



The Torch



Edition 15

Remembrance Day



Why we should observe Remembrance Day in South Africa

Remembrance Day, or Poppy Day as it is sometimes known, is observed every year on 11 November, or on the nearest Sunday to that date. How many people these days know what this date signifies? Over the years, many South Africans have lost sight of the significance of the term 'remembrance' in the military sense. This short article will attempt to rectify this.

In 1918, at the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month, the guns fell silent to end the First World War (1914-1918), the largest global man-made catastrophe known until that time. The 'war to end all wars' cost the lives of a total of 8 634 300 soldiers. Twenty years later, the Second World War (1939-1945) saw the loss of 24 517 000 combatants' lives. In addition to these statistics, millions of civilians died during both conflicts.

As a comparatively young country which permitted only a small segment of its population to bear arms, South Africa nevertheless made significant contributions to the Allied causes in both world wars and in the Korean War (1950-3). In the First World War, 245 419 South Africans of all races volunteered for military service; during the Second World War, 342 692 South African men and women of every race came forward; and in the Korean War, 826 men saw service with No 2 Squadron, South African Air Force while ten officers of the South African Armoured Corps served with the British Army. Will we remember them?

Ideas of silent remembrance for those who died for their country emerged around the world at the time of the First World War. The horrendous slaughter of that war and the grieving it caused sent shockwaves around the world. When the war took a turn for the worse in 1918, many areas in South Africa called for a halt of activity at midday to '...direct the minds of the people to the tremendous issues which are being fought out on the Western Front'. The Mayor of Cape Town, Sir Harry Hands, declared this policy official on 14 May 1918 and, on 14 December 1918, following the signing of the armistice in November, an impressive public display of remembrance was observed in Cape Town. At the firing of the midday gun, traffic came to a halt, all hats were raised and the public stood in silence as the Last Post and Reveille sounded through the streets.

The implementation of the 'Two Minute Silence', traditionally held throughout the British Empire (now the Commonwealth of Nations), has its roots in South Africa. There were various people around the world who felt that an official period of silent remembrance would be appropriate. In Melbourne, Australia, a plaque commemorates Edward George Honey, who, it is believed, first promoted the idea. In a letter published in the London Evening News on 8 May 1919, Honey called for a five minute silence to mark the first anniversary of the armistice, but no evidence exists to suggest that any official action was taken in this regard.

It was the proposal by Sir Percy Fitzpatrick, well-known South African philanthropist, author and politician, which was acted upon. Fitzpatrick had been deeply affected by the loss of his son, Nugent, in France in December 1917. In commemoration of the Armistice, he appealed to King George V for a two-minute pause to be observed annually throughout the Empire at the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month: one minute in remembrance of the fallen in war; and one minute in gratitude for those who survived. Fitzpatrick had access to the King, who was moved by the idea. The official call of the King was published in the Sunday Times on 7 November 1919 and read as follows:

THE GLORIOUS DEAD

King's call to his people

Armistice Day Observance

Two minutes' pause from work

The King invites all his people to join him in a special celebration of the anniversary of the cessation of war as set forth in the following message:

To all my people

Buckingham Palace

Tuesday next, November 11, is the first anniversary of the Armistice, which stayed the world-wide carnage of the four preceding years and marked the victory of Right and Freedom. I believe that my people in every part of the Empire fervently wish to perpetuate the memory of the Great Deliverance, and of those who laid down their lives to achieve it.

To afford an opportunity for the universal expression of this feeling it is my desire and hope at the hour when the armistice came into force, the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month, there may be, for the brief space of two minutes, a complete suspension of all normal

activities. During that time, except in rare cases where this may be impracticable, all work, all sound, and all locomotion should cease, so that, in perfect silence, the thoughts of everyone may be concentrated on reverent remembrance of the Glorious Dead.

No elaborate organisation appears necessary. At a given signal, which can easily be arranged to suit the circumstance of each locality, I believe that we shall gladly interrupt our business and pleasure, whatever it may be, and unite in this simple service of silent remembrance.

George R I

Two months later, Fitzpatrick received the following letter from Lord Stamfordham, private secretary to the King:

Dear Sir Percy Fitzpatrick

The King, who learns that you are shortly to leave for South Africa, desires me to assure you that he ever gratefully remembers that the idea of the two minute pause on Armistice Day was due to your initiation, a suggestion which was readily adopted and carried out with heartfelt sympathy throughout the Empire.

Yours truly

Stamfordham

After the end of the Second World War in 1945, the observance of Remembrance Day has also embraced silent remembrance of all those who have died in conflict since the First World War. As South Africans unite as one nation, we should use 11 November to remember the 12 452 South African casualties suffered in the First World War, the 38 208 casualties suffered in the Second World War, and the 34 pilots killed in the Korean War. Many war graves to South Africans lie far from home, in Namibia, in France and Belgium, in Tanzania, Ethiopia, the Middle East, Italy, Korea and elsewhere. Closer to home, we should remember the many South Africans who died in the conflicts on our borders and in the Liberation Struggle of the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s. As yet, there are no reliable figures for these casualties, but what is important is that they all contributed to building our country as we know it today.

The observance of 11 November is not about celebrating any victory, nor about boasting about our achievements in conflict. It is about showing respect for those who were willing to serve their country and, if need be, to make the ultimate sacrifice so that we who are here now can have the life that we know. As the soldier's prayer states,

And when you go home tell them of us and say

For your tomorrow we gave our today

Our gift was great, but you must now give a greater gift

We died. Now you must nobly live

To complete the plan

And make man brother unto man.

In conclusion, I quote the Remembrance Prayer:

They shall not grow old

As we that are left grow old

Age shall not weary them

Nor the years condemn them

At the going down of the sun

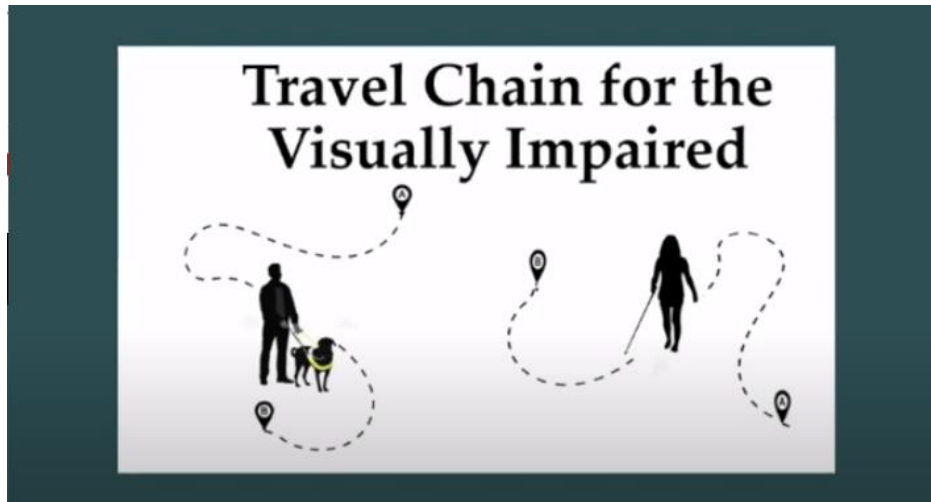
And in the morning

WE SHALL REMEMBER THEM

1. Abrahams, J C, A Debt of Honour (Printed as a token of gratitude to the fallen by the South African National Defence Force, copyright 1997).
2. Blake, A, Not For Ourselves (History of the South African Legion, 2004).

Source: [The Heritage Portal](#)

The travel chain in the day of the life of the visually impaired person (VIP)



To access the video on Youtube click [here](#)

Am I Anxious or Am I Just Stressed Out?

You've noticed a pattern. You lie awake at night, your brain defying your will to sleep. Worried thoughts parade through your mind instead of sheep. You wake up tired and wishing you could just stay home.

You love your friends but keep ending up alone. During your morning drive, you think about what could go wrong that day and say, "I knew it!" when things don't go your way.

You read articles on the internet. You look up your symptoms and cringe. You finally experience some relief when one diagnosis matches your symptoms better than anything else: anxiety. But what does it mean to have anxiety? Does it mean you have a disorder? Does it mean you need medication?

You might, but you also might just be having a natural reaction to stressful circumstances. Anxiety is a normal human experience, and we're living in anxious and uncertain times. Just because you're feeling anxious doesn't mean you have a disorder or need medication. But if you do, finding out is good news. It is possible to fully recover from anxiety with the right care.

How can you tell when you need treatment for anxiety? We're here to help. Read on to learn more about the difference between everyday anxiety and clinical anxiety.

Normal Anxiety Versus Anxiety Disorders



The most important way to distinguish passing anxiety symptoms from a disorder is how long you have them and how intense they are. Ask yourself these questions:

- How often do I feel anxious?
- How intense is the anxiety I feel?
- How much does my anxiety affect my life?
- Has anxiety ever caused me serious problems at work or home?
- How long have I been experiencing symptoms of anxiety and stress?

Another term for "normal anxiety" or everyday anxiety is situational anxiety. It's normal to experience anxiety when you're in a stressful situation. One way you can tell whether your symptoms indicate an anxiety disorder is if the symptoms go away when the situation is over.

When you have an anxiety disorder, your symptoms are frequent and chronic. In other words, your anxiety doesn't go away even when nothing stressful is happening. Your anxiety is also out of proportion to the circumstances. You feel just as bad, or even worse, when you're worrying about something as you do during or after the worst-case scenario you worried about.

One of the most important differences between situational anxiety and an anxiety disorder is how it affects your functioning. People with everyday anxiety are able to cope with and bounce back from anxiety. Their anxiety goes away when stressful circumstances pass, and any effect it has on their work or home life is minor and temporary. On the other hand, anxiety disorders are chronic and interfere with a person's ability to complete daily tasks. Severe anxiety can cause people to become socially withdrawn and have serious problems at work or school.

To learn more about the differences between clinical anxiety and everyday stress, let's meet Margaret and Pauline. Margaret has an anxiety disorder, while Pauline does not.

Margaret vs. Pauline



Margaret and Pauline are both stressed about work. They're having to work overtime. Each has to give a presentation in a few weeks. They're both experiencing classic symptoms of everyday stress and anxiety. They feel tired and irritable. They worry. Their muscles are tense.

Both Margaret and Pauline play their favorite music on the way home from work. However, Pauline is able to let more of her stress go during the ride. She goes straight from work to the gym, where she's able to work out even more of her stress. Margaret, on the other hand, is so stressed out that she's stopped going to the gym. And while Pauline spends Fridays venting to friends, Margaret has become withdrawn and hasn't spoken to anyone in weeks.

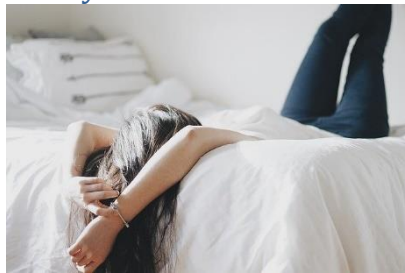
Margaret never fully releases her stress. Desperate for relief, she's been drinking more than she wants to drink. But as soon as the alcohol wears off, her mind is flooded with worried thoughts again. Margaret tosses and turns and wakes up in the middle of the night. Pauline falls asleep easily.

Pauline is healthy while Margaret is often sick. Chronic, relentless stress has weakened Margaret's immune system. Because while it's been worse lately, she's been anxious for years.

In the days leading up to the presentation, Pauline's stress increases. Like Margaret, she starts drinking a little too much and loses some sleep. She misses a workout. But she makes sure she goes to the gym the next day. She decides not to drink while she's feeling this way because she knows it makes things worse. She works hard and nails her presentation. She gets a promotion.

Margaret is just as smart as Pauline, but she can't envision a situation in which she doesn't fail her presentation. Anxiety won't let her imagine anything other than disaster. The stress is so overwhelming that she quits her job without notice a week before she's due to give her presentation. It's the third job she's quit in the past year.

What Do I Do If I Have an Anxiety Disorder?



If you feel more like Margaret than Pauline, you might have an anxiety disorder. One of the first things you should do if you notice that anxiety has been interfering with your everyday life and getting in the way of your goals is to seek a professional opinion and get assessed for anxiety.

You may be able to get diagnosed and treated for anxiety by your primary care physician (PCP). Many people with mild anxiety can recover with the help of an anxiety medication prescribed by their PCP. However, your general care doctor probably does not specialize in mental health and may not be able to diagnose or treat more complicated or severe anxiety. For best results, we recommend setting up an appointment with a mental health professional. You can use our therapist search tool to find an affordable therapist near you.

Most therapists can't prescribe medication, but we think it's best to start with one. First, it's usually easier to get an appointment with a therapist than a psychiatrist. It's also possible to successfully treat even severe anxiety disorders without medication, and therapy is frequently recommended as part of the treatment plan for anxiety. If you do need medication, it can be easier to get an appointment with a psychiatrist if you're referred by your therapist.

The kind of treatment you'll receive will depend on your diagnosis and the severity of your anxiety. Anxiety disorders you might be diagnosed with include generalized anxiety disorder, social anxiety disorder, and panic disorder. We'll talk more about how those are diagnosed in the next section.

For more information on getting started with a therapist, you can read our article on "How to Choose a Therapist." For more information on treatment options for anxiety, you can read our article on therapy versus medication, which includes a section on therapy versus medication for anxiety.

How Do Doctors Diagnose Anxiety?



Some people who get diagnosed with anxiety by their doctors had no idea they were anxious. They thought they were having problems with their heart, stomach, or immune system. Stress and anxiety have physical effects that are easy to mistake for symptoms of medical conditions. (The reverse can happen, too, which is why it's important to get annual wellness exams from a doctor.)

Many of the physical symptoms of anxiety are caused by an overactive sympathetic nervous system. This network of brain, nerve, and body responses is often called the "fight or flight response." Signs your sympathetic nervous system is active include:

- Sweating
- Restlessness
- Muscle tension
- Rapid breathing
- Shortness of breath
- Increased heart rate
- Heart palpitations
- Trembling or shaking
- Slowed or blocked digestion

In cases of extreme or heightened anxiety, you might experience a full-blown sympathetic nervous system response. These effects are part of what cause people who are having panic attacks to feel like they are having a heart attack or dying. Symptoms of a panic attack can include any or all of the symptoms listed above.

Most of the time, however, anxiety is subtler. You don't always sweat when you're stressed out, and your heart rate doesn't always speed up. But you might physically tense up. You might lose your appetite, feel tired, or have trouble sleeping.

The symptoms of everyday stress and symptoms of anxiety disorders aren't that different. Symptoms of generalized anxiety disorder listed in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM), the primary reference guide for psychiatric diagnosis, include:

- Having trouble controlling worried thoughts
- Feeling restless, keyed up, or on edge
- Having difficulty concentrating
- Feeling tired a lot of the time
- Experiencing muscle tension
- Having trouble sleeping
- Feeling irritable

These and many other anxiety disorder symptoms are also symptoms of everyday stress and anxiety. You've probably had at least one time in your life where school, work, a relationship, or something else stressed you out so much that you couldn't sleep and worried a lot about it. So how can you or your doctor tell if you have one of these disorders or are just experiencing the effects of everyday anxiety?

One of the criteria listed for almost every DSM disorder (anxiety disorder or otherwise) is that the condition must "cause clinically significant distress or impairment in social, occupational, or other important areas of functioning." In other words, if you're struggling to maintain work and relationships like Margaret, your anxiety is more intense, and more likely to indicate a disorder, than if you have anxiety symptoms, but do the thing anyway, like Pauline. Another important sign of an anxiety disorder is just how heavy and relentless it is. It's not just something you experience for a day or a week.

We recommend consulting with your doctor or setting up an appointment with a therapist if your symptoms of anxiety make you feel terrible most of the time or have a serious impact on your daily life. While anxiety can derail your life, it's also highly treatable. You can recover fully with the right treatment. So, reach out—the help you need may be only a call or click away.

Source: [Open Councelling](#)

Here's the curtain raise on the Sight Tech Global agenda



The goal of Sight Tech Global, a virtual, global event on December 2-3, 2020, is to gather the world's top experts who are applying advanced technologies, notably AI, to the future of accessibility and assistive tech for people who are blind or visually impaired.

Today we're excited to roll out most of the agenda. There are another half-dozen sessions and breakouts still to come, notably sessions on AI bias and civil rights. What we've discovered over the many weeks of research and conversation is a consistent, strong interest on the part of researchers, technologists and product and design thinkers to convene and talk over the future — its promises, challenges and even threats.

We're delighted to have top-level talent from virtually every leading technology company, many research universities and some startups ready for fireside chats and small panel discussions with expert moderators. Some sessions will take questions from our audience as well.

When the event dates are closer, we will add dates and times to each of these sessions as well as announce additional speakers. Register today to get a free pass and please browse the first edition of the Sight Tech Global agenda below.

[Seeing AI: Where does Microsoft's blockbuster app go from here?](#)

With ever more powerful computer and data resources available in the cloud, Microsoft's Seeing AI mobile app is destined to become a steadily better ally for anyone with vision challenges. Co-founder Saqib Shaikh leads the engineering team that's charting the app's cloud-enabled future.

The future according to OrCam

As AI-based computer vision, voice recognition and natural language processing race ahead, the engineering challenge is to design devices that can perceive the physical world and communicate that information in a timely manner. Amnon Shashua's OrCam MyEye is the most sophisticated effort yet to merge those technologies in a seamless experience on a dedicated device.

Accessibility from the wheels up: The Waymo self-driving taxi

If people who are blind or visually impaired find Uber and Lyft liberating, imagine how they will feel summoning a self-driving ride from an app on their mobile phones. But wait, how exactly will they locate the cars and what happens when they climb in? Presenter Clem Wright is responsible for the self-driving taxi's accessibility, and he will be joined by leadership from two organizations closely involved in that effort: The Lighthouse for the Blind SF and the Foundation for Blind Children.

Our AI future is already here

Whether it's Alexa, Tesla or Facebook, AI is already deeply embedded in our daily lives. Few understand that better than Dr. Kai-Fu Lee, a scientist who developed the first speaker-independent, continuous speech recognition system as a Ph.D. student at Carnegie Mellon, led Google in China and held senior roles at Microsoft and Apple. Today, Dr. Lee runs Sinovation Ventures, a \$2 billion fund based in China, is president of the Sinovation's Artificial Intelligence Institute and has 50 million followers on social media.

The future of AT devices and the companies that make them

Dedicated devices versus accessible platforms? Victor Reader Stream versus iPhones and Alexa? How will AT companies take advantage of a world with cloud data and edge computational power, AI algorithms and more demanding customers than ever? Humanware, eSight and APH are already looking far into that future.

If the Jetsons had screen readers, would they be using keyboard commands?

The screen reader is arguably the most consequential digital technology ever for people who are blind or visually impaired. At the same time, screen readers depend on a dizzying array of keyboard commands, and — when it comes to reading websites in a browser — they struggle with the ugly reality of poor website accessibility. New technologies may lead the way to better outcomes.

Alexa, what is your future?

When Alexa launched six years ago, no one imagined that the voice assistant would reach into millions of daily lives and become a huge convenience for people who are blind or visually impaired. This fall, Alexa introduced personalization and conversational capabilities that are a step-change toward more human-like home companionship. Amazon's Josh Miele and Anne Toth will discuss the impact on accessibility as Alexa becomes more capable.

Augmented reality and perception: What's the best way to get the message across?

It's one thing for an AI-based system to "know" when it's time to turn left, who came through the door or how far away the couch is: It's quite another to convey that information in a timely fashion with minimal distraction. Researchers are making use of haptics, visual augmented reality (AR), sound and language to figure out the right solutions.

Wayfinding: Finding the mark

Map apps on mobile phones are miraculous tools accessible via voice output, but mainstream apps don't announce the detailed location information (which people who are blind or visually impaired really want), especially inside buildings and in public transportation settings. Efforts in the U.S. and U.K. are improving accessible navigation.

Computer vision, AI and accessibility: What's missing from this picture?

For an AI to interpret the visual world on behalf of people who are blind or visually impaired, the AI needs to know what it's looking at, and no less important, that it's looking at the right thing. Mainstream computer vision databases don't do that well — yet.

Sight Tech Global is eager to hear from potential sponsors. We're grateful to current sponsors Amazon, Ford, Google, Microsoft, Mojo Vision, Waymo, Wells Fargo and Humanware. All sponsorship revenues go to the nonprofit Vista Center for the Blind and Visually Impaired, which has been serving the Silicon Valley area for 75 years.

Special thanks to the Sight Tech Global advisors — Tech Matters Jim Fruchterman, UC Santa Cruz's Roberto Manduchi, Verizon Media's Larry Goldberg, Facebook's Matt King and Be My Eyes' Will Butler — who are playing an invaluable role on this project.

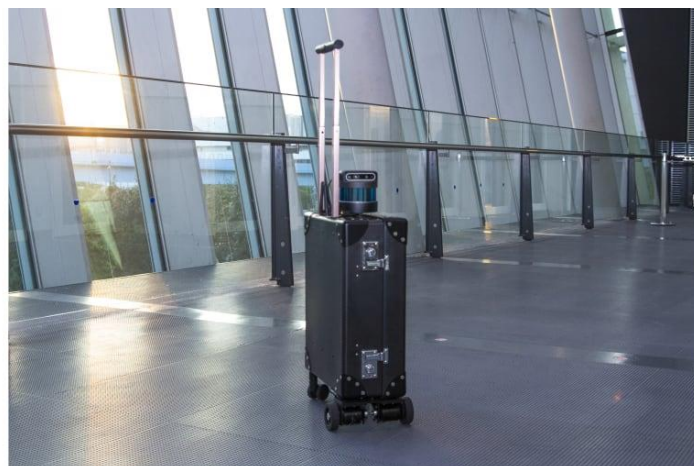
Source: [Tech Crunch](#)

A robot suitcase could replace canes and guide dogs for blind people

Story by Tom Page; video by Stefanie Blendis, CNN • Published 6th October 2020

Searching for a better alternative led Asakawa to invent a high-tech suitcase that helps get her to her destination safely and efficiently.

Packed with cameras and sensors -- many of the same technologies found in an autonomous car -- the suitcase uses artificial intelligence (AI) to map the environment around it, calculating distances between the user and objects both stationary and mobile. A mobile phone app is used to program a destination into the suitcase, which plans a route and directs the user through vibrations in its handle.



Inventor Chieko Asakawa has created a suitcase that enables blind users to navigate public spaces and avoid objects in their path.

The suitcase also features facial recognition technology, which can notify the user if a friend is nearby. It can also flag shops and other places of interest in the vicinity and direct the user to them if prompted.

The concept has been in development since 2017 in a collaboration between IBM, other Japanese companies, and Carnegie Mellon University in Pennsylvania, where Asakawa is IBM distinguished service professor at the Robotics Institute.

Asakawa says there are hopes to commercialize the suitcase and a pilot scheme is planned to trial it in an airport, shopping mall and other public spaces. Though the current version is too full of tech to hold any clothes, that could change in the future, she says.

Restless innovator

A keen runner, Asakawa harbored Olympic dreams as a child, but a swimming accident at age 11 caused her to gradually lose her sight until, aged 14, she became totally blind.

As an adult she has devoted her life to developing accessibility technology. Among her creations is "aDesigner," a disability simulator for designers to make their websites more user-friendly, and "IBM Home Page Reader," the first voice browser to allow internet access for blind and visually impaired people. Asakawa has won industry and government awards and been inducted into the US National Inventors Hall of Fame.

"I never relax when I travel alone," she says. "I always think about what technology will help me travel easier, quicker and more comfortably." It was this restlessness that led to the AI suitcase.

She says the suitcase has other applications and could be used to help visually impaired people navigate cities, while its object-recognition technology can be utilized to identify colors -- useful when clothes shopping, says its creator.



Chieko Asakawa was inducted into the US National Inventors Hall of Fame in 2019.
courtesy Chieko Asakawa

Perhaps its most profound benefit is that it allows users to devote mental energy to other things. "Visually impaired people usually use a white cane or a guide dog. But using these mobility aids, we always have to pay attention (to) our surrounding world," says Asakawa. With AI providing spatial awareness, a blind person is liberated to do other

things: take a call, listen to the birds; daydream, even. Public spaces become places to be enjoyed, not just navigated.

"It will open up many doors for blind people, because we'd be able to go anywhere by (ourselves)," says Asakawa.

The technology will naturally evolve, she predicts, as components become smaller, lighter and more powerful.

Without new technology, "we cannot change our society to be more inclusive," Asakawa says. "A smart suitcase is a great showcase (for) how AI and technology (can) change the lives of people with visual disabilities."

Source: [Edition CNN](#)

Announcements

Farewell John



“ I am very pleased to say that I introduced John to St Dunstan’s many years ago and he became our trusted and admired Financial Officer many years ago. Right to the end he has contributed sage, balanced and valuable advice to St Dunstan’s regarding their finances and financial standing. He and Isabelle have also contributed significantly to the harmonious and constructive relationships between the various members of the St Dunstan’s family. They will both be sorely missed for their involvement in that area and John, in particular, will be missed for his insightful and unbiased contribution towards the welfare of St Dunstan’s as a whole and their finances in particular.

Reunions and Board meetings will not be the same without them. Thank you John and Isabelle. “

by Les Masterson

Welcome Hannl



St Dunstan's would like to announce that Hannl Cronje joins the Board of St Dunstan's. Hannl has been an associate of St Dunstan's for many years and been an integral part of the John and Esther Ellerman Long Cane rally event.

Her involvement and love for people with disability started at Cape Town Society for the Blind. Her career, 17 years in total, with Cape Town Society for the Blind included the traumatic transition period when the workshop was closed, and small business units were established. She gained extensive experience in the field of disability (physical, psychosocial, intellectual, and neurological) when being the CEO of Orion Organisation NPC in Atlantis for the past 8 years.

Training included social work, human resources, and senior management, allowing for a firm platform for attending to people as individuals, in the workplace as well as from a managerial perspective.

The above experience grew even more through lecturing at Northlink College, Prestige Academy and TDM for a period of 6 years.

Presently she is the Chairperson of Ulwazi Edu care in Atlantis and serve on different community organisations and church council. She is also a Trustee of the Hope and Reconciliation Trust. She is a Commissioner of Oaths and Justice of the Peace in the community she lives in.

BENEFICIARY NEWS

INACIA BARNARDO



Happy Birthday to Inacia who is celebrating a very special birthday this November.

Casual Day – 3 Dec 2020

NCPD


National Council of & for
Persons with Disabilities

Casual Day
with Persons with Disabilities

NAPPY RUN
Celebrate with Disabilities. Celebrate with Us.

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The date for Casual Day 2020 has changed!
Get your stickers & merchandise for
Thurs 3 December
International Day of Persons with Disabilities

To order visit www.casualday.co.za
or call 011 609 7006

STICKERS
R20

MICKEY AND THE MOUSE
Stay True

Casual Day
with Persons with Disabilities

SIDE BY SIDE
for Equality

A project of the NCPD - 2020

© Disney

"Progress is impossible without change." -Walt Disney

Casual Day has gone digital! In addition to the physical sticker, you can now support Persons with Disabilities by donating R20 via airtime. SMS your FIRST NAME to 38224 and get your very own MICKEY DIGITAL STICKER. (R20/SMS. Free/Bundle SMS don't apply). Thank you for standing Side by Side for Equality with us.