

A TRIBUTE TO PADDY KEARNEY – a humble and selfless humanitarian

I consider it a privilege to have known and worked with Paddy Kearney for many years. Please allow me to share with you some of my experiences with this great humanitarian.

My early recollections are of Paddy being deeply affected by the “squalor and inner city decay“ of the lower CBD, that seemed to have taken a foot hold in the previously segregated part of the city including the Warwick Precinct Triangle which resulted in a wide spread of social ills such as homelessness, Wonga addiction amongst street kids, poverty and an increase in the number of refugees. Paddy took active steps to mobilise Stakeholders in the area, business and religious organisations, together with I –Trump and the Warwick Precinct upgrade forum to address these issues.

Paddy also played a leading role in the DURBAN inner-City Liberation Heritage Route Committee and convened the 1st meeting on 27th August 2013 together with Hoosen Moola of Safer Cities and I-Trump and Paddy Kearney representing the Denis Hurley Centre. Paddy believed that by attracting visitors, tourists & students to these Liberation Heritage Sites, it would help regenerate the inner city, creating much-needed employment and resuscitation of the area .Subsequent meetings were convened at the Kwa Mushle chaired by Steven Kotze, researcher at the Local History Museum .

The function of the committee was to identify and authenticate liberation Heritage Sites. Paddy played a very active role at these meetings and also chaired meetings in Kotze’s absence. A highlight of this endeavour was a Field and Site Inspection preceded with an address by Tembinkosi Ngcobo, head of Parks ,Recreation and Culture –eThekweni Municipality and an overview of the Project Significance by Jabulini Sitole and Thami Nxasane of the National Heritage Council. Thereafter, about 40 Delegates were transported by Municipal bus to each of the Identified Historic Liberation Sites to hear first-hand of the role played in the Liberation Struggle. Paddy and the Delegates were truly elated to see all the hard work done by the Committee was coming to fruition. Finally after 3 years Mr Guy Redman, Deputy Head of Libraries & Heritage Departments of the eThekweni Municipality made a press release in the Daily News on the 8th February 2016 officially confirming 30 Liberation Heritage Sites in Durban.

Paddy, together with Thami Nxasane were also responsible for doing the ground work for the “Spiritual Cluster” comprising of the Juma Mosque, Emmmanuel Cathedral, Denis Hurley Centre, Gandhi Library, Gandhi Memorial Trust, Victoria St Market and the Early Morning Market with the view of getting National Heritage Status and possible UNESCO recognition, citing its unique feature of 3 major Religious establishments in close proximity to each other, sharing a peaceful co-existence for more than a 100 years.

Paddy, a deeply religious man and a devout Catholic also had a deep respect for other Faith Groups and their adherents. His sincerity and love for humanity at large, won him many friends and admirers who readily gave him support towards the establishment of the Denis Hurley Centre, a place of hope for the destitute.

We salute this humble humanitarian who has left us a Legacy that will continue to inspire us for generations to come.

May his Soul Rest in Peace

Roothren Moodley.

Victoria St Market –Trustee

Durban Inner-City Liberation Heritage Route Committee Member

Warwick Precinct Upgrade Forum Member

Early Morning Market Support Group