

Anti-Apartheid Activist Dies at 91

Tuesday September 12, 2006 1:01 AM

By CELEAN JACOBSON

Associated Press Writer

[Chafee Wins in R.I. As 9 States, DC Vote](#)
6:46 am

[Key Races in Tuesday's Primaries](#)
6:31 am

[Annan Meets With Iran President Khatami](#)
6:16 am

[Gunmen Kill Police Chief in Mexico](#)
6:16 am

[Karr Arrives in Calif. to Face Charges](#)
6:16 am

[Residents Won't Leave, Despite](#)

JOHANNESBURG, South Africa (AP) - Hilda Bernstein, an anti-apartheid activist and author whose husband was tried for treason alongside Nelson Mandela, has died. She was 91.

Bernstein died of heart failure at her home in Cape Town on Friday night, her son Keith said.

"The liberation movement mourns a tireless political activist whose lifelong commitment to the cause of the South African people will continue as an inspiration for generations to come," the ruling African National Congress said in a statement.

Bernstein's husband, Rusty, and Mandela were tried along with other anti-apartheid activists in the infamous Rivonia Trial in 1964. Mandela received a sentence of life imprisonment, while Rusty Bernstein was the only defendant acquitted and freed.

But police harassment made life afterward so difficult for the Bernsteins that the couple was forced into exile, leaving their children behind. They crossed the border to Botswana on foot - a journey described in Hilda Bernstein's book "The World That Was Ours."

Fire
6:01 am

In exile, Hilda Bernstein was an active member of the ANC and a regular speaker for the Anti-Apartheid Movement group in Britain and abroad.

S. Korea Starts
Razing Village for
Base
6:01 am

The couple eventually settled in Britain but returned to South Africa after the 1994 democratic elections that made Mandela the country's president.

Creators Confess
to Lonelygirl15
Mystery
6:01 am

Hilda Bernstein was a founding member of the Federation of South African Women, the first nonracial women's organization in South Africa. She also was a writer and artist whose work has been used as book jackets and illustrations, posters and cards for the AAM.

Judge Says Mo.
Must Redo
Execution Plan
5:46 am

Bernstein was born in London in 1915 and emigrated to South Africa in 1932, working in advertising, publishing and journalism.

Karr Arrives in
California
5:46 am

A fiery orator, she served as a city councilor in Johannesburg from 1943 to 1946 as the only communist elected to public office in a "whites only" vote.

From the Associated
Press

She and her husband were active in the early days of the South African Communist Party and the ANC. They both suffered banning and detention by the apartheid state.

Rusty Bernstein died in 2002.

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Author and veteran anti-apartheid activist Hilda Bernstein dies at 91

Celean Jacobson
Canadian Press

Monday, September 11, 2006

JOHANNESBURG, South Africa (AP) - Veteran anti-apartheid activist and author Hilda Bernstein has died, her family said Monday. She was 91.

Bernstein died of heart failure at her home in Cape Town on Friday night, her son Keith said. She was the wife of the late Rusty Bernstein, an anti-apartheid activist who was tried for treason alongside Nelson Mandela in the famous Rivonia Trial in 1964. Both she and her husband fought tirelessly in South Africa and abroad for the end of white racist rule.

"The liberation movement mourns a tireless political activist whose lifelong commitment to the cause of the South African people will continue as an inspiration for generations to come," the ruling African National Congress said in a statement.

"Bernstein will be remembered among other things for her work in chronicling the lives and struggles of the South African people, and in particular in documenting the struggle of South Africa's women," the ANC said.

Bernstein was a founding member of the Federation of South African Women, the first nonracial women's organization in South Africa.

Bernstein was born in London in 1915, the youngest of three sisters. She emigrated to South Africa in 1932 and worked in advertising, later publishing and journalism.

Known as a fiery orator, Bernstein served as a city councillor in Johannesburg from 1943 to 1946 - the only communist to be elected to public office on a 'whites only' vote.

Both she and her husband were active in the early days of the South African Communist Party and the African National Congress. They suffered banning and detention by the apartheid state.

At the Rivonia trial, which sentenced Mandela and other anti-apartheid leaders to life imprisonment, Rusty was the only one found not guilty and was discharged. But police harassment made life afterward so untenable that the couple were forced into exile, leaving their children behind.

They crossed the border to Botswana on foot - a journey described in Bernstein's book "The World That Was Ours." The couple eventually made their way into Zambia but were declared prohibited immigrants by the British authorities and forced to travel overland to Tanzania.

In exile, Bernstein was an active member of the External Mission of the ANC, and

a regular speaker on behalf of ANC and Anti-Apartheid Movement, both in Britain and abroad. She toured extensively in many countries of Europe, Canada and since 1994, South Africa, on behalf of the ANC and the Women's League.

Eventually they settled in England where Rusty Bernstein worked as an architect. They returned to South Africa after the 1994 democratic elections.

She also was a writer and artist who exhibited in London, France and various countries of Africa. Her work has been used as book jackets, book illustrations, as posters and as cards for the Anti-Apartheid Movement.

Bernstein's publications include "The World That Was Ours," "The Terrorism of Torture" and "For Their Triumphs and For Their Tears."

Rusty Bernstein died in Oxford in 2002 and later that year his widow returned to South Africa.

She is survived by four children, seven grandchildren and four great-grandchildren. There was no immediate word on funeral arrangements. The funeral will be held Saturday.

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11/09/2006 20:11 - (SA)

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The African National Congress said in a statement: "The liberation movement mourns a tireless political activist whose lifelong commitment to the cause of the South African people will continue as an inspiration for generations to come.

"Bernstein will be remembered among other things for her work in chronicling the lives and struggles of the South African people and, in particular, in documenting the struggle of South Africa's women."

Bernstein was a founding member of the Federation of South African Women, the first nonracial women's organisation in South Africa.

Fiery orator

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Her work has been used extensively

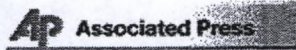
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Hilda Bernstein

1915 - 2006

Memorial

16 September 2006

Nelson Mandela Gateway Auditorium
Waterfront, Cape Town

Hilda Bernstein

Hilda Bernstein was born in London, one of three daughters of Simeon and Dora Schwarz. Her father was a Bolshevik, who left the family for good when Hilda was 10 to return to the Soviet Union where he died in the revolution. Hilda left school and emigrated to South Africa in 1933.

She soon joined the youth branch of the Labour Party. By 1940, she joined the Communist Party, the only organisation on the time with no racial segregation. She served on both the District Committee and National Executive and in 1943 was elected as a communist to the Johannesburg City Council by an all-white electorate.

She met Lionel (Rusty) Bernstein through shared political involvement and they were married in 1941. During the war years - whilst Rusty was serving in the army - she became a leading Party orator. During the 1950's she took the lead in organising women. In 1956 she was one of the founders of the first multi-racial women's organisations, the Federation of South African Women, and played a key role in organising the historic women's march to Pretoria in 1956.

She also helped found the South African Peace Council and was its National Secretary until being banned.

Hilda faced a succession of government attempts to curtail her political activity. In 1946 she was charged with sedition and convicted for assisting the black mineworkers strike. In 1953 she was banned from 26 organisations and from attending any meetings; in 1958 her renewed banning orders included a ban on writing or publishing. She was detained during the 1960 State of Emergency following the Sharpeville massacre.

In 1963 her husband Rusty was arrested at Rivonia and charged together with Nelson Mandela and others. He was acquitted, recharged then released on bail. Soon after his release, Hilda fled from home as the police came to arrest her. She and Rusty crossed the frontier into Botswana, ultimately arriving in London. This story was dramatically told in her book "The World that Was Ours".

In exile, Hilda was active in the ANC, including the Women's section, the Anti-Apartheid Movement and the British peace movement. Her public speaking and writing skills were used extensively for all these causes.

In middle age, and with four children, Hilda forged a new element to her activism as an artist and writer. Her writing included "Separation", "The World that was Ours", "The Rift" (experience of South Africans in exile), and "Death is Part of the Process", a novel televised by the BBC. Hilda also wrote political pamphlets on women in the SA struggle, Steve Biko, Political trials and torture in SA, as well as numerous other articles and pamphlets.

She had many one-person shows of her etchings and pictures. She exhibited widely in group shows of print-makers and women artists in the UK, USA, Europe and Africa. Her work has been hung in the Royal Academy and in public and private collections throughout the world. It has been used on book jackets and illustrations, on posters and as greeting cards for the Anti-Apartheid Movement.

Both Hilda and Rusty came back to South Africa to take part in the election of the new democratic government in 1994. After a marriage of over 60 years Rusty died in England in 2002.

In 2004 aged 89, Hilda was very proud to receive the Luthuli Award (Silver) for "contribution to gender equality and the attainment of a free and democratic society" from President Thabo Mbeki.

At the time of her death at 91 she was living in Cape Town.

Hilda brought unbounded energy, creativity, intellect and tenacity to whatever she undertook. More specially, she combined these with a fierce integrity and commitment to humanity.

Along with her enduring heritage as political activist, writer and artist, she leaves behind her children (Toni, Patrick, Frances and Keith), seven grandchildren and four great-grand-children.

Our revolutionary movement, government and country pays tribute to her! *Hamba Kahle Comrade Hilda Bernstein!*

Hilda Bernstein Memorial Service

10:30	National Anthem	-	New Hope Choir
	Welcome	-	Minister Ronnie Kasrils Programme Director
	Keynote Speech	-	Ahmed Kathrada
	Tribute	-	Rica Hodgson
	Speech	-	Pregs Govender
	Song	-	The Choir
	Poetry	-	Frances Bernstein
	Song	-	The Choir
	Vote of Thanks	-	Toni Strasburg
	Video Footage/Hilda		
	Song	-	The Choir
11:45	Closure		

Refreshments will be served after the service

HILDA BERNSTEIN MEMORIAL SERVICE



Born on 15 April 1915 and died peacefully in her sleep on 8 September 2006

ANC stalwart; member of the SACP since 1940; One of the Founder Members of the Federation of South African Women in 1956; One of the key role players in the organizing of the historic women's march to Pretoria in 1956; Banned in 1953 and detained during the 1960 State of Emergency; In exile, she was active in the ANC, the Anti-Apartheid Movement and the British Peace Movement; An artist and a writer; A devoted wife, mother and grandmother.

DATE: Saturday, 16 September 2006

TIME: 10h00 for 10h30 to 12h00

**VENUE: Nelson Mandela Gateway Auditorium,
Clock Tower, the Waterfront, Cape Town**

Enquiries: Rachmat Rasool Cell: 0828838801

Hilda Bernstein

May 15 1915 – September 8 2006



**A celebration of Hilda's
life and work**

**The Womens' Prison Atrium,
Constitution Hill, Johannesburg
Sunday 12th November, 3 pm.**

Hilda Bernstein

Hilda Bernstein (nee Watts) was born in London, one of three daughters of Russian immigrants Simeon and Dora Schwarz. Her father was a Bolshevik, who left the family for good when Hilda was ten to return to the Soviet Union where he died in 1932. Hilda left school and immigrated to South Africa in 1933.

She soon joined the youth branch of the Labour Party. In 1940, she joined the Communist Party (CPSA), the only organization at the time with no racial segregation. She served on both the District Committee and the National Executive and in 1943 was elected as a Communist to the Johannesburg City Council by an all white electorate, to represent Hillbrow.

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We pay tribute to her.

Hamba Kahle Comrade Hilda Bernstein!

Hilda Bernstein Commemoration

PROGRAMME

Senzeni na	Yeoville Choir
Welcome	Hugh Lewin
Thula Sizwe	Choir
Tribute	Albie Sachs
Mokgosi oalla	Choir
Poem & memories of Hilda	Ilse Wilson
Malibongwe	Choir
Keynote speech	Gertrude Shope
Cde Hilda ulale Ngoxolo	Choir
Vote of thanks	Toni Strasburg
Excerpt "Memories of Dreams"	Video
Hamba Hamba Kahle & Nkosi Sikelel' iAfrika	Choir

CLOSURE

Light refreshments will be served after the event





*A Memorial to
Hilda Bernstein*



1915 - 2006

Friday 29th September 2006

*South African High Commission
London*

Order of Service

11.30 *Paul Joseph, Master of Ceremonies*
Welcome

National Anthem

11.40 *Cyril Ndaba, Deputy High Commissioner*
Welcome on behalf of the High Commissioner

11.45 *Babette Brown, comrade and family friend*
Who will also read a message from Ronnie Press

Choir leads "Malibongwe"

11.55 *Mike Terry, former General Secretary of the Anti*
Apartheid Movement (AAM)

12.05 *Lyndall Gordon, Hilda's friend*
Tribute to Hilda

Choir leads "Senzeni Na"

12.15 *Ronnie Kasrils, Minister of Intelligence Services*

12.30 *Frances Bernstein, Hilda's daughter*
Poem recital

12.35 *Paul Joseph, Master of Ceremonies*
Will read a message from the ANC

12.40 *Toni Strasburg, Hilda's daughter*
Vote of thanks

Choir leads "Hamba Kahle"

12.50 Reception

13.30 End

Obituary from The Guardian

Monday September 18, 2006
Denis Herbstein
The Guardian

Hilda Bernstein

Activist and author, she fought against apartheid in South Africa and in exile.

The partnership of Hilda Bernstein, who has died in Cape Town aged 91, and her husband, Lionel "Rusty" Bernstein (obituary, June 26 2002), featured long and enduringly in the struggle against apartheid, both in South Africa and in their English exile. Perhaps Hilda's most unprecedented accomplishment was to persuade white voters to elect her, a communist, to the Johannesburg city council. But that was 1943, before Hilda and communism were red-carded by the Afrikaner nationalist referee.

Hilda Bernstein was an all-rounder - she could "talk the talk" (through her books and rousing oratory) and "walk the walk" (she was a founder, in 1956, of the non-racial Federation of South African Women; and had a conviction, in 1946, for involvement in a black mineworkers' strike). But alongside her feminism was a devotion to her home and her four children. A colleague at the Johannesburg publishers where Hilda edited a family magazine, recalls her rushing home early to make naartjie (mandarin) marmalade.

Hilda Watts grew up in London's East End, the daughter of Jewish Russian emigrants. Her father, Simeon Schwarz was a Bolshevik and was made the Soviet trade attaché in London in 1919, but was recalled to Moscow in 1925, never to return. His widow, Dora, emigrated to Johannesburg with Hilda, the youngest of the three daughters, in 1932. Hilda was quickly active in the youth branch of the Labour party, but in 1940 joined the Communist party. A fine public speaker with an exceptional organisational ability, she was elected to the council by the voters of Hillbrow, the most (or only) avant garde of the suburbs, and certainly helped by South Africa being an ally of Moscow. But it gave her a

further insight into the woeful plight of urban Africans, particularly the migrant gold miners.

Throughout the 1950s, Hilda worked tirelessly to better the condition of African women, despite being banned from 28 organisations. She helped organise the march in 1956 in which 20,000 women converged on the Union Buildings, the seat of government in Pretoria, to demonstrate against the pass laws. And she was a founder and national secretary of the Peace Council until it, too, was banned. But there were ways to carry on the work clandestinely, but when, in 1958, her writing and magazine work was banned, it was a serious financial blow.

She had married Rusty, an architect, in 1941. He had drafted the Freedom Charter, the founding document of the liberation struggle. But his ability to pay the bills for a growing family was likewise hindered by political intrusions, notably the four years, 1956-60, as a defendant in the Treason Trial, and then his and Hilda's detention in the State of Emergency that followed the shootings at Sharpeville in 1960.

And yet they managed. In her book *The World that was Ours* (1967), she recounts that their house in Observatory "breathed and murmured with people and sound - people coming to swim, to talk, to borrow books, the children's friends of all ages; people who never rang the bell or knocked, but called a greeting as they came in." The house "shines brightly at us from one side of the mirror; on the other are the homes and lives of our friends and comrades in the [black] locations".

Rusty was the sole accused in the 1964 Rivonia trial to be acquitted. Nelson Mandela, Walter Sisulu and other ANC leaders were jailed for life. He was immediately re-arrested, then surprisingly bailed, giving the couple the option of quitting a hopeless political stage. And yet the decision was agonising. As the police closed in, Hilda still did the housewifely thing, and took the clothes out of the washing machine and then slipped out through a secret passage in the back garden. They were taken across the border into the then British Bechuanaland and arrived in England in their forties.

Rusty worked as an architect, while Hilda launched a career as a graphic artist. She created book covers, and African National

Congress and Anti-apartheid Movement posters and greeting cards, and combined that with shows of her etchings around the world. She also chronicled the big story with books on the women's struggle, *For Their Triumphs and Their Tears*, 1978; the murdered activist, *Steve Biko, No 46 - Steve Biko*, 1978; and a series of interviews on her countrymen and women's experience in exile. Her novel *Death is Part of the Process* (1983) won the Sinclair prize and was made into a BBC drama. Those who heard her at meetings were left in no doubt about the seriousness of events in South Africa. After the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia, in 1968, she left the Communist party.

They moved from London to Herefordshire in 1981 where guests enjoyed the conversation and the cuisine, though non-smokers endured a ban on the weed as unalterable as an edict from Pretoria. They returned for a visit to South Africa in 1994 to work for an ANC victory.

They were living in Kidlington, near Oxford, when Rusty died. Soon after, Mandela, on a visit to Britain, drove over to talk about old times. In 2003, Hilda returned to South Africa and lived in a flat in the Cape Town seaside suburb of Sea Point, near her son Keith.

Last week her doctor told her there was not long to go. She phoned her children in Europe to say goodbye. She is survived by children, Toni, Patrick, Frances and Keith, seven grandchildren and four great grandchildren.

· Hilda Bernstein, political activist, born May 15 1915; died September 9 2006

Message of Condolence on the passing away of Hilda Bernstein

Kgalema Motlanthe - ANC Secretary General

The African National Congress joins democrats and communists across the country in mourning the passing away of Cde Hilda Bernstein, a stalwart of our movement and an untiring fighter for the cause of the oppressed and exploited.

Like her many family, friends and comrades, the ANC is deeply saddened by this loss. Like them, we nevertheless draw solace from the profound and selfless contribution she made throughout her long and rich life to the cause of freedom, democracy and equality.

Cde Hilda was one among the few white South Africans of her generation who were prepared to stake the relative comfort of a life of privilege in pursuit of her principles and political conviction. Her commitment to the struggle for national liberation and class struggle, including her preparedness to stand for public office as a member of the Communist Party, was an indication of her willingness to defy the norms of an oppressive society, even in the face of arrest, banning, censorship and exile.

Through her writings, Cde Hilda exposed in unflinching detail and honesty many of the iniquities of the apartheid system. She also chronicled the struggles and sacrifices of the South African people, providing an inspiration for all those engaged in struggle and leaving for future generations a rich documentary legacy. Having been actively involved in democratic and non-racial women's formations over many decades Cde Hilda was a pillar in the struggle for women's emancipation and a champion of the involvement of women in all elements of the struggle.

As we mark the 50th anniversary of the heroic women's march of 1956 - of which Cde Hilda was an organiser - and celebrate the launch of the Progressive Women's Movement, we are called upon to draw on the example of Hilda Bernstein as we open up a new front in the struggle for gender equality.

Cde Hilda was a talented writer and artist, who used her skills not only to express herself, but to give a voice to those who had for so long been kept in silence.

As we pay tribute to an extraordinary South African, freedom fighter and communist, let us draw inspiration from what Hilda Bernstein stood for and how she lived her life.

Let us pay her the ultimate tribute, by taking forward the struggle that she pursued with determination and vigour throughout her many years.

Hamba Kahle Qabane.

NATIONAL ANTHEM

Nkosi sikelel' iAfrika
Maluphakanyisw' uphondo lwayo,
Yizwa imithandazo yethu,
Nkosi sikelela, thina lusapho lwayo.

Morena boloka setjhaba sa heso,
O fedise dintwa la matshwenyeho,
O se boloke, O se boloke setjhaba sa heso,
Setjhaba sa South Afrika - South Afrika.

Uit die blou van onse hemel,
Uit die diepte van ons see,
Oor ons ewige gebergtes,
Waar die kranse antwoord gee,

Sounds the call to come together,
And united we shall stand,
Let us live and strive for freedom,
In South Africa our land.

MALIBONGWE

Igama Lamakhosikazi Malibongwe
Igama Lamakhosikazi Malibongwe
Malibongwe Malibongwe
Malibongwe Malibongwe

Igama Lamakhosikazi Malibongwe
Igama Lamakhosikazi Malibongwe
Malibongwe Malibongwe
Malibongwe Malibongwe

SENZENI NA

Senzeni na, Senzeni na
Senzeni na, Senzeni na
Senzeni na, Senzeni na
Senzeni na, Senzeni na
Repeat verse

Sono sethu bubumnyama
Sono sethu bubumnyama
Sono sethu bubumnyama
Sono sethu bubumnyama
Repeat verse

HAMBA KAHLE

Hamba, hamba kahle mkhonto
O mkhonto, mkhonto we sizwe

Thina, thina bomkhonto sizimisele
Ukuwabulala wona amabhulu

With special thanks to the Choir:

Pinise Saul

Joyce Moholoagae

Ruby Serame

David Serame

Josh Makhene

Leah Mabuza

Joe Legwabe

can't get a copy of
custodian bill
steff.

meeting of a man ~~has~~ ^{has} already ~~been~~
my job to handle ~~esp.~~ ^{esp. Ruth} ~~at~~ ^{did} this ^{critically}
~~but I just a few words~~ ^{single handed - need much help from}
^{Jeanette + her helpers - esp. the} ^{chair}
^{+ of course}
^{blay's}
^{celia's}
^{near}
^{graduated}
^{+ glenn}
^{ll}

There have been wonderful tributes to my mother as a political activist – her contribution to making South Africa what it is today, her long devotion to the women’s movement in this country and her achievements as an artist and writer.

But on behalf of my brothers and sister, her seven grandchildren and four great grandchildren – I want to speak of my mother as a mother.

There have been occasions when people have implied that growing up in a political family must mean that we, as children were neglected and deprived. The opposite is the truth.

Our mother was the warmest, most motherly mother anyone can imagine. She adored her children and thought that we were all supremely talented, clever and beautiful. ~~As a result~~ ^{As a result} we were loved to bits, and ~~we~~ grew up believing that we were indeed talented and could do just about anything she could – which is not exactly the case.

Despite the insecurity of our lives with our parents being banned and arrested we always felt secure and loved. Ours was a happy home.

Our ^{mom} was more than anything a homemaker. Our house in Johannesburg when we were growing up was always the centre - where friends and comrades came for her wonderful cooking, had meetings in the warmth of a real home; it was where our school friends congregated. She cooked, baked bread and cakes, knitted, sewed and embroidered. And this was as well as a working career and a political one.

Everything she did was artistic – down to the way she put food on a plate, ordered our home and did her garden.

She was always there to help with homework, sing to us and kiss us goodnight – even if she then went out to meetings – which we hated.

Our parents instilled in us strong moral attitudes right from the start.

We knew we were different, that there serious wrongs in South Africa and that all people were equal and had to be treated as such.

We learned from a very early age, not just about the desperate struggle in our country, but also about honesty, equality and integrity and knowing what was right and wrong in a moral sense.

This of course did cause problems for us growing up as white children under apartheid and sometimes embarrassed us. I know that there were times when I wished to be just like my school friends – but even then knew that I never would be.

My mom did not suffer fools of any sort, and was quick to say so. She especially hated any derogatory remarks about women. She was a feminist decades before the feminist movement of the 1970's. Gender equality really mattered to her.

My mother herself grew up in a 'different' family.

Her parents were immigrants to England from Eastern Europe, her father a Russian from Odessa was one of the original Bolsheviks and he too devoted his life to a higher cause – the revolution in his country and the betterment of mankind.

As a result he left his family in England when my mother and her sisters were still quite young, to return to make his contribution to the new USSR. He never saw his family again.

In the film about my family, 'Memories of Dreams' I explore this theme of moral values being passed down the generations, of strong beliefs that result in fractured families and lives; sacrifice and belonging; of history repeating itself.

Exile has been another recurring theme across the centuries for our family. Yet I do not believe that my mother made sacrifices, rather she made 'choices', and we her children have long believed that they were the right ones.

My parents were a strong and devoted couple, together – except for jail - for 60 years, until the death of my gentle, intellectual father in 2002.

After his death my mom came to live in Cape Town. Another upheaval at the age of 89, which she faced as stoically ^{with optimism} as she had everything else in her life.

Her flat in Sea point faced Robben Island and she used to sit for hours looking across the sea thinking of her dear comrades who spent so much time there.

This was her adopted country, and she was accepted as a South African. In 2004 She was awarded the Silver Luthuli award by the President. At first she was rather dismissive of it – saying she was not interested and didn't want it and if anyone should be honoured it should be my father.

Nevertheless, we took her to Pretoria. After the rehearsal she said that had been very boring and she wanted to go home.

But the on the day it was amazing. We had arranged a wheelchair for her and when finally, her name was called, the man came to wheel her to the podium. She slapped him aside, leapt out of her wheelchair, sprinted up the steps, ignored protocol and kissed the President. She was so very, very proud and honoured. Afterwards many people came up to me and asked why I had said she was frail and couldn't walk when she was so fast up the steps!

The next day ^{I was} ~~we were~~ filming her for Memories of Dreams and I asked her if she felt South African or English. As you will see in the clip shortly she said she was a South African. She was so happy to have seen South Africa's dream realised.

In a moment we are going to show you 3 very short clips from my film that give and overview of Hilda – her work, her talents and her life.

On behalf of my family – my wonderful brothers Patrick and Keith, my lovely sister Frances, our children and grandchildren I would like to thank you all for coming here today to pay tribute to an extraordinary woman, a true South African who has helped make SA what it is and the best mother that anyone could ever have had.

I end with a quote from her:

"I believe that women hold the power to change their own lives, to change the society in which they live, and together with other women, to change the world."

Before I speak on behalf of my siblings - I am going to read a ^{message} ~~tribute to my~~
~~mother~~ ^{2 of her grandsons} from my son Nick - who has written it on behalf of all the grandsons (she
only had grandsons - but she does have great grand daughters).

~~I am of course, immensely proud of Hilda's many achievements, which I am sure
others here today will have spoken of. I always felt a very strong bond with Hilda
and I'll just give some snapshots of things I remember of my grandmother.~~

I remember the smell of her cooking and earthenware crockery from the house in
Primrose Hill where we went for lunch every Sunday throughout my childhood.

I remember the pleasure I got from the pleasure she took from my artistic
endeavours at school, particularly the poetry I wrote.

I remember the intriguing baths of acid in her studio and the way an etching
would come to life from one, and books and papers, prints and paintings
everywhere.

I remember a keen mind, a loving smile and a gentle laugh. I also remember
being on a school bus and seeing her waiting at some traffic lights on her bicycle
- and exclaiming to the amusement and disbelief of my classmates 'there's my
granny!' ~~As she would have been in her 60's at the time~~

I could go on and on, but one last memory - a recent one, from earlier this year
when myself and my partner Claire came to Cape Town to introduce her to my
son, Cosmo who was 16 months old.

Hilda couldn't take her eyes off him and I'll forever cherish the memory of seeing
Hilda holding his little hand, her in her wheelchair, him in his buggy as they were
both pushed along the sea-front.

I am so grateful that he had a chance to meet his remarkable great grandmother. Artist, writer, freedom fighter, my hero and inspiration. I burst with pride whenever I think of her, and count myself extremely lucky to have had Hilda to look up to all my life.

From: intmin@mweb.co.za [intmin@mweb.co.za]

To: [intmin@mweb.co.za]

Cc:

Subject: FW: Re: Message from Ivan Strasburg

Sent: 2006/09/15 04:55 PM

----- Original Message -----

From: Ivan Strasburg

Sent: Thursday, September 14, 2006 22:06

To: intmin@mweb.co.za intmin@mweb.co.za;

Subject: Re: Message from Ivan Strasburg

I know that Hilda would have forgiven me for my absence at her send off. The most frequent complaints I heard from her were always directed at people who made speeches that were too long, so even though

shes not around to hear this one I'll keep it short. In the 45 years that I knew her I can't ever remember a situation or time when we weren't pleased to see each other. She was a very respectful mum-in-law who never interfered and was always a pleasure to be with, even in her last few years as things got more difficult for her.

She was the best mother-in -law one could ask for.

MESSAGE FROM IVAN STRASBURG

[HILDA BERNSTEIN MEMORIAL SERVICE]

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She was the best mother-in-law one could ask for.

Collection Number: A3299

Collection Name: Hilda and Rusty BERNSTEIN Papers, 1931-2006

PUBLISHER:

Publisher: **Historical Papers Research Archive**

Collection Funder: **Bernstein family**

Location: **Johannesburg**

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