane. They were in court to highlight the gender based violence that is endemic in the country.

According to London estate agent Knight Frank the cost of property in Cape Town, expressed in terms of % sees the price in Cape Town has risen 0.2% to 51st position for the 12 months 2012 to 2013. In comparison the change in London was + 7. 5% in 21st place during the same period.

Fri 7

Evidence came from near neighbour, resident Dr J Strip living only 72 metres from the house of 'Blade Runner' detailed how he was woken on the night that Reeva died and observations on the conduct of the accused as he noted the scene and the actions of the dying woman.

The radiologist noted upon, his entering the Pistorius home, that he readily admitted that he had shot his girlfriend in the belief that she was an intruder. Medically aware Trip went in search of a pulse in the, in his opinion, a woman that was about to expire. There was none to be found in her neck nor was there any peripheral pulse.

With it being nearly 20 years since South Africa became a multi racial democracy this writer, who was in place before and after this date, makes the case that the lone white member of the Cape Town parliament who died in 2009 (qv 2/1) should have the same recognition that undoubtedly F W de Klerk and Nelson Mandela will most likely receive during any celebrations.

Helen Suzman MP stood out alone among its members who endeavoured to fight the case for members of the black majority and imprisoned over the smallest matters was, according to the Robben Island inmates, the only person who was able to ensure that Mandela and his fellow prisoners had access to books and the outside world through education.

From when the leading lights of the African national Congress had been released from detention after 1990 this woman, who was not a Nobel Prize winner, or in recent times, received any mentions in the various biopics of the Mandela clan that has been brought to the big screen, would take to task the countries first back president et al if she thought that there was not a fairness in the decisions made by the new authorities in Johannesburg.

Sat 8

Evidence from a former girlfriend, Samantha Taylor, seems to confirm the prosecutions attempt to show that the Para Olympic athlete, who faces a charge of murder and other three firearm offences, as a person of quick temper and person of violent outbursts, may be justified.

This latest escapade involves the discharge of a firearm, after being questioned by a policeman who observed a gun on the back seat of a vehicle in which both were passengers, and then its discharge and destruction of a traffic light from inside the vehicle.

Tues 11

As the second week of the trial of Oscar Pistorius begins there was a change in the demeanour once

pathologist, Professor G Saayman, began to give his testimony before the court. With pre knowledge that the details would be gruesome the presiding judge Ms Masipa ordered the shutting down of the television feed. Even as the medics words were spoken the accused was seen being sick into a bucket at his side.

There was a particularly disturbing evidence of the ways that the three bullets, manufactured by the USA based Winchester company, were designed to act on entering the body. They were “open up, flatten out and mushroom out” looking as if a flower was opening its petals. They were designed to do a body maximum damage as the hard jagged edges spread into the flesh.

Letter, **Christabel Gurney AAM Archive** despite the plea made for recognition of the achievements of Helen Suzman (qv 7/3) this writer notes that the proposer of the MP 's honouring was not adverse to the occasional side swipe at those who followed the pleas of the Anti Apartheid Movement not to make purchases of fruit; apples or oranges from the apartheid state.

Wed 12

Telling of the gun discharge from a moving vehicle incident (qv 8/3) told by the vehicles driver Darren Fresco.

Thurs 13

In an effort to repudiate the testimony of the accused that he was wearing his prosthetic legs at the time of the shooting of Reeva Steenkamp the court room in Pretoria was turned into the bedroom of Oscar Pistorius for a, so the police allege, re enactment of the events of Valentines Day 2012.

With police colonel G Vermeulen squatting on the floor he swings the cricket bat, as used by the athlete to batter the door of his bathroom down to gain entry after the discharge of 4 shots of which 3 entered his girl friends body. According to the police if he had been wearing his false legs than the marks on the door would have been in a different place on the door. Thus the state says he was lying about his efforts to assist the critically injured women.

The defence team, led by Barry Roux, offered an alternative theory; even if he was wearing his prosthetic legs the accused would not stand at the same height as a man with his own legs because the Paralympian walked with a bent back. To prove his point the police colonel was asked to sit on the floor and swing the bat. When seated and instructed to lift his feet from the ground and swing the bat he became unstable and the swinging bat made a lower contact with the door. Thus he would not have been able to balance on his stumps and break down the door.

With the end of the work of the Anti Apartheid Movement, with the release of Nelson Mandela and other high profile members of the ANC between 1990 and 1994 the London based movement had to find a home for their amassed anti apartheid literature.

Such determination of the likes of C Gurney who edited the movements monthly newsletter through the 1970 's, the Bodlian Library, Heritage Lottery Fund and the Melburn Trust has seen a new website named Forward To Freedom; the History of the British Anti Apartheid Movement 1959 – 1994 attempts to preserve, for the future study and the understanding of those not of the age of apartheid that an injustice can be righted if there are enough people who care enough to right what is wrong.

Among the pamphlets and other memorabilia, which can be studied at www.aamarchive.org are is a 1970's leaflet promoting disinvestment, targeted at British Leyland vehicle company. 1986 poster

highlighting the trial/verdict of the Shaprville Six trial. Campaign badges. Campaign literature for the 1970 's Stop the Tour.

Fri 14

As on 11/3 the vomit bucket was used by Oscar Pistorius as he sat in the dock in the Pretoria high court. This time the cause of this in voluntary action was the showing on the court monitors of police compiled evidence pictures. There was also shouts of protests from those Steenkamp family members and friends seated in the public gallery.

Seen only briefly were stills of the models body; in death, Blade Runners prosthetic leg and a sock stained with his blood which goes some way in backing up his claim of having worn it to batter the bathroom door down.

In addition to these, that were being used as prompts as a now retired police officer S van Rensburg gave evidence as the first police officer on the scene in 2012, there was others that indicated the how the athlete 's home was furnished and decorated .

Sat 15

Police who investigated the circumstances of the death of the girl friend of 'blade runner' have come in for criticism on two counts, one evidential and the other accusations of theft of the athletes property.

As for the evidential mishap former police colonel, Schoombie van Rensburg noted that a second investigator was mishandling the the weapon, a 9mm pistol, belonging to the home owner and was said to be the weapon that ended the life of the model turned media personality.

This same office also noted that a box containing a number of valuable wrist watches; R50, 000 to R100, 000 /£2, 800 to £5, 600, which was being examined for blood spatter and were owned by the accused had two less in the container when later noted.

Also offered into evidence and shown in court were photos of Pistorius in the aftermath of the shooting. Much of his clothing, as well as his prosthetic legs, were covered in blood

This writer is of the opinion that with the use of the 'sick bucket', used twice so far in the Pretoria high court, the accused is playing for the sympathy of those who will deliver a verdict at the end of his trial. To find that there is only, it could be said, a one woman jury the presiding black judge; may have made his show of upset worthless.

With the use of dum dum bullets in the firing chamber of his 9mm weapon it is not as if the man did not know, did he not care, as to the amount of damage they would do to a body when fired at close range as he believed it was a black intruder?

Tues 18

Week three of the trial of 'Blade Runner' opened with evidence from Sean Rens the manager of a fire arms academy. Tales were told of the athletes attempt to purchase a high powered Smith and Wesson 500; a high powered gun which was among the 6 weapon receipt seen by the manager. It is only allowed, under South African law, for a non collector of fire arms to own four such weapons.

An incident was related that showed how sensitive Oscar Pistorius to the threat of break ins at his

Pretoria. On hearing noises he became as one in searching from room to room for an intruder. In the end the noise was discovered to be coming from his spin dryer.

Wed 19

Presented to the court, through the testimony of ballistic expert police captain C Magena, was evidence that Oscar Pistotius on his stumps when her fired the four shots through his bathroom door that ended the life of Reeva Steenkamp.

The police expert came to this conclusion through the setting up of laser measuring equipment that determined the trajectory of the bullets once fired. In addition the height of the accused was independently measured by the firm Ergonomics Technology who are based north of Johannesburg.

At an earlier hearing, in 2013, the court heard that the athlete, claimed in statement, that he was in such a panic at the time that he ran to the bathroom on his stumps. This turn of events is now accepted by the state.

Thurs 20

With the publication of the final report, following the 2013 publication of a preliminary (qv 30/11), into what had been overspending of state money on the new home for the extended family of president Zuma the public prosecutor Thuli Madansela has written the Secure in Comfort report.

Within its 444 pages is a detailed history of the episode that became to known as 'Nkandlagate'; the spending of R246m /£13. 73m of state money in the building of a new residence for his then new wife, extended family and other buildings along with a security upgrade of an already existing residence. This was at the same time as his supporters, living in Natal province were living in homes without the basic amenities.

The report came up short of criticising the president after the president told parliament during the release of the interim report “My residence in Nkandla has been paid for by the Zuma family .. all the buildings and every room we use in the residence, was build by ourselves as family and not by the government.”

Her conclusions that Zuma must repay the building costs of the swimming pool, amphitheatre, visitors centre, cattle enclosure, chicken coup and a pig pen was not enough for those opposed to the ANC government. The Democratic Alliance are to push for the impeachment of the president. This course of action was also supported by the leader of the newly formed political party Agang SA.

Leader Comment, **The price of Zuma 's spending** will surely have a large impact on the results of the elections only seven weeks hence. Opinion polls note the fall in support for the party that has been in power ever since Nelson Mandela, “the nations greatest leader” took over the mantel from de Klerk in 1994.

How well the present government performs in the coming election will have a bearing on how the president responds to the report by the public prosecutor. “If he accepts the findings and addressees them transparently the country may be able to move on. ... attack the prosecutor he will find even more ANC support drifts away to the growing list of other parties ... “

Fri 21

Making good on the promise made, by the Crown Prosecution Service to finalise its stance after the inquest findings into the death of Angolan national Jimmy Mbenga, decisions have been made.

While it is not legally possible to charge the security company G4S with corporate manslaughter those employees of the company who escorted the father onto a plane which would return him to the country of his birth will be charged with manslaughter. All four are due in court on 7/4.

The solicitor engaged by company employees S Tribelnig aged 38, Terry Hughes 53 and Colin Caler 51 noted in a statement "my clients are very disappointed with the CPS decision after being previously told after a very lengthy police investigation that charges would be brought against them."

With the expectation, now confirmed, that the trial of Oscar Pistorius will last longer than he had budgeted for, the daily cost of his self financed defence team has been brought into the light. The estimated full day, presence of 3 full time lawyers comes in somewhere between R150, 000 to R200, 000 /£8, 301 - £11, 068. Of this amount lead council Barry Roux collects R50,000 /£2,763. In addition there are the costs of defence experts; ballistic, forensic as well as an American crime scene reconstruction company.

Thus the decision has been made to place his Pretoria home on the market. The price; R5m / £277, 000.

Sun 23

The trial of 'Blade Runner', defined as case CC13 by the Pretoria justice department, is soon to reach a critical point once the prosecution has called its last witness. Oscar Pistorius will then move into the witness box to explain his actions that led to the death of his girlfriend Reeva Steenkamp. When giving his evidence he will be shielded from those in court as a screen will be erected. Thus keeping him out of sight of everyone except the judge trying the case.

Those in the know speculate that the prosecution team, led by G Nell, will act in such a tough manor with an aggressive line on his questioning, that the athlete; already with a state of mind that is near collapse will show even more emotion that he has done while listening to the evidence called by the prosecution. Others question the choice of the defence team to have him hidden behind the screen that encloses him.

As for the media interest; the specially created 24 hour television channel created to follow events in the Gauteng high court, viewing figures are put at 200, 000 per day; the countries most watched programme. The court proceedings attract 114, 000 followers in its Twitter account.

Mon 24

With the 4/3 ruling that Shiren Dewani must return to South Africa to face a charge of orchestrating the murder of his just married wife Annie, a date has been set for his departure from the UK; 8/4.

A spokesman for the South African justice system, Mthumzi Mhaga, noted that once in police custody a decision will be made whether he will be granted bail, remanded in a medical facility or await his trial in a prison cell.

Tues 25

Week four of the trial of the athlete with the soubriquet Blade Runner opened with the court being read details of the text messages sent by Reeva Steenkamp during the time latter stages of their relationship.

Recovered by police mobile phone expert Francois Moller they seem to show that the girl, who wrote in one of her texts that she was the girl, 'who fell in love with you but also the girl who gets sidestepped when you are in a ... mood. I am scared of you and sometimes how you snap at me and how you react to me.'

There are other angry comments to Oscar Pistorius as the model/ media personality, noting of his anger at her platonic relationships with other male friends while the, now accused, boasts of his having dated another chick.

The police expert notes that as much as 90% the transcribed text messages, of which there was 35, 654 pages, were of normal messages.

Before these 'electronic bursts of anger' were heard a Pretoria neighbour of the Para Olympian Anette Stripp, somewhat reinforced the evidence of two other residents of the gated housing estate, as she described gunshots terrified female screams followed by more gunshots.

Long has been known the plight of the rhino on the African continent and the numbers who have died at the hands of the poaching fraternity who would kill the endangered species just to harvest he animals fibrous horn for the Chinese herbal medicine market. It would seem that poachers can sell one kilo of horn for as much as \$85, 000.

In order to safeguard the rhinos future a charitable link between Save the Rhino and the International Wilderness Wildlife Trust has been made. One of its projects is to raise the finance to move some of their number out of the Kruger National Park, where the poachers have easy access to their prey, to the Okavanga Delta region of Botswana. Here, where there is less access for poachers vehicles, they may be a little safer.

One of the initiatives of the two charitable organisations is to set up the Bead Coalition in which locally produced bead bracelets are sold in support of the charity. One of the main backers in this diarists home town is the chairman of the Leeds Rugby League Football Club.

Wed 26

Having called just twenty of the listed one hundred and seven listed witnesses the lead prosecutor Gerrie Nell ended the states case against Oscar Pistotius with the words "That is the states case." There was no immediate presenting of the athletes case as his legal team asked for an adjournment. They are undecided as to call the accused to give evidence upon the trial resumption on 28/3. When asked how he thought the states case against him had presented the reply: "We 've got a lot of stuff ahead of us."

In a South African court it is usual for the accused to give his evidence first as it gives an impression of his confidence and to ensure that it is not contradicted by those that follow.

Thurs 26

During the year 2013, in the countries of interest to this diarist, only one person was put to death at

the states insistence. That country was Lesotho.

Worldwide the numbers collected by the human rights organisation Amnesty International show that 778 executions were known to have taken place in 22 countries. Those sentenced to death, from 57 countries reached 1, 925. Also 23, 392 people were known to have been on death row worldwide in 2013.

Fri 26

If, as more than seems likely, that Oscar Pistorius is the first person to speak in his own defence then the most crucial questions that he must answer satisfactory are set out below. For him not to do so will see the athlete with no lower legs spend a long time in prison.

Why did he shoot into the bathroom without warning when it is common knowledge that under South African law, and emphasised by a prosecution witness, that a person may not shoot at another unless there is a direct threat to life.

Was his relationship with Reeva Steenkamp an abusive one. This would not seem correct as it has already been shown that only 10 per cent of texts received by his girlfriend could be termed abusive.

Had they argued earlier claims that they were 'in house' by 10pm were discounted by a prosecution pathologist who found food remains in her stomach. This indicated that food was ingested no more than 2 hours before death thus the soon to be victim was eating at 1pm.

Why did neighbours hear screams on more than one occasion. Do burglars scream and sound like a women; as neighbours claimed when shot. The defence may claim that the 'women's screams' were in fact Oscars in a cry for help.

Was he wearing his prostheses when trying to break down the bathroom door. Either he was wearing his false legs when cricket battering the door or the marks, that brings this defence claim into doubt; too high and the marks were accidentally acquired when in the possession of the police

Was there an attempted cover up estate police guard's evidence notes an all clear assurance from the accused after his neighbours hear gunshots. Phone records seem to differ over who called who and in what order.

A reckless man and or a liar. It is the Judge Thokozile Masipa alone who will have to determine this. The evidence already given shows his impatience an frustration with authority; discharge of weapons in the wrong places.

Inside the courtroom the acknowledged stiffness between the Steenkamp and Pistorius families seems to have been broken down as the trial has continued.. The first to move to reconciliation was Aimee P as she moved towards June Steenkamp. There was talking for a few minuets and the holding of hands within the courtroom.

APRIL

Sun 6

According to the specialist drinks firm Harpers Data and Insight, the male and female wine drinking population prefer their tipples to be produced from South African grown grapes in the ratio of 7.2% : 10% respectively. Whereas the most popular source is deemed to be France; four places above.

Mon 7

Details have been released, by the South Africa authorities of the Bristol based businessman accused of having his wife murdered hours after the ceremony had taken place. With all the legal moves exhausted by his defence, Shrien Dewani will be escorted back to Cape Town to stand trial for her murder. After a brief appearance in the high court in Cape Town the care home owner will then be taken to Valkenberg high security prison in the city.

These latest moves were welcomed by the family of the dead woman, Anni Hindocha. The family are also behind the local media's appeal to the legal authorities to have the trial televised as there is 'wide public interest' in the case.

A report, from the Oxfam charity, challenges the reality of a South African healthcare company Netcare, operating the large Queen Mamohato Memorial Hospital located in the Lesotho capital Maseru. The funding for this project has come from the private sector arm of the World Bank; the International Finance Corporation.

The international charity notes that kingdom's government is spending \$67m /£40m per year, 51%, of its health budget on the hospitals construction as well as a number of outreach health clinics. In its defence the IFC notes that in this new medical facility, built to replace the Queen Elizabeth the Second Hospital which is 'passed its sell by date' death rates have fallen overall by 41%. Child pneumonia 65%, stillbirths 22% down.

This private/public financial arrangement runs for a total of 18 years and Oxfam notes that spiralling costs and inflation, now at 7%, repayments by the Maseru administration will become increasingly difficult as time goes by.

With a resumed defence, delayed because of the sickness of one of one of Justice Masipa's assistants, the accused will not take the stand until one who has not attended the morgue, only the pictures taken time. Having read /seen the state evidence the Free States man Jan Botha, will challenge the evidence of pathologist Gert Saayman as to the time of the last meal of Reeva Steenkamp. In his opinion the athlete's girlfriend last took in food at 1am and not the 10pm that the state claim.

A surprise witness, a neighbour said the live closer to residence of Blade Runner, than the prosecutions witnesses, will also be called.

Tues 8

With Shrien Dewani back in the city where he is to stand trial over alleged involvement in his wife's death (qv 7/4) it is the time for the family of Anni Hindocha nee Dewani to speak about of current events. Brother Anish notes that "its been difficult ... there is no life in our family any more.

As Oscar Pistorius takes to the witness box, to begin his defence of the charge of murder after the death of his girl friend Reeva Steenkamp, there was an unusual request from 'Blade Runner.' The athlete was granted the unusuality of addressing his heartfelt apologies to the dead girl 's family who occupy seats behind his position. According to one who was there this apology had already been flagged up models family especially the mother. It is already known that June Steenkamp had been making attempts to have such a happening from Day One of the trial seemed unmoved by his appeal.

Earlier, evidence from the defence called pathologist, Jan Botha, caused the accused to be violently sick. However he recovered as the questioning, from his defence team concentrated on his early life, disability, the influence of his mother before her untimely death.

Wed 9

As the Para Olympian athlete Oscar Pistorius continues to give a heart wrenching account of the events that led up to the death of his girlfriend those who are in the know have their own worries as to how he will react when cross examined by the state.

Even in this, the early telling of events, there was much emotion showing as the accused gave his evidence. It would appear that as the athlete awoke after hearing a noise coming from his bathroom after fetching a fan from the balcony. All this in the darkness, and assuming Ms Steenkamp was in the bed beside him advanced to the bathroom with a 9mm pistol in his hand. Advancing across the darkened room with the weapon held in the firing position; at arms length, and calling for her to ring the police there was a second noise- someone coming out of the toilet?- so instantly fired 4 shots into the bathroom through the door.

It was only then, when he returned to the bedroom, that he realised that Reeva was not in the bed after sitting on its side and feeling for her without success. Returning to damaged door, all this time without his prophetic legs, he tried to force an entry. No success. He then went back to the room to collect a cricket bat to batter it to gain an entry point. The door, damaged enough to allow him to gain entry; key taken from the inside, there he saw her "she wasn't breathing." It is this point, whether she was or was not alive at this time that is questionable. During an earlier bail hearing he noted "Reeva was slumped but alive."

Shiren Dewani arrived back in Cape Town after flying in from Britain aboard a private jet as both the legal and medical authorities believed arriving by commercial airline could have compromised security. Then there was a brief, seven minuet, hearing at the high court before the accused was taken to Valkenberg Hospital before his next court date on 12/5.

Thurs 10

News item, in a review of the written media it is noted that that June Steenkamp is unsure as to the sincerity of the emotion shown by Oscar Pistorius; the moaning and the vomiting, during his trial for the murder of her daughter. Nor is she interested as to whether he is guilty of that crime. All the mother needs is what happened on the night.

Programme notes, in real time a South African journalist, who has attended the trial of Blade Runner makes her assessment of the performances of the athlete as a witness in his own defence. There is speculation that the state 's council Gerrie Nel is attempting to discredit the shows of emotion that the accused has shown throughout the trial.

Such tactics were employed when an unseen picture of the Reeva Steenkamp 's head wound was

shown to him. At the same time the prosecutor was demanding of him to acknowledge that he was the cause of his girl friend's death while thrusting the picture into his face. His only, and constant reply, was to indicate that there was no need to see the picture as he was there.

Other tactics used by the prosecution was the use of a Sky television broadcast of the gold medal winner firing a pistol at a water melon as a target. He says, off camera "It's a lot softer than brains. But ... it's a zombie stopper. Gerri Nel then likened the exploding fruit to that of the dead girl's brain seen in the picture that so upsets the man in the dock.

On show, in Windhoek, and also found elsewhere on the African continent from Kinshasa to Lagos are the well dressed members of the Society for the Advancement of Elegant People which from the 1960 's onward have been wearing clothes designed by the Namibian born Lourens L Gebhard who blogs as Vintage Guru. Followers of his fashions extol the virtues of the well cut suits of that period.

Fri 11

Another gruelling day, for Blade Runner, under the often sarcastic demeanour of state prosecutor Nell as the athlete insists he killed his girl friend by accident and when explaining how he came to be in possession of a firearm that ejected a bullet in a Johannesburg restaurant he "knew that his finger was not on the trigger." Nell "we have you in possession of the gun, a shot went off, but you didn't discharge the gun." Pistorius replies "I didn't pull the trigger, I didn't have time to think. Nell puts himself in the accused place "I'm a gun enthusiast, I didn't have time to think."

Sat 12

Being, pushed, and pushed again while still in the witness box and, not always answering the state prosecutor's questions to his satisfaction, Oscar Pistorius was at one time reprimanded by the presiding judge 'why was he making mistakes' on the stand.

Over and over the two men went to the events in the bathroom; through the bathroom door as Gerri Nel put forward the possibility that Reeva Steenkamp was not using the facilities rather that she was standing behind the door engaged in conversation, or hiding, from the athlete. State forensic evidence, it is claimed, indicates that this is the more likely sequence of events when the final position of the body is taken into consideration.

'How could you claim that she was in the toilet area and not answer you when you called on her to phone the police' asked Nel. After Blade Runner again said he opened fire, through the bathroom door, because of the fear of intruders therein the prosecutor noting that she did not respond asked why. He noted that his reply was the "most improbable part of the story."

Wed 16

As Blade Runner began his last day of an unrelenting onslaught of questions from the state 's prosecutor the defence team unveiled a piece of evidence, a 2013 Valentine 's Day card from Reeva Steenkamp which seems to rebut one of the main elements of Gerri Nel 's unsettling tactics.

The card, written on 13/2 has the words "Roses are red, violets are blue. Today is a good day to tell you that .. I love you. Production of this card by the athlete's defence will, it is hoped go some way to 'muddy the water' that was stirred up when the content of exchanged texts were read out in court.

On his appearance as a witness, one who knows W Booth lawyer and analyst, notes that the man

himself was a poor witness, giving rambling answers, made contradictions in his evidence. All the above may indicate that he was lying. However it has to be remembered that the judge has to reject his version of events and agree with the evidence provided by the state 'beyond reasonable doubt.'

Thurs 17

The evidence, from the defence 's third witness, supporting the testimony of the accused, was treated by prosecutor G Nel much in the same way as the evidence given by Pistorius was. It was examined, then ridiculed.

This time it was Roger Dixon, former police forensic expert and now a geologist, who felt the heat of the challenge as the defence 's view on the prosecutions interpretation of the scene that the police found when first confronted with the death of Reeva Steenkamp. There were deep disagreements over the significance of the position of her body when viewed by the police. A bruise on the dead women 's right buttock was said to have been caused by her falling backward onto a magazine rack; a contradiction of the state's theory.

He even classified himself as a 'layman' when it came to attending post mortems having never attended any whereas, Gerrie Nel indicated that the state's expert had performed 10,000 to 15,000 during his police work.

All in all it would seem that the case against Blade Runner, put forward by this witness has not been helped by a who prosecution council which has deemed him "irresponsible to make inferences in areas in where you are not an expert. Am I right?" The trial will continue on 5/5

Fri 18

News item, noting that the alleged crime committed by Oscar Pistorius is only a high profile of a crime that it is said that South African women face from their partners. Academics/police indicate that such occurrences; murder/rape happen once every eight hours.

Hard on the heels of grilling in court, the forensic expert Roger Dixon; part of Blade Runners defence team, who was termed 'irresponsible' by state prosecutor Gerrie Nel he went straight to the Facebook messaging service and hashed that up as well.

Intending his remarks; "Third day in court today. Lets see how much of my credibility, integrity and professional is destroyed. Its difficult to get belief in those who will not listed because it is not what they want to hear. After that, beer."

By some mishap the message went viral and could be read by all that wanted to; not just the intended recipient. Then came the apology; "That was actually a joke. I said it lightheartedly. I don't let things like that upset me. You cannot let emotions influence you at all."

Sat 19

Events of 2013 (qv 18/11) when it was noted that the Sans people of Botswana were being moved off their traditional lands, the Kalahari region, have caused one of their leaders Jamunda Kaklebone aged 39 to mount a protest against a 1/14 plea to Prince Charles in London. From that date the Gabarone government have banned the hunting of all animals outside game farms and ranches.

This move will in effect end the way of life, from way back, of the Sans people who from time immemorial have roamed the bush land and the Kalahari desert.

In an end to put a stop to this, an unashamedly rush for the tourists dollar, there will be a direct appeal to the monarch in waiting. With a known strong interest in the environment, much influenced by the Africanologist Sir Laurens van de Post, it is hoped he will be able to influence those responsible; Tshekedi Khama, the minister of wildlife environment and tourism and the Botswana president who just happens to be the brother of the president.

As the 50th anniversary of the Rivoena trial nears the cell, under the courtroom in Pretoria 's courthouse where the leading members of the African National Congress were on trial for their live in 1964, lies in disrepair. It has not been used since jury trials were scrapped in 1969.

In the opinion of court facilities officer, Chris Labuschagne, this 5m by 7m holding cell fourteen steps below the courtroom, is part of the countries history and needs preserving.

Fri 25

Within a short time the country will remember that day, in 1994, that the whole South African nation of whatever ethnicity voted in a general election that heralded a 20 year reign of a African National Congress government led by Nelson Mandela.

With the first black president recently died the government, still dominated by the ANC, faces another election. Only this time the 'born frees' will be first time voters. This group, typified by Glenda Ntsepho, who now lives with her adopted family in the town of Randburg north of Johannesburg, has this status along with 20m other first time voters. The latest figures show that of this 40% of the bf's, aged 18 to 19 eligible to voter only 646, 313 have registered to do so. Of Ms Ntsepho herself, an aspiring lawyer studding at Witwatersrand University in Johannesburg, her voting intention is not to place her mark on the ballot paper. There is no way that she would vote for the present party an in her opinion non of the other political parties make her want to vote.

One political party, the Economic Freedom Fighters led by ANC bad boy Julius Malema (qv) is steadily building up a following much in the same way as Robert Mugabe and the late Hugo Chavez the president of Venezuela. Both are seen as leaders of their country that gains its power from the underclass.

In South Africa 's case; in the words of the late Nelson Mandela, from 1993, the EFF leader sees that the way forward, not this time but 2019 possibly, "If the ANC does not do what the apartheid government did to you then you must do to the ANC what you did to the apartheid government."

The writer of the song Free nelson Mandela in 3/'93, which became an anthem for the Anti Apartheid Movement in its support of the African National Congress, is to receive South Africa 's highest civilian honour. Jerry Dammers, who wrote the song for his Specials AKA band, will be presented with the Order of the Companion of OR Tambo in a ceremony at Union Buildings in Pretoria. The medal will be presented on 27/4.

Sat 26

The beginning of a seven day period that will seen remembrances of the visit of the first black president of South Africa to the city of Leeds. During this time, which begins on 30/4, thee will be a showing of the ceremony that granted Nelson Mandela the Freedom of the city. Also planned is a portrait of the man himself drawn by members of the cities graffiti fraternity.

MAY

Sat 10

With the trial of Oscar Pistorius essentially relying on the athletes own finances (qv 21/3) it has come to pass that that he has sold his house; the location of his girl friends death. Put on the market at the beginning of his trial for £280, 000 an estate agent noted. The actual selling price has not been released. As already noted defence legal costs, lawyers fees and expert witnesses; in forensics and crime reconstruction could account for a daily bill of £5, 400.

Trial evidence, from the defence ballistic expert Tom Wolmarans noted that it was impossible to determine how the dead woman fell after being hit by the bullets fired by Blade Runner.

As predicted the African National Congress won their fifth general election in a row even though there share of the vote was reduced from 65.9% of 2009 to 62.2%. Opposition parties had mixed results; the Democratic Alliance gained 22.2% / 16.6%. The Economic Freedom Fighters Party, led by the former head of the governments Youth League, Julius Malema, gained 6.3% to come 3rd. Way behind, with less than one percent of the vote was the Agan party formed by the former partner of Steve Biko. Turn out was a respectable 73% of the countries 25m registered voters.

News item, as the countries Electoral Commission confirm that there will be no political change of government the South African president Jacob Zuma states, in a broadcast to the nation, that this next term of ANC governance will be dedicated to the memory of the sorely missed Nelson Mandela.

Tues 13

With the defences claim, by forensic psychiatrist Meryll Vorster, that the accused is suffering from an anxiety disorder, states council Gerrie Nel has asked the court to refer Blade Runner to a state run mental health institution for one month. There he could be kept under observation. If granted there would be a delay in this already long trial. This application took the athletes defence team by surprise and would be opposed.

On the eve, of a supposed return to work by the platinum mineworkers employed by the London Based Lomin mining company, the deaths of two employees who tried to return to work 24 hours earlier, has diminished this possibility.

This long running strike, instigated by the Mineworkers and Construction Union on 24/1, has seen South Africa 's platinum production has cut world production by 40%. It is no wonder that the Lonmin board announce a profit loss for 1 – 6/14. This management indicate will result in a company restructure alongside the possibility of job losses.

Thurs 15

Despite 60% of the population of the Kingdom of Swaziland living on less than \$1. 00/day and the social grant for the elderly at \$19 per month the ruler of this landlocked kingdom. King Maswatti 3 has voted himself a large increase in his royal household budget for this current year.

Claiming that, despite a personal fortune put at \$200m the household budget, which includes provision for his salary, mothers upkeep and the wages of royal aids has risen more than 10 per cent to £36m / \$61m.

Tues 20

With the courts decision to suspend the trial of Oscar Pistorius while the athletes claim, made through his defence team (qv 13/5), that he was suffering from an anxiety disorder at the time of his alleged shooting of girl friend Reeva Steenkamp, will be assessed by independent psychiatrists to determine whether his actions on the night of her death were related to an existing problem.

The writer is of the opinion that those who are chosen to assess the state of Blade Runner 's mind will have to prove beyond doubt whether anxiety is a defence. "New techniques make the correlations between biology and behaviour much clearer. But until we are ready to give up the idea of a mind that can chose, even in its darkest moments blame will have to be part of the story."

Wed 21

Detailing the next 30 days of the life of Oscar Pistorius; spending time, as an outpatient at a state psychiatric institute between the hours 9am to 4pm Monday to Friday, being evaluated as to whether he was suffering from anxiety at the time of the death of his girl friend.

There has been some opposition to the athletes treatment with some claiming that in their efforts to speed up his trial it is wrong to offer preferential treatment.

Tues 27

With an election won the president of South Africa announces two new 'firsts for this country'. Just appointed has been Lynne Brown as public enterprise minister, who just happens to be a lesbian and a new finance minister; Nhlanhla Nene who is aged 55.

The appointment of fifty two year old lesbian comes after time as the president of the Western Cape Province until the ANC were ousted by the Democratic Alliance in 2009. The appointment of the minister, ethnic Coloured, is not to be seen as a reward; she 's not a gay activist, however the appointment is termed 'significant. It is known that she trained as a teacher and gained a certificate in gender planning methodology from University College London. Here hobbies are listed as golf, reading and arts and culture.

The new finance minister is the first black African to hold this post and has spent time as deputy to minister Pravim Gordhan who is of Indian extraction. Before entering politics the new minister, whose given name in his native Zulu means luck, worked for the private insurance firm MetLife as a regional administration manager who during the apartheid era organised the countries fiat strike in the financial sector. Cyril Ramaphosa remains vice president. The mines minister, Susan Shabangu, lost her cabinet job, seen as a punishment for not ending the ongoing five month strike at the countries platinum mines. Also ousted was the minister of police, Nathi Mthethwa, who was in office during the Marikana massacre of 2012.

Blade Runner reports, as an outpatient for his psychiatric assessment as ordered by the court recently.

Wed 28

News item, as the countries longest platinum miners strike continues;centred round the Marikana complex outside Rustenberg, those that have withdrawn their labour in a dispute over a wage demand of R12, 000 /£700 per month and the miners who are prepared to risk their lives and return to work tell their stories.

Thurs 29

It has been noted, in the Global Burden of Disease Study, and published in the Lancet medical journal that using data collected between 1980 to 2013 42% of females in South Africa were classified as being obese.

In a comparison the rates of male and female obesity in the UK were 66.6% and 57.2% respectively.

Two female children, born in 2010 at the Tambo Memorial Hospital in Boksberg, are at the beginning of a legal dispute as one of the mothers is demanding the return of her child. The circumstances; to counter a claim, from parents seeking a divorce where the father maintained that the child was not his, a DNA test was ordered by the court. The results showed that not even the mother was related.

In an effort to ease the situation of bringing up a child that was not biologically hers this 33 year old and unemployed mother began attending counselling sessions with this second mother who after a time brought her own child to these sessions but would not agree to handing over said child.

In recent times the high court in Pretoria appointed the University of Pretoria's Centre for Child Law to investigate an outcome that will be in the best interest of the child.

Fri 30

Come to the London stage, the Hampstead Downstairs, has come a viewable adaptation of the book in 2003 (qv 3/11) A Human Died That Night about the crimes of Eugene de Kock termed Prime Evil who, in a previous life was a Colonel in the South African Defence Force who carried out assassinations of those who were opposed to the apartheid system. The former medical practitioner is now serving two life sentences and another 212+ years in jail for his crimes.

The main characters are Pumla Godoba Madikizela a psychologist, played by Norma Dumezweni with the jailed inmate played by Matthew Marsh. Throughout the performance there is a vivid performance that clearly shows the natural drama in when a white Afrikaner male and an African female face each other across a table. The old South Africa facing the new South Africa seem to be testing each other; the limits of forgiveness or empathy one race should or will offer each other.

Produced by J Munby the progress of the play begins as if the audience is observing a conference and then the audience seem to be dragged into the very centre of the performance. Questions asked and ideas thrown out; is the prisoner hoping by his cooperation with his questioner that a sentence reduction will come his way. Does having the doctor seen doing washing be just that or is the producer implying that there is an element of Lady Macbeth; unforgiving self in the prisoner, is the jailed de Kock seeking sympathy because many of his fellow apartheid era colleagues, who also served jail time are now out and free?

JUNE

Tues 3

Long has been known that any object or imprint from a 'notable' of the apartheid era can have a commercial value. Be it a hand print of a recently released Nelson Mandela to the African National Congresses move into the fashion business. The artistic use for the redundant barbed wire fencing that surrounded Robben Island prison also has a value.

Torn down, in 2009 and lying in a heap waiting its final fate, the conceptual artist Chris Swift, who works with discarded material set up a trust to find a use for this once oppressive barrier. Once in custody the 30 metre high fence in an art installation and a gallery exhibition.

With the design knowledge of Charmain Taylor, who viewed the exhibition in 2012, other outlets of artistic licence became apparent to her. The razor wire, now electroplated gold or silver was being made into items of bespoke jewellery and known as The Legacy Collection became available. Prices range from R2, 600 to R8, 400 / £150 to £475 and thus turns something negative into a positive object.

Of those who have viewed the collection and have a resident of Robben Island prison nothing but approval of the use of the fence has been shown. Fifteen year 'resident' Eddie Daniels welcomes the initiative "What do with a fence that has fallen into disrepair. It would just rust and serve no purpose I hope they put the money to good use."

Those that benefit, to the value of 10% of the sale profits, will be members of the NGO Harvest of Hope; an organisation that trains farmers. A second beneficiary is the Nelson Mandela Foundation.

Also recently released, highlighting the legend of this piece of apartheid's history off the coast of Cape Town, is a marketing agency, Quirk's, Nelson Mandela's life story detailed in Lego. It gained first prize in a YouTube Film Hack competition, shown on Google and assisted by the NMF. The sound track to the short film was NM's speech from the dock at the end of the 1964 Rivonia trial.

Fri 6

In Vodafone's Law Enforcement Disclosure Report it is noted that the state authorities in Lesotho made 188 requests for the telecoms company to divulge information gathered by legal interception of a citizen's phone in 2013. In Mozambique there were none because the company has little coverage there. The government of South Africa deems the disclosure of phone taps applications et al as unlawful.

In Britain, during the time specified, of the 514, 608 requests were made by the authorities only 2,760 were allowed.

Tues 10

Recalling the day that the theatrical Prime Evil, Matthew Marsh, meets the convict Eugene de Koch, a man who during the apartheid era was an intimate member of one of the many South African states death squad's that brought swift justice to those opposed to National Party rule.

Sat 21

By the use of drones, those pilot less aircraft that have been deployed in some of the worlds trouble spots, the South African defence firm Desert Wolf would bring a non lethal method of controlling an unruly gathering under control.

Named the Skunk Riot Control Copter, which would cost R0.5m / £27, 000, would disgorge 80 projectiles per second into a crowd of demonstrators such as those that gathered outside the Makikana mine in 8/'12. Each projectile contains pepper spray and would end to any disruption without any loss of life. Also the airborne device carries disorientating strobe lighting and has the ability to broadcast messages to the those gathered below.

Company director H Kieser claims that such drones were actually airborne during the miners demonstration and as many as 25 of these aerial vehicles have been ordered by an unnamed mining house. As of this time it is illegal to fly such machines. Legislation, the company hopes, will soon be altered to enable this to happen.

One of the lawyers, involved with those that were affected by the police shootings of miners, James Nichol, noted the use of such weapons to end a legally called strike was “absurd.”

Sun 22

Not only were the she-been 's in townships like Soweto important to those fighting the apartheid regime of the 1980's and early 1990 's, they were just as important in times past. In a recreated media article from 21. 6. 1959 Anthony Sampson (qv) describes one such; Back o' the Moon in Sophiatown run under the eagle eye of proprietress Fatsy.

Here, seen as a centre of an alternative intellectual life for the majority black population, alcohol beverages with such names as Kill me Quick, Skokiaan, White Lightning and Darling What Have I Done? were served all with a intoxication level far higher that the weak beer that was allowed by the state to be served black majority.

Thurs 26

The lengthy strike, called by the miners union that has affected the Lonmin and Anglo American mines in Marrikana, has been called off.

Sat 28

Culturally released from the six month period of mourning, that is natural to Xhosa clan, the widow of Nelson Mandela has spoken out about unknown events that made the life of South Africa 's first black president more bearable.

During the latter stages of his various illnesses efforts were made to shield him from the events that appeared in the written ans spoken media that concerned the antics of his beloved African National Congress.

Of her own future; from 31/6 the sixty eight year old will become heavily involved, and active, in promoting the work of the Partnership for Maternal, Newborn and Child Health Partners' Forum which was also a charity close to Madiba 's heart.

JULY

Tues 1

News item, telling the tale of one who spent most of her working life to being the office manager, defender and organiser of the daily life of Nelson Mandela. In her own words the tale of a died in the wood Afrikaner, who had never socialised with members of the black majority population before being picked by President Mandela to be his personnel assistant.

She organised the presidents day and accompanied him on all his overseas travels and did her best to protect him from from those who would want to exploit, for whatever reason, the president.

At the resumed trial of Blade Runner, after the state acceded to the defences plea for a psychiatric evaluation, the panel of mental experts in their report noted that “Mr Pistorius did not suffer from a mental defect or mental illness at he time of the commission of the offence that would render him criminally not responsible for the offences charged.”

Defence council, also noted that within the report it was said that the accused “was capable of appreciating the wrongfulness of his act.”

With the defence calling Gerald Versfeld, an orthopaedic surgeon, and the judge having seen the athlete without his false legs there was much discussion as to whether he would have been able to act in the way that has already been detailed to the court viz a viz breaking down the bathroom door after allegedly firing four shots into his girl friend and causing her death.

Another defence witness, Ivan Lin an engineers and acoustic expert, gave his expert opinion on whether persons living at various distances from the scene of the crime, would be able to differentiate between a male or female scream. In his opinion it is “very unlikely hear the screams, let alone interpret the sound source reliably.

Wed 2

Hard on the heels of a return to work of South Africa 's platinum miners members of the National Union of Metal Workers have followed their example. Their grievance is their low wages. The NUM 's executive have called on the workers employers to offer a 12% wage increase.

Thurs 3

Amid the pages of a second report, on the psychiatric well being of athlete Blade Runner (qv 1/7) was information about his state of mental health which was not meant to be divulged in open court. Unfortunately some of the details have been let loose on social media sites. Further revelations have been banned by judge Thokozile Masipa.

The contents of the report, which continued to be read out by his defence council, Barry Roux, who noted that “Mr Pistorius has been severely traumatised He currently suffers from post traumatic stress disorder The degree of anxiety and depression that is present is significant..... Should he not receive proper care, his condition is likely to worsen and increase the risk of suicide.

Fri 4

With clearance from Judge Masipa further extracts, from the report compiled by the psychiatrists who evaluated Oscar Pistorius (qv 3/7), were read out by a member of his defence team. Kenny Olwadge described how the report, compiled by Dr J Scholtz, noted that there were two 'persons' within the one body of the Para Olympic gold medallist.. On the one hand there was the supremely confident athlete who stood 'tall' on his artificial legs. On the other hand he saw himself, when not wearing them as a a vulnerable, scared disabled person.

Another witness, Professor W Derman chief medical officer of the 2012 South African Paralympic team observed that the athlete feels highly vulnerable and acted out of fear, not anger, when he shot Reeva Steenkemp dead.

Mon 7

News item, at what may be the last day of the trial of the Blade Runner the state will begin its cross examination of Professor W Deerman who as chief medical officer of the countries Paralympic team in 2012, could be said to know well the state of mind of Oscar Pistorius.

At the same time a defence ordered video of a reconstruction of the events that led up to this court case has been leaked to an Australian media outlet. The contents of which, the state will claim, go some way to disprove the claims of the defence that without his artificial legs the athlete would be unable to do as the state claimed.

Family reaction, to the leaking of the defence made video ;titled The Evidence Room, was termed "a staggering breach of trust" by the Australian television Channel 7. In the clips shown the athlete can be shown moving about, without his prosthetic limbs awkwardly. In a second sequence he is seen seen, again without his 'legs' and on all fours attempting to move a motionless women, named as his sister, out of the a toilet cubical.

The defence team note that the footage, deemed as 'visual mapping' to be used by the athletes defence team to plan his defence and was not for public view. The footage was obtained illegally

Tues 8

The judge, hearing the murder charge against Blade Runner, has been told by his defence team that all their witnesses have given their evidence and it is their intention to end their defence case. The state will then be given the opportunity to call more witnesses. If this is declined the case against Oscar Pistorius is ended.

The next phase of the athletes trial will then begin. The date for the trials resumption will be fixed by Judge Masipa and both legal teams. While in recession the lawyers will be preparing written and oral submissions that will aid her to come to a decision as to the guilt or innocence of the accused. A second adjournment will allow for mitigation arguments to be heard.

Speaking to the Hello magazine the mother of the dead girl friend of Oscar Pistorius that she had forgiven the athlete for the death of her daughter. However there will be no rest in peace for model cum media star until the paralympian 's trial is over.

Wed 9

With the hearing of all the witnesses evidence at an end the presiding judge has determined that the

court will resume on 7/8 when she will hear the closing arguments from both the prosecution and defence advocates. Before this date, on 30/7 state prosecutors will submit written points for the judge to consider. The written statement, from the defence team, should be handed in to the court by 4/8.

Well before the case was adjourned, in the Pretoria high court, defence council Barry Roux had written into the court record the defences inability to call at least five witnesses who would not give their evidence because of the great amount of publicity, on the social media outlets; Twitter and You Tube videos or the 24 hour, word for word, publicity offered by the dedicated TV coverage.

It has been said that by highlighting this “gravel to grave” media coverage the grounds for an appeal against the verdict handed down by Ms Justice Masipa.

Thurs 10

With the humiliation of a the parties poor following in the recent general election followed by her abortive attempt to link up the countries Democratic Party the leading light of a political party that emerged in 2013 (qv 19/2) has resigned as leader.

Fri 11

Eugene de Koch; Prime Evil to those who opposed the apartheid regime, and in 1996 was sentenced to two life sentences with an additional 212 years in jail has had his second application for parole rejected by the Pretoria authorities.

Recently the South African minister of justice, M Masuth, noted that the former police officer had “made progress towards his rehabilitation It is fair and in the interests of the victims and the broader families of the victims are afforded an opportunity to anticipate in the parole consultation process I have not approved at this stage.”

Responding to the ministers decision journalist J Pauw, who broke the story of the death squads, indicated that the jailed man had personally apologised to his victims families and argues that this man has been unfairly singled out.

Tues 15

The country is mourning the death of Nadine Gordimer who, as one of a number of writers chronicled the real time lives of those oppressed who lived through the apartheid era and beyond. Passing away peacefully in her sleep on 13/7 at her Johannesburg home. Much has been written about the novelist who, as a member of the African National Congress, was unsparing in her criticism of the white minority rule and post 1994 the majority government of Nelson Mandela, if it was her belief that their actions were wrong.

She was the daughter of a Jewish Latvian watchmaker and a white middle class woman from Britain. Her writing output began at the age of nine and tallied 15 novels, several volumes of short stories, non fiction and other works.

For unknown reasons Oscar Pistorius (qv) has taken once again to the social media. On his twitter account there has now appeared pictures of his charity work with disabled children and wise words from Victor Frankel' an Auschwitz concentration camp survivor.

Wed 16

Blade Runner may be keen to show his good works for a charity with disabled children (qv 16/7) but when it comes to an out of court discussion, with a member of the public, things are different. Challenged on a night out, in a VIP section of a Johannesburg night club, by a Jarard Mortimer, the two men became involved in a heated argument about proceedings in the Pretoria high court..

A spokesman for the athlete, accompanied by his cousin, quickly left the club and he regrets that his foray into public caused such disruption..

Fri 18

On what is known as Mandela Day, the widow of the first black president of South Africa has called upon the western nations to make 2015 a year for development. The plea was made by Graca Machel to the United Nations calling on the world to improve the conditions that the world 's poor, climate change agreements and development goals. The consequences for not addressing these issues; increased poverty and military conflict from which the rich would not be able to protect themselves from. The letter was also signed by Desmond Tutu and Mo Ibrahim.

Tues 22

As the plight of the rhino 's resident in Kruger National Park, becomes even more desperate, as they becomes the target of the poachers the authorities in South Africa are considering to move a number out of the park. To all extent and purpose the small number of game wardens have little chance of locating poachers, who infiltrate from across the border in Mozambique, with their limited aerial surveillance of the reserves area 9, 845sq km/7, 500 miles.

As of this date so far this year about 560 rhinos have been poached throughout the country and well over half were killed inside the park. Poaching suspects arrested in 2014; approximately 160. In the preceding 12 months 1, 004 rhinos died.

Mon 28

One million people are said to have seen Pumeza Matshikiza, an Xhosa speaking national from the Eastern Cape, as she performed a freedom anthem at a recent athletic event in Glasgow Scotland. Brought up in township, during the last years of apartheid her love of opera was primed through hearing Swiss soprano Edith Mathis singing in the Marriage of Figaro. It was only later in later in her life, at 20 when studying at the University of Cape Town that her interest in the art of opera was fully aroused.

Tues 29

Long known to the Afrikaner nation as Rooibos tea which has been brewed in the country since 1904 has won its battle with a French company to have protective status after the Paris based company tried to trade market its name. After a European Union decision recently the South African trade minister Rob Davis was able to announce the tea had been granted geographic indicator status. Thus no other company wan use the Rooibos name for its products.

Wed 30

One of the daughters of president Zuma:Thutukile, aged 25, has been appointed as chief of staff in the ministry of posts and telecommunications. Those who oppose his style accuse him of nepotism.

AUGUST

Fri 8

As all persons pertaining to the outstanding, State v Pistorius gathered in a court room of the Pretoria high court, state prosecutor Gerrie Nel made the states case for the conviction of Blade Runner on the charge of the murder of his girlfriend Reeva Steenkamp.

Even after the lengthy trial the prosecution continued to assert that the athlete must be found guilty because his given evidence was “devoid of the truth” and mendacious. The death of his girlfriend; mistaken for an intruder, was no escape from the fact that he had killed a 'person' which was against the law in South Africa.

Presuming that the accused defence team will claim that the death was as act of self defence on his part because the firearm was discharged as an involuntary action after being startled.

Sat 9

Beginning the defences summing up, in the case; State v Pistorius, lead defence council Barry Roux condemns the state for for the murder charge levied against his client. In his opinion the charge should have been culpable homicide. Therefore Blade runner must be acquitted.

As has been alluded to (qv 8/8) the firearm that killed the athletes girlfriend was fired as a reflex action and he lacked the criminal capacity to carry out such a crime as cold blooded murder. The claim, by the state, that the incident occurred at 3. 17am; when screams were heard, were not from the throat of Reeva Steenhamp rather they were from the accused when he realised what had happened.

Justice Thokozile Masipa has now retire, until 11/9 to consider her verdict.

Sun 10

With the population of South Africa being 80% black the number /percentage of females at the top of the legal system; 44% of supreme court judges are from the majority population. Also in a country of 239 judges only 76 are female.

Fri 15

An art form; protest theatre, most prominent during the countries apartheid era, has been resurrected after the publication of a book that remembers the events surrounding the Marikana miners strike of 2012 (qv) in which 34 platinum miners died after police fired into a crowd of fleeing strikers.

The book We Are Going to Kill Each Other Today, written by two journalists sent to cover the strike, Lucas Ledwaba and Leon Sadike then thought that the facts surrounding incident could, and should be, adapted to be a musical.

As of this time Marikana; the Musical and with a cast of 20 actors and five musicians with direction from Aubrey Sekhabi, has already had its premier in Grahamstown at the towns National Arts Festival before it relocates to Pretoria 's State Theatre.

Sat 16

A South African mental health panel has deemed Shrien Dewani fit to stand trial for the 2010 murder of his wife Anni, following his extradition, after a long legal battle, from Britain. Speaking of the decision the country's director of public prosecution, Rodney de Koch, speaking in the Western Cape high court "The accused is not mentally ill not certifiable in terms of the mental health act." According to Dewani's lawyer, Francois van Zyl, the panel's decision was unanimous.

The British based business man is expected to next appear in court on 9/9 for a pre trial hearing.

Sun 17

The abalone [*Haliotis midae*] is one of the country's natural resources that is listed as a 'priority species.' Poaching of the edible sea snail is rife, fuelling the illegal trade both for the meat and for the decorative shells.

Tues 26

Of the 37 witnesses called to give evidence at the trial of the athlete Oscar Pistorius (qv) those that heard the fatal shots, Annette and John Stripp, became prime witnesses for the prosecution. As a result of this husband and wife team, who lived yards from the Pretoria home of the accused, were recently interviewed for a research paper by South Africa's Prosecution Authority.

Close reading of the report notes that these particular witnesses found that giving evidence was emotional, daunting and exhausting. Having told the trial that they had heard the screams of a woman from the house that Blade Runner lived in on the Silver Wood estate they were deluged with questions in a bullying overtone by defence counsel. In the end they felt that they were being called liars and were not sure they would offer statements/appear in a trial situation again.

The platinum miners strike, called by the Association of Mineworkers and Construction Union, that ended in 7/14 has forced the Lonhro mining company to reassess its operations at Rustenberg. It seems likely the British owned company is to cut 21% / 5,700 jobs when it ceases work through 4 to 6 of the company's 11 shafts operated east of Johannesburg.

Fri 29

A London arts venue, the Barbican, is being urged to end before it has begun, an installation by the white South African Brett Bailey who brings his Exhibition A show to the city. The aim of the show is to act as a critique of the human zoos and ethnographic displays that showed Africans as objects of scientific curiosity during the last 200 years.

Those who object, some 8,000 have put their names to a petition objecting to the artist's wish to objectify black people as subservient. A spokesman for the venue the head of theatre Tony Racklin notes that the artist is known internationally and has a reputation for challenging stereotypes and forcing the audience to engage with stories of exploitation.

By the rule of the country's supreme court the country's president Jacob Zuma has to order the handover of hidden, since 13/1 '09, documents to the Democratic Alliance that could see the then battling deputy president face a number of corruption charges relating to the purchase of weapons.

At the same time the last white president of the country, F W de Klerk, has spoken out about the relationship between president Zuma and the future of the ANC. A split party; a good move he notes

SEPTEMBER

Tues 2

Long has it been known that the poachers skills have been centred on the likes of the rhino and the elephant for the want of their horn and ivory. However little publicity has been given to those that would steal South Africa 's endangered plants.

Within the last four weeks at the Kirstenbosh National Botanical Gardens, located on the slopes of Table Mountain, that thieves have stolen 24 cycads plants valued at R70, 000/ £40, 000. Only two of the specimen's were not on the critically endangered list of protected flora and fauna. Throughout the world only 347 species exist and only 38 can be found in South Africa.

Of those taken recently, from the slopes of Table Mountain behind the city of Cape Town, the 24 Cycads removed included 22 of the Albany species and of this species only 80 are thought to be growing in the wild. A legal trade in the plant does exist. When the KNBG sold a sucker from its prized *Enkephalartos woodii* in 2013 at auction it was purchased for R89, 000.

Such is their importance that the Cycad Society of South Africa has offered a reward of R10, 000 to anyone who provides the police with information that leads to the arrest of the thieves.

Fri 5

As the world 's peace laureates prepare for their annual meeting; the 14th, in the city of Cape Town one of their number will be absent. Not for the first time has the Dalai Lama been refused entry into South Africa. Back in 2011 the Tibetan spiritual leader was refused a visa to attend the 80th birthday celebrations of Desmond Tutu. The stated reason; not to upset the Chinese government as the two countries were heavy trading partners. In 2012 a court ruled that officials had acted unlawfully in not granting a visa.

A World Health Organisation report on the numbers of world suicide rates notes that in South Africa and Angola 5 persons per 100, 000 head of population die at their own hand. While for the stated headcount of population in Zimbabwe and Mozambique 15 choose this method the end their life. Throughout the continent the rate of such death is 8 per 100, 000.

In in 2012 there were 803, 900 world suicide deaths representing an annual global age standardised of 11.4 per 100, 000 population; 15.0 for males and 8. 0 for females.

Tues 9

Deemed to be the next president of the country the current vice president, Cyril Ramaphosa, has not endeared himself to the nation with his latest words. Attending a game breeders auction where he sold three rare white flanked impala for the price of \$2.6m /£1.6m from his own Mbizi Lodge reserve in Limpopo province.

In the aftermath the, one time firebrand leader of the anti apartheid spearhead NUM, seemed to side white minority when he told them their lands were safe from any attempt the government to seize it for distribution among the majority population. Such a remark angered the recently formed Economic Freedom Fighters political party. Their spokesman, A Mngxitama, called the vice president "basically he is a black colonialist." Such comments come hard on past remarks, on 5/9, when the countries Number Two called for the introduction of a national minimum wage.

Wed 9

While the world awaits Ms Justice Masipa 's verdict following the end of Blade Runners trial, the South African nation examines gun culture and the continuing fears of the different ethnic groups that make up this apartheid free republic.

In the view of the crime writer D Meyer it is the life style of the accused Oscar Pistorius; his particular history and background. His back story, rise to international superstar and a global symbol of triumph over tragedy.

An academic view; Professor Dap Louw a forensic psychologist, humans are a physically puny species where evolution has developed our cognition into a lethal weapon, and honed our drive and skills to solve puzzles and problems.

The Petra Diamond Mine, South African owned and listed on the London Stock Exchange, which mined, in 2009, a 101.5g diamond (qv 30/9) has had another stunning success. This time round this white diamond: 232.08 carat stone is valued at \$16m / £10m. With such a find company shares rose 8%.

Fri 12

After only a short time, the session ended before mid day, Blade Runner seemed very relieved to have not been found guilty of this then girlfriend Reeva Steenkemp. Giving her reasons Justice Masipa noted that the prosecution case had largely consisted of chief council Gerry Nel building eye witness testimony when in reality the text messages and neighbours of the accused being able to distinguish between screams as 'fanciful.'

With his murder charge dismissed Oscar Pistorius, or so the judge seemed to imply will be found guilty of culpable homicide / manslaughter which in South African law can carry a sentence of less severity than in this authors country. There are also other charges; discharge of a weapon and possession of bullets, that still may see the athlete jailed.

News item, Cleared of the murder of his girlfriend but found guilty of a charge of culpable homicide Oscar Pistorius could possibly face 15 years in jail. As to two of three firearm charges the athlete faced the presiding judge ordered a not guilty verdict to be entered into the record. Sentence will be announced on 9/10.

Reaction from Reeva Steenkemp 's parents was justice has not been done in this case.

Thurs 25

Despite many of the actors, who were to perform at the Barbican at the Exhibition A art installation (qv 29/8), being of the opinion that the act and deeds of those who took advantage of the human resources that were available on the African continent ect those taking part decided that they wanted these 'important stories told.' Their five day run had been cancelled.

Sun 28

With the Barbican's Exhibition B art installation cancelled (qv 25/9) a debate between one who took part, artist Stella Odunlami and the sociologist/ activist Dr K Andrews debate the issue.

OCTOBER

Sat 4

With the impending trial of Shiren Dewani (qv), for the murder of his new wife in 11/'10, the sister of the Anni; Ami Demborg has disclosed her thoughts weeks prior to the wedding nuptials. Speaking to the Sky news programme weeks before the wedding day she noted a disagreement between the soon to be married couple.

Such was her argument with Shiren that here engagement ring was thrown towards her intended husband. Such was the intensity of the dispute between the couple that Anni 's sister wished that she had advised her not to marry him.

Commenting to her interviewer she noted “All right, forget it, I'll support you, break it off.

Mon 6

As the trial date nears for the husband of Annie Dewani (qv 4/10) administrative details have become known. With similarities to the trial of athlete Oscar Pistorius the question of whether the trial will be broadcast in full will be determined by the presiding judge.

Hearing the case, in the Western Cape high court building in Cape Town, will be the female judge Jeanette Traverso. The defence team will be led by senior council Francois Zyl. The states leading prosecutor, Adrian Mopp, who has already secured the convictions of Shiren Dewani 's alleged co conspirator 's Z Tonga, X Mngeni and M Qwabe in 2012 (qv 9/8).The three men will become prosecution witnesses in a trial that is expected to last till 12/'14.

The \Nobel Foundation notes that the number of South Africans who have been deemed a laureate, in one of the defined categories is 9. By comparison the number awarded to UK nationals is 92.

Tues 7

Day one of the trial of Shiren Dewani saw the Bristol based businessman plead not guilty of five charges; murder, conspiracy to commit kidnapping, robbery with aggravating circumstances, kidnapping and defeating the ends of justice.

Detailing pertinent elements of evidence defence lawyer F van Zyle read from a 37 page plea explanation of events prior to his marriage. Also there was a vivid description of the events that ended the life of his just married wife of the accused. Among the revelations that although he was bi sexual through physical experiences or email chats he was 'turned on' at the first sight of the women who would up as his wife.

Both sets of parents were in the well of the Cape Town high court for this first day of evidence. The Hindocha family wore ribbons and a smiling picture of daughter or sister Annie.

Through newspaper adverts the management of Kruger national park are offering for sale 500, in groups of 20 plus, one of the most endangered species of animals on the African continent.

It is hoped that some of the owners of the many private game ranches throughout the country will take a number of the white rhino into 'protective custody' and out of harms way of the ivory poacher.

Wed 8

As the evidence statement of Shiren Dewani has already noted, that he was bisexual and had been intimate with another male person before those in the Cape Town high court, it is now known that one of his 'associations' was with an unnamed parliamentary aid who will give evidence to that effect as part of the prosecutions case now being heard. Such an existence had been known since 2011 (qv14/7).

Meanwhile a media outlet in South Africa, newspaper; The Independent has highlighted concerns shown by the dead woman 's sister, Sneha Hindoch, gave to the police in about an incident in 11/'09. During the exchange Annie expressed her concerns that her marriage was a mistake as they had not been 'intimate.' Even 24 hours after the wedding there was talk of the lack of bedroom activity overnight. Whether this was because her new husband was shy or a virgin was not said.

However the new bride was unwilling to go anywhere with her husband and certainly not to Cape Town. It seemed to the sister that was willing to leave the marriage behind. To facilitate such a happening there was an offer of cash for a ticket out the country at any time available.

The prosecution will make much of the accused 's willingness to use males for sex and it may have been the defence 's strategy to declare this in their opening statement as a way of down playing the state's case that his bisexuality was the reason he sought help in the planning and killing of his new bride.

Thurs 9

Further examples of Shiren Dewani 's predilection for men came via agreed court records that showed that he was spending time on two same sex dating websites; Gaydar and Recon. It was even noted that he was connected to this site while he waited with his new wife for their connecting flight to Cape Town.

One of the first prosecution witnesses, Mziwamada Quabe aged 29 and already serving a sentence for his involvement in the killing of Annie, faced the accused across the court room. His evidence began with the remark "There was a husband who wanted his wife killed,." That man, across the well of the court 'looked stunned.'

The witness gave much evidence and told of the the cash offered; the equivalent of £1, 300. The deal was that his wife would be killed and he would not be harmed.

Fri 10

Evidence, from M Quabe, continues to be heard in the Cape Town high court and a highlighted fact that hotel receptionist Monde Mbolombo was more than the link man between S Dewani and those already jailed for the murder of his wife Annie.

Questioned by defence council F van Zyl that more than one phone call was made between himself and the three persons who are already serving long prison sentences for her murder. A murder that they say was initiated by the the accused in the dock. A response from the witness; "to say he was involved would be a strange word because he was only the conduit." Then it was revealed that there was other evidence, sound and vision of the hotel receptionist, Mblombo himself, noting that those who were to execute the killing wanted gloves to prevent any firearm residue being found on their person.

Sun 12

Knowing that the body of Anni Dewani was located in the location, named the 'field of death', by the residents of Khayelitsha ; a few new facts. This location is only 30km from the Cape Town high court building where the husband is on trial for her murder. Residents of the shanty town, where the unemployment rate is high, note that the R15, 000 /£1, 330 said to have been paid for those willing to do the deed is a “lot of money.”

As a place of death this field of death, a sandy land bordered by railway tracks and tin shacks, is an ideal place for death to occur. In such an area 78 residents have met their death at this place between 4/11 and 6/12.

The census of 2011 revealed that 8, 000 households reported using bucket toilets. More alarmingly 12, households had no toilets at all.

Tues 14

In defence of the British businessman accused of having his wife, Annie Dewani, killed his council offered an alternative defence. The death of his new wife was not the intention of those who now are serving time in jail for her death.

It was only at the end of the car ride, that brought them both to the centre of Khayelitsha, that her death occurred. If the firearm, that witness M Qwabe was holding, had not discharged while the newly married woman was dragged from the taxi, Annie would have been held for ransom as her parents/new husband were wealthy.

Defence council F van Zyl said a forensic examination of the path of the single shot that killed the woman travelled through her neck and severed her spine. It was his supposition that the shot was not an “execution shot.”

Up country, inside the Pretoria court building, evidence has been given, by Joel Maringa a social worker for the correctional services department that the most appropriate sentence that Justice Thokozile Masipa should pass on Oscar Pistorius was one of community service for a period of three years

Deemed, by herself as a “broken man” with such a sentence; 16 hours of service a month equal to two days of eight hours duration for such work as cleaning in a hospital or a museum, would leave the athlete with time at home to reflect on his recent actions and to reflect on his actions. After all he is only a first time offender.

Responding prosecuting council, Gerrie Nell noted that such a sentence was “shockingly inappropriate.”

A second witness, Blade Runners psychologist Dr L Hartzenberg, reported upon the counselling sessions, even ones between the two that happened before his conviction, that the two had. Right from the start the medic described his patient as a man in “an unresolved spiral of grief,” where many of the sessions were just lots of crying and hugs from himself.

In summing up the psychologist said of Pistorius “We are left with a broken man who has lost everything ... his love for Miss Steenkamp ... moral and professional reputation. He has lost friends.”

Wed 15

Judge J Traverso, overseeing the trial of Shiren Dewan has refused to allow the court any more evidence related to the accused 's sexuality. Here decision came before a London policeman 's written evidence concerning explicit e male exchanges between the Bristol businessman and an unnamed witness.

Emerging, as the trial of Oscar Pistorius reaches its climax, is the fact that the Steenkamp family have been receiving R6, 000/ £341 per month since after their daughter died at the home of the man in the dock of Pretoria 's high court.

The details were released by Steenkemp 's lawyer Dup de Bruyn the knowledge came forth that this family was in financial troubles. Eager to assist the family for a period of 18 months, but wishing to keep these payments away from the public eye. Thus it is only now that the deed can be told.

Speaking for the dead girls family Gerrie Nell indicated that the monthly payments were ever a loan and every cent would be paid back. He also noted that there was on offer, from the athlete, a lump sum of R375, 000/ £21, 299, available which he described as 'blood money.' This loan was refused.

Tensions within the court saw Pistoriou 's uncle call for his son to have a police escort from the court building. Such a demand was made as the uncle had spied, in the public gallery figures from the nations criminal classes. Of concern was the presence of a self confessed killer and a former bouncer who awaits his day in court on a murder charge.

Thurs 16

Impact statement, Kim Martin, cousin of Reeve Steenkemp; upon hearing about the death.

Fri 17

As the trial nears its conclusion, both state and defence council are on the verge of presenting their closing arguments to the court, the alleged intimidation (qv 15/10) has made its ugly appearance.

The sister of Oscar Pistorius, Aimee, became tearful when Mikey Schultz a muscle bound former hit man came and sat down beside her and swore at her. The family then complained to the police. Prior to this event Reeve Steenkamps cousin, K Martin, told the court that the convicted killer had told her he “needs to pay for what he had done.”

Sat 18

Despite defence council Barry Roux 's insistence that Blade Runner did not act with “deviousness” when making his end of case statement. Prosecution council Gerry Nell noted that “the minimum sentence that society will be happy with will be 10 years imprisonment this is a serious matter the negligence borders on intent.

The judge will announce her sentence on 21/10. Thus ends a trial that took up 46 court days.

Sun 19

The convicted Xolie Mngeni, sent to jail in 2012 for killing Anni Dewani has died in prison from the brain cancer that he was diagnosed with while awaiting trial in 2011. In 7/14 a panel of 11 doctors backed his appeal to the appeal board be released from jail and returned home where his

family would look after him till his death.

Mon 20

Figures, from the World Bank and the United Nations Population division indicate that the South African Gross National Product for 2013 was US\$ 351bn. This amounts to \$6, 618 per person. Internet use per 100 people was 49. The countries population in 1950 stood at 14m. By 2010 that figure had risen to 51m.

Tues 21

News item, Oscar Pistorius has been jailed for five years by Justice Masipa for the culpable homicide of his former girlfriend. For his various reckless discharges of a weapon, disclosed during his trial, he was give a three year jail term; which was suspended. Much of the sentence has been suspended and it is possible that he may be free from detention within months. A spokesman for the national prosecution office says that it will decide within 14 days whether to appeal the sentence as being to lenient.

Meanwhile the nations para Olympic committee has said that it will ban the convicted killer from the track for a period of five years. Therefore he will not be able to represent his country at the 2016 games in Rio.

Previously, during the above 's trial, there must have been some debate about the sensibility of sending a disabled man to prison. This brought a response from president Zuma who criticised those who thought the countries prison system was not able to cope with such a person. In this specific case the leader of the ANC Oscar 's defence team for bringing forward the argument that his client should not be jailed. Zuma asked of the defence 'was it also because he had money?'

Wed 22

Taken down, from a courtroom dock in Pretoria 's high court building for his approximately detention of 10 months, Oscar Pistorius was driven the Pretoria Central Prison; now renamed Kgosi Mampuru where it still detains the likes of Clive Derby Lewis and Janusz Walus convicted of the killing of Joe Slovo in 1993. At the height of the struggle against apartheid this place was more likely to house black opponents of the system or hang them.

On the verge of a general election, in which the present president Ian Khama is expected to be re elected as the countries leader. This election comes at a time when elements within Botswana accuse him of being a dictator. One such group are the nomadic Sans people.

Having taken the Gaborone government to court, with the assistance of Survival International in 2013 (qv 18/10) over the right to hunt and roam over their 'traditional lands' which happen now to be a game reserve. The would be president, the son of the countries first president, agrees that if the Sans kept to their past methods of animal husbandry all would be well. However with their modern weapons and use of vehicles to kill the game Botswana's economy suffers.

Other voices of complaint are heard; journalists who flee the country or those that give interviews out of their office and out of the range of the GPS signals in mobile phones. Recently stories have been appearing, in a country that allows freedom of the press. Such journalistic license is allowed but when stories are made up, with no basis in fact, then a stand must be made.

A proud fact that the country stand third on the Ibrahim Index of Transparency of African

Governance. Others may say the Index may be outdated.

Leader Comment, **The athletes imprisonment is a verdict on a man but also on ...** the trial of Oscar Pistorius played out like a Hollywood thriller from beginning to end. However “South Africa still battles with issues of race, social inequality and difficult governance and achieving the right balance is testimony to the admiral path that the country has nevertheless travelled in the past two decades.”

It's not hard to predict that firing four bullets into a tiny bathroom would result in a fatal wounding. But Oscar Pistorius never took full responsibility for his actions. - **Magie Orford, president of PEN SA** -

Fri 24

The convicted athlete /killer who had been assured that his sporting ambitions were not at an end, is so far as after the 2016 Olympic Games has had a reversal in fortunes. The announcement on 21/10, from the national committee has been clarified further by a spokesman for the International Paralympic Committee. Under its rules his chances of competing again would only come to fruition if he appealed his sentence and won a reduction.

Speaking to the Cape Argus the South African sports minister, Fikile Mbalula, noted that “I do not think Oscar will be able to come back in terms of athletics it is unfortunate that it had to end in this manner, but the courts have spoken and we will respect their decision.”

Tues 28

As was evident in the Cape Town high court on 15/10, at the trial of Shiren Dewani, Justice Traverso has refused into evidence the testimony of a Birmingham based male escort who was to tell the tale of his three sexual encounters with the Bristol based businessman charged with/arranging the murder of his new wife in 11/10.

As the nation mourns the death of Zenzo Meyiwa; the goalkeeper captain of the national soccer team as he visited his girlfriend in a township outside Johannesburg; president Zuma noted “words cannot express the nations shock at this loss” police released murder related statistics

from 4/13 to 3/14 the murder rate increased by 5%, attempted murder rose 4.6%, aggravated robbery up 12. 7%, common robbery up 0. 6%. In excess of 17, 000 persons were killed during this time frame; an average of 47 per day.

A spokesman for the national prosecution authority, Nathi Nmcube, indicates that conviction and sentence passed on Blade Runner is to be appealed. The state notes the anger felt by the nation when Justice Masipa gave credence to the defence argument that there was reason to doubt that Pistorius mistook his girlfriend for an intruder.

The appeal, which would raise the charge from culpable homicide to one of murder, is based on the NPA 's belief that Justice Msipa misinterpreted a law that says that the athlete objectively foresees the possibility of his actions would cause the death and carries on regardless, - *dolus eventualis* -

Thurs 30

Health notes; Spending as % of GDP 8. 5 [2012 figures] which is 5% more than WHO recommend. Private sector consumes 60% of total health spends for 85% of the population that use such a service. Public healthcare struggles to finance the other 15% of the nations needs.

Employment; less than 30% of doctors, dentists, pharmacists, physiotherapists and psychologists work in the public sector. Of the nursing profession only 40% serve the public.

Some treatments, HIV and TB for example are free to treat. A problem with this is that those who are diagnosed by the private health carers are usually directed towards the government funded medical services. Thus they, the private sector, put further drain on the public purse. As of this time 2.5m South Africans are receiving treatment. With sufferers now receiving life saving treatment life expectancy has risen from 53 in 2002 to 60 in 2013.

Rural healthcare; swallows up only 12% of doctors and 19% of the nursing profession despite 47% of the rural population is made up of children.

Private medical care; covers 17% of the nations population. With health minister Doctor A Motsoaledi not averse to spending time in the largest hospital on the continent south of the Sahara Desert in Soweto working new plans are being worked out for a National Health insurance scheme. The catch anyone earning above a certain amount, unstated, will be required to make a contribute. The ministers aim for the fund is that all national will be able to use either health service without undermining financially either service.

NOVEMBER

Sat 1

A grieving mother sat silent for the duration of the trial of Oscar Pistorius. Now she speaks out; forgives her daughter 's killer even though she thinks he has not told the truth about his girl friends death.

South Africa Twitter account note that a female is raped every four minuets and a women killed by her partner every eight hours.

Wed 5

Following the decision of the Crown Prosecution over the death of Angolon national J Mubenga (qv 21/3) the named G4S security guards have gone on trial charged with manslaughter of one who would be deported.

While the Crown do not deny the right of G4S to assist in deportations of so called illegals it is the manner of how it happened in this case. While the three guards, Hughes, Kaler and Tribeling were perfectly right to use the restraint method they did. Subsequent events should have made them act in a different manor.

Having silenced Jimmy Mubenga 's protests they did nothing as he remained in the doubled up position for 30 minuets complaining of not being able to breath; claims heard by other passengers on the aircraft. One account notes a guards reply; "Stop struggling we will let you up when we are airborne."

The state is to challenge the sentence handed down to Blade Runner. The countries national prosecution office will use the principal of law; *dolus eventualis*. It will be argued that the presiding judge did not take enough cognisance of whether the perpetrator objectively took notice of what he was about to do may possibly cause death; never the less he carries on regardless.

Fri 7

As the judicial inquiry, into the deaths of 34 striking Marikana miners lumbers on, council for the relatives of the deceased, George Bizoz has called for the prosecution of eight members of the Lonmin board. Whilst it is known that in 2012 (qv 23/11) e mail releases showed that non of the striking miners had fired at the police, later disclosures indicate that mine management had colluded with the police and even provided the police with a helicopter for their own purpose.

Even more; along with eight, the countries vice president Cyril Ramaphosa should face charges of being accomplices to murder.

Tues 18

Arguments by both sets of lawyers will, by 21/10, have pleaded their case before Ms Justice Traverso as to why on the one hand the case against Shiren Dewant (qv) should be abandoned. It will then be then the chance of the state to put their case for a continuance of the ongoing murder against the Bristol based businessman.

Six jurors, deliberating over the manslaughter trial of four G4S employees charged over the death of

Angolan national J Mubenga (qv 5/11) were given the chance to feel how he must have felt when he was restrained in handcuffs prior to an expected departure back to the land of his birth. The chosen ones were able to sit in specially installed passenger seats positioned in the well of the court.

Sun 23

Between the time a mother speaks out on forgiveness of Blade Runner (qv 11/1) and this date authors have not been slow in authoring books delve into the comprehensive detail; Behind the Door by M Weiner and B Bateman published by Mackmillan @ £16. 69, film potential; Chase Your Shadow: The Trial of Oscar Pistorius John Carlin Atlantic £17. 99 and the thoughts of mum Steenkemp; Reeva: A Mothers Story Sphere £14. 99.

Tues 25

As of this date, according to a report published by the International Fund for Animal Welfare, the number of rhinos killed for their ivory has risen to 1,020.

Programme notes, a re examination of the events surrounding the assassination of Olaf Palme the prime minister of Sweden at the height of the anti apartheid era. Names were named as to who, and why he had been murdered. As a country not only that financed the anti apartheid movement he was a politician with many enemies within Sweden the question of who or why he was killed is still open to question.

One of those mentioned in the papers examined, coming from the investigation of the Swedish author (qv 26/2) now lives in exile in Cyprus. B Bendo? Was not inclined to give an interview nor would he give information about his work for the state security regime, Bureau of State Security that was/is believed to be have been behind this killing.

DECEMBER

Mon 1

Using UNAIDS, an international organisation that monitors the well being of those who are infected with the HIV virus in the countries that are of concern to this diarist; 6. 27 million of the South African population are infected with Aids. Of this number 2.8m persons are taking anti retroviral drugs to suppress the virus. In Lesotho 0. 36m; Swaziland 0.2m Mozambique 1.7m, Zimbabwe, 1.39m Botswana 0.32m of the population are infected.

South African adult females, 3.5m HIV + ve; a figure 1.9m higher than that for Nigerian women. In Botswana 61.9% of sex workers are infected. Swaziland has no health care facilities for anti retroviral and general HIV outpatient care. However it has the highest HIV rate among young men globally; 7.1%.

Despite the acceptance of the fact that the authorities are aware that the 2011 census figures are imprecise, it was recorded that 3.3% /1.7m were registered as 'non South African' where as the overall population of the nation was 51.8m.

On the other hand figures from the World Bank/ UN suggest a migrant population of 1. 86m. In 2013 there was a total of 108, 711 applications for temporary and permanent residence in the country.

Tues 2

The jury in the ongoing trial of three G4S employees accused over the death of Angolan national Jimmy Mubenga has heard evidence from Terry Hughes of events leading up to the death. Firstly it was explained how everything was normal as he, and his fellow workers transported the asylum deportee to Heathrow Airport. However once on the plane events went down hill fast. Hughes tells a tale of not being able to hear shouts from the detained that he could not breathe as he sat in his seat with his seatbelt fastened and his hands cuffed as he was bent over.

With the assistance of Stella Mendonca and Sonia Mocumbi; the daughter of a former prime minister who are both opera stars on the international stage are to return to the land of their birth; Mozambique to teach opera and other musical spheres to others from a land that is only now emerging from the struggle of a colonial and civil war in the recent past.

Classes are to be held at the Pedagogical University in Mozambique. Their first challenge is to bring forward an existing choir up to standard to perform Rossini 's Petite Messe Solennelle. Once returned from a career in Europe over the last 30 years where they performed with distinction on the world stage they have come home to spread their skills among the people.

Once returned, 12 months past, the two set up the Musiarte music school in Maputo where lessons in guitar, piano, violin will be offered to both children and adults. Chief among their challenges is to bring on a choir which will perform Terra Sonambula which is based on a novel; a must read book by a national author Mia Couto which chronicles the life of an orphan child through the countries civil war.

Wed 3

One, who had been observing the trial of 3 G4S security guards charged with the manslaughter of

an Angolan national being sent back to his west African homeland, collapsed as one of the accused, Terry Hughes gave his second day of witness evidence. As details emerged Adrienne Makenda Kambana collapsed and had to be assisted by court officials.

Long has it been known that during the apartheid years the role of the female domestic servant, who served her time as nanny, cook or cleaner to a white 'madam' was a heartless task. With the ending of the era where the ethnic white population were 'more equal than others' the experiences of Siphokazi Mdlankomo aged 39 is a programme or two of becoming the top chef on the nation's equivalent of the BBC programme Master Chef.

Much is still the same for the domestic worker; the early morning commute, in this case from one of the townships on the outskirts of Cape Town to the home of Liz Andreasen where she has been employed as a cook for the past nine years.

The work of the domestic worker has always been seen, along with farm labourers, as being an ongoing reminder of the worst part of our past that is still visible to the outside world; so says Eusebius McKaiser; author, broadcaster and political commentator.

As of 1.2 the minimum wage of a domestic worker in cities rose to R 2,065. 47 / £119 per month.

Thurs 4

Stopped has been the sale of the 43 page post mortem report into the death of the the Black Consciousness Movement who was, so it turned out a long time after the event, killed by the police while he was under interrogation in 1977.

Days before the report was to go on sale, at auction, the anti apartheid activists son Nksoinathi Biko along with other relatives went before the court to plead that the sale would be disrespectful of African culture and should be stopped.

The judge ruled that the sale must be delayed till 31/1. Thus giving the family and Westgate Walding Auctioneers time to negotiate. It is expected that such a document; given up for sale by the secretary to one who carried out the autopsy, could be sold for R 100, 000/ £5, 670.

Sat 6

Interviews with those that live in South Africa twelve months after the demise of Nelson Mandela. Those interviewed; ranging through all aspects of apartheid free society and professions – farmers, lawyers, politicians and workers who make up this divided nation.

In Mandela Gardens, an area in the centre of Leeds; dedicated by the man himself, held a muted remembrance of his life. Among those gathered were civic and community leaders. where poets from the Leeds Young Authors were listened to. This was followed by the laying of floral tributes and the showing of a film documenting Mandela 's legacy in Leeds was shown.

Tues 9

At the end of Madam Justice 's Jeanette Traverso 's deliberation over the defence claim of the innocence of Shiren Dewani (qv 18/11) her decision has been made. The Bristol based businessman has walked out of the Cape Town high court a free man.

This finding was based, almost solely, on having the state believe that upon his arrival in Cape

Town in 2010 along with his new wife that he would be able to find a man to carry out the killing of his new wife 'just like that.

There were many mistakes made by the police and the legal team once their man came to trial; four years after the event. Probably the main mistake was to allow the accused to leave the country until all the evidence had been assessed. During the trial itself states prosecutor, Adrian Mopp, was seen to make many procedural errors and being accused of time wasting by the judge. Meanwhile defence council, Van Zyl he who defended Mark Thatcher in the Wongagate trial over his involvement in organising a coup in Equatorial Guinea, was swift to outflank the state when seemingly important evidence; Shiren 's involvement with the Gay community in London was ruled inadmissible by the judge.

As to the reaction of the family of Anni Hindocha nee Dewani they were stunned at the outcome of the trial. Their next move, according to the dead woman 's sister is to see if its possible to take out a civil law suit against Shiren.

In the opinion of the writer much of the failure to convict was down to the hurried police investigation. The murder took place just months after the World Cup when the country was under intense scrutiny. Sloppy crime investigation could lead to low level of tourist interest in the country. Thus loss of foreign earnings.

Wed 10

Finally free from detention, after months in a South African facility, Shiren Dewani leaves via Cape Town airport. His destination Dubai. Pursued by press and media film crews the Bristol businessman said nothing to the press who followed his every move.

Away from the press scrum, at his home in Sweden, Ashok Hindocha the uncle of murdered Anni Dewani noted that the sudden halt to the trial did not allow the the evidential 'holes to be filled' by the questioning of the man accused of instigating her death to be answered. It was these holes in the evidence that caused the judge to throw out the states case of manslaughter.

Overall the family is not concerned with establishing the guilty party it is more that the family want to know the truth. With this acquittal we did not get the truth from South Africa.

Fri 12

According to a report produced by International Fund for Animal Welfare black rhino horn on the black market sells for £22, 290 / \$35, 000 per pound.

Mon 15

The latest figures, from the EIA?, indicate that the total carbon dioxide emissions from the consumption of energy in 2012, for South Africa are 473 million metric tonnes. The United Kingdom emissions were 499 mmt

As a comparison the figure in 2011 (qv 31/1) was 450 mmt whereas the UK emissions were 520 mmt.

Tues 16

The Nelson Mandela Foundation has announced that it is soon to publish a book that the countries

first black president began writing shortly before he stood down as president. From 1998 until 2002; the year 'he ran out of steam' The Presidential Years began to take shape. With ten chapters still to be completed it is only now that former colleagues have had time to finish his work.

News item, the 3 G4S security guards accused of the manslaughter of the Angolon national, Jimmy Mubenga (qv 2/12), who died during his deportation have been found not guilty.

Wed 17

The reaction of the widow, at the conclusion of the trial (qv 16/12) of the Angolon national who died as he was being deported with the help of the 3 G4S security guards was 'shock and disappointment.'

There were concerns that the jury were unaware of the coroners court verdict on his death was one of unlawful killing. Nor were they told that the mobile phone of two of the accused, Terry Hughes and Stuart Tribelnig contained racist jokes and 65 texts which the coroner found "racially offensive."

Such are the concerns of the grieving widow A M Kambana nee Mubengo has indicated she will front a campaign to end this practise of forced deportations.

Thurs 18

It has now been revealed, by the Old Bailey judge; Justice Spencer overseeing the trial of the 3 G4S employees cleared of the manslaughter of Jimmy Mubenga, that both prosecution and defence council knew of the racist tweets/ jokes that could be found on the mobile phones of T Hughes and S Tribelnig.

It was his opinion that, despite their offensive nature, the texts had no bearing on the trials central issue "whether the defendants deliberately held Mr Mubenga forward, head down, for a considerable period and weather [they] deliberately ignored his repeated protests that he could not breathe."

Tues 30

Very much aware that a great deal of the continents history is passed on by word of mouth down the generations and that that knowledge is fearful of being lost to a younger generations an idea was born out of a poetry reading festival first held in Cape Town in 2008.

The Badilisha Oral History project, still based in the city was born out of the Poetry X Change annual competition where Africa's rhyming word smiths gathered. Wishing their work to be heard more widely the use of the ever present mobile phone was brought into play. Such devices have now been brought into play to keep ethnic history alive. In respect of this authors sphere of interest there are 169 poets from South Africa and 26 from Zimbabwe. Other countries represented are Kenya [33], Nigeria [27], DRC [3].

The oral history collection is funded by the Spier Wine Farm; based on the outskirts of Stellenbosch with Linda Kaoma as project manager.