

**A.M. KATHRADA**

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**e-mail: [amkathrada@mweb.co.za](mailto:amkathrada@mweb.co.za)**

**7<sup>th</sup> October, 2006.**

**Dear Nadine, and all family-members and friends of Verna,**

**It was with a deep feeling of shock and sadness that we learnt from our mutual friend Nadine, of the death of Verna. Barbara and I spent some time afterwards reminiscing about this wonderful lady, and especially about our inter action with her.**

**Not long after our release I cast my mind back to discussions that Walter Sisulu and I had in Pollsmoor Prison on the dearth of literature about the struggle years, and to encourage our historians to research, record and publish books in order to fill the vacuum.**

**My earliest discussions in this regard were with Nadine Gordimer, who enthusiastically received the idea, and introduced me to Verna Hunt, who she regarded as among the finest editors.**

**While exchanging views about writing my own experiences, Verna started off the process by meticulously going through the letters that I had received in prison, and some 900 carbon-copies of letters that I had written. Not only did she study them thoroughly, but, (ignoring her arthritic hands) Verna typed each and everyone of them!**

**Fortuitously, when Michigan State University in America decided to publish a selection of my letters, Verna, without hesitation, gave whatever assistance she was asked to render. Herewith is an extract from my "Acknowledgements" in "Letters from Robben Island":-**

***"This book would probably not have seen the light of day had it not been for the infatigable work and enthusiasm of Ms.Verna Hunt. From the moment she was told of the letters she wholeheartedly threw herself into the arduous task of sorting, classifying and typing them. For her it became a labour of love, so much so that after many months of hard work she could claim the unique distinction of knowing the contents of my letters better than anybody else, including myself...."***

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Hachette Livre IT department [admin@hachette.co.nz] Phone +64 9 478 1000  
\*\*\*\*\*

Nadim  
0117263417

10/2/2006



**A.M. KATHRADA**

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083-644-0300.

Friday, 27<sup>th</sup> October, 2006.

Our Dear Nadine,

I just learnt at about 9.30 p.m. (Friday night) of the burglary at your place, and the dastardly attack on you. I am absolutely shocked at this cowardly deed, and hope that the perpetrators are tracked down and brought to book. I feel so frustrated, angry and helpless. It is aggravated by my inability to do little that may help to lessen your trauma.

Please remember that our thoughts, and the thoughts and good wishes of countless admirers and friends are with you.

Barbara is in London, and Kim (who helped with Memoirs) is in Australia. They've both asked to convey their best wishes.

My very best wishes to you.

With affection and admiration,

 (KATHY)

**A.M. KATHRADA**

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9<sup>th</sup> October, 2006.

Dear Nadine,

On my return to Cape Town I accessed the following message on my computer. Robert Vassen has just retired from Michigan State University, where he has been Professor, teaching foreigners the English language. He is born in South Africa, and had to leave in the sixties.

His letter speaks for itself.

Our condolences again to Verna's family and to you. Our apologies for not being able to the Memorial.

Regards,





**Ahmed Kathrada**

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**From:** "Robert Vassen" <vasse@msu.edu>  
**To:** "Ahmed Kathrada" <amkathrada@mweb.co.za>  
**Sent:** 09 October 2006 06:09 PM  
**Subject:** Re: sad news

Dear Brother K,

Thank you for informing me of the very sad news of Verna Hunt's passing away. Please convey the following message to her family from me, if you can:

" I first met Verna Hunt in 1993 through Mr Kathrada when I had travelled from the USA to South Africa to secure a set of Mr Kathrada's prison letters. Verna Hunt not only made a duplicate set available for me to copy but she gave me all the work she had painstakingly done in organizing the letters by theme. Her generosity, charm and willingness to share all her work with me, a relative stranger then, made an everlasting impression on me and I have remained grateful and indebted to her ever since. At the launch in 1999 in Lenasia she 'thanked' me for including her name in the credits. This modesty in this very lovely lady was another of her endearing characteristics. I tried on all my subsequent visits to at least call her to say hello. Now I write to offer to all her family and close friends my deepest sympathy at the passing away of this very fine South African." Bob Vassen.

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Thanks K. I will be writing soon.  
Bob.

At 05:12 AM 10/7/2006, you wrote:

Brother Bob,

At about 11 o'clock last night (Friday), I received a phone call from Nadine Gordimer that our friend Verna Hunt had passed away. I don't of course have to remind you of all her valuable contribution towards "Letters from Robben Island", as well as "Memoirs". Apart from that she was a wonderful human being. If you wish to send a message, you can fax, or e-mail it to me, and I will pass it on.

All the best, from AMK

2006/10/09



Tom  
6004**Ahmed Kathrada**

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**From:** "Tom Vassen" <tomvassen@mac.com>  
**To:** "Ahmed Kathrada" <amkathrada@mweb.co.za>  
**Sent:** 06 October 2006 12:34 PM  
**Subject:** negotiations

Dear Brother K

As it is my day off, I decided to have a comprehensive go with the H/C. Seems to have paid off as I now have a fixed date for a meeting with the Second Secretary Bulelani Mandla for 19 October.

Should be easier as we already had preliminary plans in the pipe line. So till then.

Now to your long service with the Island. Well many greats have done the trip with your excellent guidance and hospitality, not least of which were Dela and me. And I have the photographs. Well I think you should wind down your tours and give the feet a rest. By the way how is the affected foot. I still remember our early morning walks on the seafront.

Of course life is going to be quieter for you now that Mateo, Henry and dearest Kim have gone. Part of my weekly routine is to collect my youngest grandson, Josh, from school twice a week. So I know how important little ones are. I only have barest information on Kim and family's emigration. What prompted it/ What is the job/study etc.?

Thanks for keeping me in mind for one of Madiba's book. An autograph from you and him would be wonderful. But I can only hope!

We all followed Zuma's trial with great interest and also Tutu's commentary and analysis of present day S. Africa. Makes good reading.

Are you guys following the big debates about Islam and infidels? Was the West ever anything but duplicitous?

Love to both of you

Brother Tom

2006/10/10



Anant -  
← 22 Jan 07

**ahmed kathrada**

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**From:** "Anant Singh" <anant@videovision.co.za>  
**To:** "Ahmed Kathrada" <amkathrada@mweb.co.za>  
**Sent:** 22 January 2007 01:01 PM  
**Subject:** VARIOUS

Dear Kathy,

Thanks for your note. I'm delighted to hear that Ma Sisulu is well. I called her assistant to set up a meeting for Quincy to go visit her. I hope he did manage to get there. I haven't spoken to him yet.

No, we are not going to Davos, giving it a miss this year. Too much to do having just got back to the office. We hope to be able to have dinner with you and Barbara on Friday night, if it's not too much trouble.

Will definitely meet with Geoff and Ruth either in Cape Town or Johannesburg. I think we should shoot the interviews you have with Tim Couzens?

Lots of love,  
ANANT SINGH

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No virus found in this outgoing message.  
Checked by AVG Free Edition.  
Version: 7.5.432 / Virus Database: 268.17.4/643 - Release Date: 2007/01/21 05:12 PM

2007/01/22



**ahmed kathrada**

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**From:** "Cheryl Gillwald" <gillwald@worldonline.co.za>  
**To:** "Ahmed Kathrada" <amkathrada@mweb.co.za>  
**Sent:** 22 January 2007 06:36 PM  
**Attach:** 126Pix010107 034.jpg  
**Subject:** 2007 and all that

Hello Barbs and Kathy

Just a brief 2007 update for the two of you. By the way I am still experiencing difficulty with Kathy's email address - can you just forward me the correct address for my data base?

Attached is a picture of our beautiful man-child who managed a 64% aggregate (6 C's) and a university exemption for matric. We can all breathe freely now and we are so very proud of him. He called it at the beginning of the year with the ominous opener "Mum, I have left this learning and studying thing 11 years too late." In answer to my baleful stare he placated me with the promise of a good average and 6 C's! Promised and delivered; as they say.

Alison who was with us over Christmas and New Year is recovering slowly from her daughter, Ashleigh's, recent departure to the UK on a gap year. Ashleigh managed to get 6 A's for matric, so mother is beaming.

Sukhthi Naidoo, a dear friend, and her boys also moved in with us for a week during December and she cooked up a storm each evening. I am afraid that she set quite a precedent and I am struggling to satisfy the now rather discriminating palates that occupy my domestic space.

Charles has flown the coup after an all too brief sojourn with us in December and is back in Greece. Dane is working the day shift at a nearby coffee shop and the house is eerily empty ...

Dane has enrolled for a bartender's course - which includes flaring (that's the term for juggling bottles) and learning to blend a wide range of cocktail recipes, etc - with the hope of increasing his marketability during his gap year. He is probably going to do an internship at the Lighthouse Digital Art Foundation in Brighton and then he hopes to spend some time in China.

I have dutifully pasted up my scrapbooks, which now record my 50<sup>th</sup> birthday, Christmas, New Year and the matric Exam Results in colourful splendour! 2006 has finally been neatly packed away and I am adjusting to the rude awakening that life is not a continuous, carefree Festive Season ... Sad, really!

Our garden is really worth seeing at the moment; protea trees a-blaze with colour, plants and shrubbery unseasonably green and views from a story book.

I trust that 2007 will treat you and yours with benevolence.

Take care for now. Kind regards

Cheryl

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2007/01/22



**ahmed kathrada**

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**From:** "Cheryl Gillwald" <gillwald@worldonline.co.za>  
**To:** "Ahmed Kathrada" <amkathrada@mweb.co.za>  
**Sent:** 22 January 2007 06:52 PM  
**Attach:** 123Pix131206 042.jpg  
**Subject:** Thank you!

Kathy I sent a thank you note to you and Barbara to an incorrect email address and have just decided to cc put my thanks on record - even though it is now overdue

**Thank you! Ngiyathokoza! Gracias! Merci! Ke a leboha! Velen dank! Obrigado!  
Efgaristo! Dankie! Hakhensa! Spasiba! Enkosi! Re a leboga! Tak!  
Grazie! Shukran! Siyabonga! Kiitos paljon!**

Dear Kathy

Thank you for making the time and for the splendid *Mandela* book. I had been eyeing it in Exclusive Books and had put it on my Christmas list for Charles. The book is a delight, but is made all the more special by Madiba's autograph and notations from you and Barbara. Dane observed that the book would become a treasured family heirloom and then gently reminded me that he is my sole heir and first in line on the inheritance list! Thank you, Kathy - the book has already provided hours of pleasure and will be treasured into the future.

I was truly indulged by fiends that attended my 50th: Oodles and oodles of wonderful smelly goodies for the old bod; a veritable library of books; sufficient flowers to bring cheer to every room in my home and enough liquor to consolidate my reputation as a serious tippler!

I have attached a picture capturing one of the many fun moments at the party. I have another for you but will send it via separate email so that the messages do not become too cumbersome and go astray in the ether.

Take care and much, much love

Cheryl

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2007/01/22





2007/01/22



**ahmed kathrada**

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**From:** "Forman, S" <SForman@ufh.ac.za>  
**To:** <AMKATHRADA@mweb.co.za>  
**Sent:** 05 February 2007 04:43 PM  
**Subject:** Information re you and Forman

Dear Kathy,

Here's hoping that you are still keeping well and as strong as you can be.

Am getting along with Lionel's story. There are a number of events that you attended with him that I hope you remember. For example:

1) The WFDY festival, (World Federation of Democratic Youth). Where was that held? I think you were there and so was Lionel. Can you remember what you both did there?  
Did WFDY work together with the IUS?

2) I believe that Chips Glasser and a chap called Hobson were there making a film. Do you know anything about them?

3) How did you and Lionel get there? Did you go with Lionel? And how did you get about?

4) I have seen a photograh with you at a conference, looking a bit sleepy. Was it at the IUS?

5) Can you remember what you did, where you went/travelled/got about.

In general could you write about your time with Lionel

Thanks very much Kathy,

Sadie

The University of Fort Hare subscribes to an e-mail disclaimer. Please click on the following URL to read further:

<http://www.ufh.ac.za/disclaimer/>

2007/02/09



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7<sup>th</sup> February, 2007.

**FOR SHAUN - URGENT**

Dear Shaun,

I'm sure many friends would have given you tips and advice about your visit to India. I'm sure a bit of repetition can do no harm.

Avoid drinking water, except from a sealed bottle.

Avoid the temptation of eating food anywhere, except in your hotel and reputable restaurants.

Although we took Malaria tablets, we never used any. But take tummy tablets (Immodium etc) in case there is an attack of "Delhi belly".

The winter there is not severe, but there can be cold days. Its better to take some warm clothes. I never had to use a jersey during the week we spent there.

Like Barbara, and almost all female friends I know, your wife will want to do some shopping. Unfortunately only knowledgeable people are able to make out the difference between a genuine product (Pashmina, silk, wool, cotton). Part of the Ashoka Hotel (where we stayed) complex are scores of shops stocking the most attractive products. But our guide advised against shopping there, on grounds of price, and genuineness of quality.

She took me to the State Silk Emporium, which has a row of shops from every Indian State –all Government-owned. I only went to the very first one, and bought all the shawls I wanted to bring back as gifts. In case you are interested, here is the name and address:-

Mrignayani,  
Silk Emporium,  
B-8, State Emporium Complex,



**Baba Kharak Singh Marg,  
New Delhi 110001.**

**Phone:- 23363320.**

**As I mentioned yesterday, try to get bookings on Gulf Air, which takes you from Johannesburg to Bahrain (which has a modern and comfortable lounge) and direct to New Delhi. You avoid Mumbai.**

**I think the same applies to Emirates Air.**

**If it is still possible, try to avoid Mumbai. It helps of course if some one meets you at the airport, and helps to guide you to the domestic terminal.**

**Incidentally, I've got some Rupees, which you are welcome to have, for tips to porters, taxis fares etc. One rand gets you more or less 6 rupees.**

**Books are very cheap in India. The Ashok Hotel complex has a well-stocked book shop. I again bought the 3 books Nehru wrote in prison (Autobiography, Discovery of India, Glimpses of World History. All well-bound hard covers, for a total of 400 Rupees (about 60 odd rands)**

**My apologies for the unsolicited advice.**

**Enjoy your stay. India is a fascinating place.**

**Best wishes,**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'OmK' or similar, written in a cursive style.



→  
Anand Sharma  
Book

## Ahmed Kathrada

**From:** "ANAND SHARMA" <anandsharma@hotmail.com>  
**To:** <akathrada@anc.org.za>  
**Sent:** 17 May 2004 01:56 PM  
**Subject:** RE: Congratulations

Dear Kathy

Many thanks for the message of congratulations. It has been a long and hard battle for the Congress to defeat the BJP- RSS combine. The people's verdict was for change and the endeavor of the Congress is to provide a stable secular alternative.

Happy to learn about your book and will convey this to Sonia too, May I suggest that you send a short note addressed to her giving an outline. The letter may be sent to her at : 10 Janpath, New Delhi 110001. A copy may please be sent to me at the following address: 303. Silver Arch Apartments, 22 Ferozeshah Road, New Delhi 110001

address

Yes I am the Spokesperson of the party and have recently returned to Parliament as a member of the Rajya Sabha.

with best personal regards.

ANAND

>From: "Ahmed Kathrada" <akathrada@anc.org.za>  
 >To: "Anand Sharma" <anandsharma@hotmail.com>  
 >Subject: Congratulations  
 >Date: Thu, 13 May 2004 13:08:43 +0200

>  
 > Dear Anand,

> At midday today I heard a snippet on the radio that Congress is back in power, with the support of its allies. At this stage we haven't all the details. I'm writing to congratulate Congress on its magnificent achievement. And ofcourse to congratulate you personally; if I'm correct, you are Congresses media person? At any rate you are holding an important position in Congress, and hopefully in the new Government.

>  
 > I want to take advantage of the opportunity to make a personal request. I know you must be very busy, and I should not burden you with small matters. I will understand if nothing can be done with my request. I have just completed my Memoirs, and we hope to publish in August. I'm presently busy correcting the proofs, which have to be handed in by Saturday.

>  
 > What we are doing is asking some high profile people whom I have met to send very brief messages for inclusion on the jacket of the book. It will be great to be able to include some words from our sister Sonia. The Foreword has been written by Madiba, and the Introduction will be written by Chief Justice Arthur Chaskalson, President of our Constitutional Court, who was also in our Defence team in the Rivonia trial.

2004/05/17



>  
> We tried to interest Penguin (India) in an Indian edition of the Memoirs, but they dont seem  
to be interested. We are hoping to pursue other publishers in India.  
>  
> Although my deadline for the Manuscript-corrections is 15th May, the brief messages can  
come a bit later, in about 10 days time.  
>  
> Hoping to hear from you soon. And best wishes  
>  
> Kathy.

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Marriage? [Join BharatMatrimony.com](http://JoinBharatMatrimony.com) for free.

2004/05/17



**Ahmed Kathrada**

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**From:** <Alexandratwin@aol.com>  
**To:** <Akathrada@anc.org.za>  
**Sent:** 08 July 2003 06:06 PM  
**Subject:** thank you so much

Dear Mr Kathrada,

I just wanted to thank you from the bottom of my heart for your email of support when I was in jail here in Los Angeles for my civil disobedience protesting the war in Iraq. It was amazing to hear from you, as I have so much awe and admiration for you and what you withstood all those years on Robben Island.

You are an inspiration to me, and I am humbled by your courage. If I could be 1/1,000 the activist you are, I will have achieved much in life.

Peace and thanks,

Alexandra Paul

2003/07/08



Ben Shek 28 June 2003

**Ahmed Kathrada**

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**From:** <b.shek@utoronto.ca>  
**To:** <akathrada@anc.org.za>  
**Sent:** 28 June 2003 04:34 AM  
**Subject:** Trip to S.Africa

Dear Kauring our shy,

We hope you are well. We have now completed our plans for a visit to S. Africa in early September, and will stay exactly two weeks, September 3-17. We have been invited by our family friend, Dr. Eric Rosen, to stay with him in Jo'burg. His address is: 157 Kessel St., Fairland 2195, Johannesburg, and his phone number is: 678-4053. He has also kindly offered to pick us up at the airport early on Sept.3, when we arrive from London.

Of course, one of the main reasons for our trip is to see you on your "home turf" and have some really good visits. We also want to see the Robben Island museum and other landmarks of your historic struggle for freedom. We met Albie Sachs again a few weeks ago in Toronto, where he was raising funds for the S.A. art collection for the new Constitutional Court building. He told us that he sees you often, and invited us to let him know details of our trip. He said he would be in Jo'burg at the time of our visit and hopes to see us there. We are eager to hear from you about your availability during our visit, so that we can make plans when we arrive. If you can get in touch with Albie Sachs and give him the gist of this e-mail that would be very good. I'll send him a shorter message as well.

We are presently at our cottage near Ottawa where we have "escapel" after a very hectic winter and spring. I have had two colonoscopies (end of January; June 2): the first removed most of a (benign!) polyp, and the second showed that the supposed remainder of the original polyp was no longer there. This was the good news, but I have been suffering chronic diarrhea and digestive problems nevertheless. I think the present stay in the countryside will certainly help me a great deal.

You can reach us by e-mail at my usual electronic address. We plan to stay here until July 25 if all goes well with my very old mother, who turned 102 in April, and recently contracted pneumonia, from which she is recovering. We are in constant touch with the hospital, and our children and other relatives will be visiting her during our absence from the city.

We are excited about our trip and would love to hear from you soon re it, etc.

Jean joins me in sending you our fondest regards.

Your comrade and friend,  
Ben.

2003/06/30



PASKAL

**Ahmed Kathrada**

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**From:** "aegd" <aegd@wanadoo.fr>  
**To:** "Ahmed Kathrada" <akathrada@anc.org.za>  
**Sent:** 10 February 2003 03:58 AM  
**Subject:** Re: Happy Birthday!

Très cher Katy

Merci so much for your nice though and email for my birthday, and the calendar of Robben Island. My "old" Tae Kwon Do Master told me on my birthday : "Now you are a real woman." !  
I am not sure about that, but to be honest I do not feel any stress about those Forties coming now !!!

As I told you , we are moving to Canada next august or september for 3 to 4 years, the good thing about it is that the country is a cool destination , the bad news is that I do not like snow and cold, and winter last for 5 month there ! But this is a minor worry !!

I am still dreaming to come back to South Africa and every time there is a documentary or a film about South Africa on TV , my heart is biting hard. A big peace of myself is always there ....But how could I come,? leaving kids behind for 2 weeks is not easy for me, not only because of practical reasons but also because of my protective mother mind and heart !!!! and taking them with me will not be the same !!! (plus the financial aspect).

My work in "drug field" is very interested but this is a volunteer job now as the organisation could not afford to pay me a salary any more. I am now unemployed (but get some money from government) although still working to continue our mission and work. I do not want to cry on my situation do not misunderstand me but I feel sometimes so cross and hungry not to be able to come to South Africa !!!

My husband often says (as a joke) that I should make business and earn "real" money , but I am not this kind of money person !! and until the kids are grown up I am focusing every thing on family business !! Sometimes "hard" but so full of Joy and Happiness. And I measure my luck to have it . So stop complaining !!!

How is your book going ??? What are your projects this year ??? No trip to France ??? I hope you keep going healthy and active and look after yourself.

I saw a documentary recently and the author was quoting you : "As the poet Ahmed Kathrada said .....". I was proud to know and be the friend of such a poet !!!!  
I finished your book of correspondances and though this should be translated in all languages and lectured in all schools around the world !!!

Cher Katy keep well

Paskal

2003/02/14