

# Ann Colvin (d. 2010)

Ann Colvin, one of the longest serving members of Sash in Durban, died suddenly and unexpectedly on Sunday, 12 September 2010.



Ann was an extremely dedicated and hard-working member of the organisation as well as a strong supporter of the Diakonia Council of Churches and a committed volunteer in the Durban Botanical Gardens.

There will be a "Celebration of her Life" at the Durban Botanical Gardens Education Centre on Friday 17th Sept from 17h00 to 19h00+. In lieu of flowers donations are welcome to Durban Botanic Gardens Trust or Diakonia.

## **A Life well lived ..**

Ann was born into a prominent Durban family in 1922. She matriculated from Durban Girls College, excelling in both academic studies and sport. After a stint of working in support of the World War effort, she married a British pilot and left South Africa. After 20 years of living overseas in countries such as England, Hong Kong, Lebanon and Kuwait, she returned to South Africa in 1968 with her family.

Shocked and horrified at the injustice and inhumanity that she witnessed, she immediately threw herself into the life long committal to the anti-apartheid struggle. By knocking on the door of the Black Sash, Ann committed herself to fighting against white rule and domination, serving for many years as its Chairwoman.

As a mature student, she enrolled at the University of Natal – Durban, where she majored in Philosophy and Politics, studying under Rick Turner, which was to have a lasting impact. It deepened her political analysis and confirmed her commitment to socialism.

She became a familiar figure protesting with her sash and placard, attending meetings and working behind the scenes. She worked very closely with the Natal Indian Congress and Diakonia, home to many struggle organisations for which she worked, such as the Detainees Support Committee and the ECC (End Conscription Campaign) and support for Conscientious Objectors.

With Griffiths Mxenge she started the Release Mandela Campaign in Durban and, in her personal capacity joined and worked for the United Democratic Front. As soon as the ANC was un-banned she formally became a member. During the Natal violence and the elections she fulfilled the role of a Peace Monitor.

Throughout her life, Ann remained steadfast and fervent in her belief that the socialist ideals of the liberation struggle needed constant vigilance and had to be fought for.

Although Ann never sought recognition or accolades, it was a very proud moment for her and her family when she was awarded the Satyagraha Award for Outstanding Humanitarian Services in 2007 by the Gandhi Development Trust.



**A tribute from Ann's children - Louise, Tessa, Paul and Mark Colvin**

It is with great sadness that we inform you of Mum's sudden death on Sunday morning (Sept 12). Because of her drive and steely determination we thought she would live many a year more. It came as a brutal shock.

However at 88, it is remarkable that she was never bedridden, hospitalised or had to endure debilitation. She went quickly and with dignity, as she would have chosen.

We shall miss her as will many, for she touched numerous people through her active involvement in the struggle and her never ending fight for political, social and economic justice and her love of nature and nurturing of the environment.

As a mother she was selfless and caring. We are proud and honoured to have been blessed with such a remarkable woman as our mother.

It was a life lived to the fullest. Hamba Kahle!

Louise, Tessa, Paul and Mark Colvin

[Read the tributes from Ann's grandchildren at her memorial service](#)

[Read the poem delivered by the family at Ann's memorial service](#)

***This photograph was taken at the Leningrad Memorial for all those killed in the seige and battle of Leningrad - which of course is now St Petersburg again. It was taken in June 1988 by Gille de Vlieg.***

---

**Ann Colvin's last 'Letter to the Editor' (published posthumously in the Mail and Guardian)**



This letter is penned by Ann Colvin – a struggle veteran – who suddenly died last week on Sunday 12 September. Incomplete, it was found on her desk and it is fitting that her last words are in defence of the Constitution and freedom of the media, for which she and many others struggled so long and hard.

Ann was renowned as an inveterate writer of *'letters-to-the-editor'*, as the Durban Region Black Sash Chairperson of many years. She knew all too well that a platform for public opinion played a significant role in the downfall of apartheid and is equally important in building a truly democratic South Africa. It was a platform she used well and it is with passion that she defends it to the last.

We believe it would be both poignant and powerful, if you could publish it posthumously.

Dear Sir,

Freedom of information, no less than freedom of speech, is central to democracy. By the same token, informed opinion is reliant, to a very large extent, on independent investigative journalism.

The current threat to gag the media by a self serving ruling party bespeaks of a crisis in leadership with its subsequent loss of moral authority, due in large measure to its dismal record of corruption, nepotism and faction-fighting.

The ruling party's attempt to muzzle our democratic right to know is less shocking than is its puerile attempt at justification with Jeremy Cronin's totally unconvincing and 'torturous' attempt to defend the indefensible.

The suggestion that the media has brought this upon themselves through their non-compliance with the provisions of the constitution, amounts to a gross insult to the intelligence of the media, its readership – and the constitution itself.

**Ann Colvin**

---

**A tribute by Paddy Kearney - delivered at her memorial service at the Durban Botanical Gardens on 17 September 2010**

When I think about Ann's life and personality, it seems to me it would be very odd to say:

"May she rest in peace". Perhaps it would be better to say something like:

"May her memory forever encourage those who must continue the struggle for justice and human rights – to which she committed herself with so much energy."

Hester Joseph reminded me that Ann died on 12 September, the day that Steve Biko died 33 years ago! What an appropriate day.

I want to share with you my favourite memory of Ann from nearly 30 years ago. I used to sometimes meet her quite by chance when we were both running on the beach at Natal Command. She was nearly sixty but as trim as ever and in her swimming costume. When we bumped into each other in this way, we would always stop and chat about "THE SITUATION".

There was, of course, always much to lament about in what was going on in South Africa at that time. No-one could be as passionately indignant as Ann - almost breathless in her condemnation of the latest apartheid outrage. It was an indignation that stayed with her even in the new South Africa, whenever she felt that we had not achieved the justice we all longed to see.

But returning to those chance encounters on the beach nearly 30 years ago, I discovered from security police interrogation, that those brief meetings, seemingly so innocent and harmless, had not gone unnoticed by the SBs. In their fertile imaginations they had been turned into carefully planned, deeply subversive strategic planning sessions between the Black Sash and Diakonia. Those Bliksem Commies were at it again, plotting something new for the day ahead – giving each other their instructions!

Perhaps in some way they were right. Ann's devotion to Diakonia was unstinting throughout its entire history. She was one of the most faithful and enthusiastic of our supporters. If there was an award for the person who attended the most Diakonia events, and who took part with the most enthusiasm, Ann would surely have won the trophy year after year.

Like Archie Gumede she gave me an enormous amount of encouragement and affirmation - and in those difficult times that sort of support meant a great deal. I'm sure

she continued playing that role also for Nomabelu – to whom I will hand over (the mike) in just a moment to continue this tribute on behalf of Diakonia.

Ann was caring and motherly to many people, always concerned about their welfare rather than her own. Surely that was at the heart of her fierce attention to human rights. Some of us used to refer to her not as “Ann” but as “Sweetie” because she used that word so often!

I shall always remember her as “Sweetie” because that’s exactly what she was. To her family, may you all be comforted not only by the memories of the love you received from her but by how much she meant to so many people.

---

### **A tribute from Nomabelu Mvambo-Dandala, Executive Director of Diakonia Council of Churches - delivered at Ann's memorial service**

On behalf of the Diakonia Council of Churches, thank you very much indeed for this opportunity to pay tribute to our dear and special Friend, Ann Colvin! After her activism through the Black Sash and the End Conscription Campaign - Ann did not resort to a comfort zone essentially because her heart was in the right place!

In the post 1994 era, Ann continued to advocate for socio-economic justice based on her passion of a transformed society. Diakonia Council of Churches had a very special place in Ann’s heart because it was one of the organisations that made it possible for Ann to continue to work for a transformed society.

Ann was a real Friend of Diakonia in every way. She was consistently and unfailingly supportive of our organisation, going out of her way - even as she became frail - to personally come to see me to share resources and give encouragement. Her watchful eye and sharp mind would find important pieces of information and analysis that she would generously draw to our attention. I can still hear Ann’s voice saying - *sweetie what do you think of ABC? Or sweetie, have you read this book?*

As a loyal Friend of our organisation we remember Ann not only speaking at our events - asking pointed and pertinent questions that needed asking - but also for her precise analysis of the socio-political and economic context, and her critical comments about the public discourse. One of Ann's particularly strong interests - among the many activities she supported at Diakonia - was our economic justice work. She saw so clearly how the apartheid regime had colluded with big business to undermine the economic base of the future democratically-elected government.

Ann thought Diakonia was a wonderful organisation. She was one of the staunch supporters who helped the organisation to try and meet those high standards. She only ever spoke well of the work Diakonia was doing, no matter how pressured she herself was with her many other activities. Ann was one of a kind. Occasionally one meets someone outside the church who lives out the gospel of Christ in a way that few Christians manage, with a deep passion for justice for the most marginalised and an

ongoing commitment to work for a better society for all. Such a person was Ann Colvin. She lived and died a gracious example to us all.

Hamba Kahle Ann - you ran a good race! You will now become part of the great cloud of witnesses that surrounds us! The Margaret Legums, the Sheena Duncans - stalwart women who served the cause of justice so well who were friends of Diakonia - they are awaiting you with open arms - ready to embrace you! Your indomitable spirit will live forever, and it will continue to be a source of inspiration as we continue to work for a transformed society!

---

### **A tribute from Ela Gandhi on behalf of the Gandhi Development Trust**

On behalf of the Gandhi Development Trust and Satyagraha management, I would like to extend our sympathies with the family on the passing away of your beloved mother Ann. Ann was a wonderful friend and a humble, committed and courageous person who had the courage to express her beliefs frankly, bluntly and without fear. We saw this during the tough years of apartheid but even more recently she did not hesitate to speak out. She did us proud and we will always remember her fondly as one of our most honoured awardees. Let us celebrate her life and carry her message of common human values to the next generation. Go well Ann!

---

### **A tribute from Di Oliver, Black Sash Trustee and friend**

My earliest memories of Ann are of staying with her on the Berea during Black Sash Conferences during the 80s - always an absolute treat! She never seemed to sleep because she had BBC radio permanently set up in her bedroom and would greet her guests with an early morning cup of tea and a full report of the "outside" version of events in S.A.

It was also her daily practice in those days to drive down the tree-lined hill to Battery Beach where she ran a few kilometres, enjoying the golden shoreline at the crack of dawn. She never seemed to mind the steamy heat of Durban and was quick to recommend very cool clothes, even if they were somewhat revealing (which wouldn't be noticed today!). Going to bed or to rest was never an attractive option for Ann. Her mind was always so active and she relished the stimulation of political analysis deep into the night. She loved company and always made one feel so very welcome as a guest.

During the 1990s I had the great pleasure of getting to know Ann as a fellow resident of Durban. We often met at the Blue Zoo, located in the picturesque Mitchell's Park, to exchange notes and catch up on each others news. The early 1990s were turbulent as the dreadful violence between ANC and IFP supporters escalated. Ann applied her analytical skills to unpacking what lay behind the conflict and was deeply troubled by the role of a third force. She was a superb networker and never missed an opportunity to attend anti-apartheid meetings and activities, wherever they were held. I became

aware of the great esteem in which Ann was held by a wide spectrum of people, their deep fondness of her and her great generosity and kindness.

Not only was Ann an indefatigable opponent of apartheid, but she was vociferously averse to the colonial and racist attitude and arrogance of many who enjoyed the advantages of being "white" - characteristics she felt were particularly prevalent in what was then known as the province of Natal. With great determination, she worked to highlight and change such attitudes and never allowed herself to be worn down by the burden of this work.

Apart from her love of and devotion to her family and friends, Ann spent many hours as a voluntary gardener in Durban's magnificent Botanical Gardens which she loved. Her own small, charming patch of garden in St Thomas' Road was always testimony to her knowledge and skills as a gardener.

May the plants that she so lovingly nurtured, her tireless devotion to the Black Sash and the causes in which she believed, and the inspiration of her selfless dedication to working for a free, truly non-racial, just and democratic society flourish into the future.

Hamba kahle, darling Ann

Di Oliver

---

### **A tribute from Ronnie Kasrils**

The tributes from close friends and the remarkable photograph of an attractive and graceful woman, with a kind and bold demeanor - full of life and ready to take on any injustice says much about her qualities and her delight in the three P's: People, Politics, Plants. What a champion she was of the poor and oppressed.

As a South African I am deeply grateful for her contribution and for having made a difference. Be well my friend. You and your siblings have been so extremely fortunate to have had the mother you were blessed with. Our country celebrates her life with you. Long may her memory and spirit endure.

Ronnie Kasrils

---

### **A tribute from Jillian Nicolson**

Courageous, brave, compassionate principled caring



The last time I saw her which was a few months ago, she was reading Failed States by the Noam Chomsky and was horrified by his expose` of America's role in global acts of aggression. Most of us won't go near Chomsky with a field guide but Ann, at 88, was breezing through him. This is classic Ann; a sharp unflinching intellect with a curiosity to do it justice and a great sense of outrage. She also had an ability to retain information that she put younger minds to shame.

She was a keen observer and critic of all things political, was quick to identify with injustice and had an unhesitating courage in tackling it if she could. And so she was a formidable opponent of the Apartheid system and a much valued member of the Black Sash, which she served and supported for over 40 years.

She brought to Sash a superb command of English and used this to great effect. From her little typewriter emerged letters of protest, of support, of complaint of congratulations, all with the same great facility with words. I suspect that the Sash Committee rather exploited these skills and left her to do more than her share.

Ann's home in St Thomas road was for years a strategic planning centre and hub of Sash activity. Committee members would troop into her lounge for weekly meetings - often wine and snacks although she always said she never cooked. She had the outside wall of her home spray painted with abusive language and someone once through a missile over her wall that hit glass door and fell into the garden. I remember her describing in her matter of fact way how she thought it might be a bomb and waited to see what would happen next! Fortunately nothing did.

I don't think I ever heard Ann turn down work or say she had too much to do and she never complained; not about being overloaded with work or attending too many meetings or surrendering her home to the placard painters, or about headstrong members who sometimes got out of line. She simply said 'yes' and got on with the job, saying in her self-effacing way that others were doing much much more and this was the least she could do. We were greatly indebted to her for her unselfish dedication over all those years.

In addition to chairing Sash Ann found the energy to participate actively in organisations like the End Conscription Campaign, the Free Mandela campaign; the Free the Children Campaign, the Detainees Support committee, the United Democratic Front, AFRA and I am sure there were more. Some of them she attended in her personal capacity and others as a representative of Sash for which we were truly grateful. She kept her finger on the pulse of all anti-Apartheid work in our region she became and is still a well known, much loved and respected figure amongst the people in these activist groups.

Her commitment to making the country and the world a better place never stopped. Ann didn't know how to stop. She involved herself in a whole landscape of activities and never lost that mental and physical energy and commitment that never dwindled even when she could no longer drive.

A friend of Ann's related this description of Ann a few weeks before she died. It encapsulates this vigilance in upholding her principles, right to the end:

A few weeks ago Ann 'phoned to bewail the proposed Protection of Information Bill and Media Tribunal. She was outraged and furious about their possible advent and wanted to know what it was really all about and 'what on earth could she do!' She declared she'd be writing to her local MP, the newspapers, joining the Right2Know signatory list and contacting friends to rally them to the cause. Always fighter for truth in every fibre of her feisty, dear soul.

There was another side of Ann which many of us valued – her abiding interest and concern in us as individuals and in our families. She took a strong personal interest in the lives of Sash members; she knew the names of many of our children and what they were up to; she sympathised and praised, she gave support when it was needed and she made sure to keep in touch – this right to the end. This is something I value enormously and will always miss.

The Black Sash has, this year, lost three exceptional women, Sheena Duncan, Ethel Walt and now Ann. We feel their loss keenly and we salute their lives and their contribution towards making this world a better place.

---

### **A tribute from Mary Kleinenberg**

Ann was often to be found at the forefront of Black Sash gatherings, both National and Regional. She was a real stalwart of the organization and her enthusiasm split over into these meetings. She was concerned about inequality and worked hard for political and economic justice. She had a remarkably quick mind and turn of phrase which was sometimes difficult to keep up with. She will be sadly missed by all those who knew her.

Mary Kleinenberg

---

### **A tribute from Seema Naran**

It has been a privilege to have Ann as a part of my life. She shared hers with me and my family. For some reason Ann took it upon herself to take me under her wing when I arrived as a young angry woman at the Durban Advice Office in 1992. She was always there for pension and peace monitoring, heated political debates and just general motherly advice on coping with loss, bringing up a child or how to deal with a boyfriend. And she has been like that consistently – I spoke to her last month, and she was as clear on her principles as she was years ago, frustrated by the slow pace of transformation, telling me about a the latest book she was reading, and the trees in her garden. Ann you will live forever in my heart, and in my conscience. Seema Naran

---

### **A tribute from Paddy Kearney, the founding director of the Diakonia Council of Churches**

Ann Colvin was a dear friend and one of the most enthusiastic supporters of Diakonia throughout its 34 years. Passionate about justice, she was at home in our events and meetings and always participated to the full. She was greatly loved and will be greatly missed.

One cannot say of Ann "May she rest in peace" but perhaps "May she be active for ever more – interceding for those who must continue the many struggles for justice in which she participated with such great vigour. "To her family – deep sympathy on her sudden death. May you be comforted by the outstanding role she played in the cause of justice.

---

### **A tribute from Astrid von Kotz**

Thank you for letting us know...sad, yes, but what a brave life lived actively! She was almost an institution, sweetie.... I would always become aware of her standing somewhere near - just by the restlessness she exuded and her catapult speech. hamba Kahle sweetie.  
astrid

---

### **A tribute from Lindy Stiebel**

Thank you for letting me know - what a sterling activist and indefatigable woman: hard to think that her energy finally ran out but it was well, well spent! My condolences to the family. Love Lindy

---

### **A tribute from Mary Burton**

I am so sorry to hear of Ann's death. We will remember her with love and respect.

---

### **A tribute from Wendy Annecke**

I don't really have words this morning. Too many of our old favourites dying and Ann was such a flame. Remember those Wednesday evening meetings at her flat with work getting done around wine and coffee and snacks and Lynn nursing Arda while she took

notes. I thought Ann would be here forever. Eish. Thought Astrid put it well: hamba khahle, sweetie.

---

### **A tribute from Loretta van Schalkwyk**

I was so so sad to learn from Solveig yesterday of 'Sweetie's' death. Yet another outspoken brave activist warrior gone from South Africa. Her indomitable spirit was always such an inspiration to me. My condolences to Louise and all the family. May Ann's spirit fly free and inspire much needed new waves of activism in this our troubled lan. Hambe Kahle outstanding siste Ann.

love Loretta.

---

### **A tribute from Evelyn Cresswell**

Thank you Wendy, Jill and the others, for letting me know, (receiving the news in my last week here in France). As you know, I was late on the scene of Durban Sash, but couldn't fail to know Ann and to admire her. She was like a mossie, irritating and never letting be those that needed her incessant buzz and bites of conscience. Her family can treasure her memory with pride through their sadness. So sorry I cannot be in Durban for her final farewell. Kindest regards Evelyn

---

### **A tribute from Nyami Mbhele**

It is a sad news to hear that Ann Colvin passed away, I knew Ann since in early 80's as a Humans Rights fighter a member of Black Sash and Diakonia Council Of Churches. She was not a good person to the Apartheid Gorvenment because she was a challenger who was not afraid to stand for truth and peace. May her soul rest in peace, she fought the good fight especially for those who were voice less. Nyami Mbhele

---

### **A tribute from Liz Palmer**

Ann was one of a kind - feisty, fiery, funny, the kindest heart, irreplaceable; and it felt, just as she had always been here, that she would be here for ever ... Rest in peace. Liz Palmer

---

#### **A tribute from Lynn Hotz**

I wish I could be at the funeral to help honor and remember her indomitable, affectionate, activist-from-every-pore-of-her-being great soul. love, Lynn

---

#### **A tribute from Audrey Coleman**

I am so sorry to hear about your mom. I have such vivid memories of her at conferences speaking so passionately and so FAST! I had to struggle to keep up with what she was saying. She had such a sharp mind and was unbending in her politics. In many cases she was met with disagreement. She was a person who will be remembered and I was so fond of her. Please pass on my condolences to the family. I know she will be sorely missed. love Audrey

---

#### **A tribute from Andrew and Alison Warmback**

When I was responsible for economic (and environmental) justice at Diakonia Council of Churches, I had regular contact with Ann – she was so supportive of this aspect of our work, and at events spoke with such passion and determination. You must be proud too to have had such an advocate for justice and freedom in the family.

Regards, Andrew and Alison Warmback (Diakonia Council of Churches)

---

#### **A tribute from Janet Love, National Director of Legal Resources Centre**

Truly a good life but because of this we are all the poorer for her having left us.

**Janet Love**

---

### **A tribute from Louise Torr**

I have been thinking so much about Ann recently. I first met her in 1981, when I was a researcher at the Institute of Race Relations, when it was still attached to the African Art Centre in Gardiner Street. Ann was a frequent visitor there, and through her and other Black Sash members, I got to know parts of Durban and KZN where all my work became focussed over subsequent years. They were very formative times for me, as Jon and I had just arrived in Durban, and Ann was one of those primary people, together with Jo Thorpe, who set me on a career path. You spoke beautifully at Ann's memorial service, which was a wonderful celebration of her life. I never realised that she was a plant activist as well, and so involved in the Botanic Gardens, but then it makes sense given your and Mark's beautiful indigenous gardens. Best wishes Louise

---

### **A tribute from Gary Leigh, Matt & Ethan Church**

Your mom was an incredible person with a huge life force . I had many wonderful interactions with her over the years, and was extremely fond of her. We will miss her.

---

### **A tribute from David Spurrett**

She was a bright-eyed, fearless and generous giant in her small body.

---

### **A tribute from Alan and Geraldine**

We are very sorry to hear that your mother has died, and we know it is hard for you. You called her "Sweet", and I remember that and it made an impression on me, and I remember her as being gentle and indeed sweet-natured. Yet I know she was a fighter for justice and had steel in her soul too. She was a veteran of the struggle. Her light will always shine.

---

### **A tribute from Haydn, Alison (Osborne) and kids**

Ann lived a remarkable and useful (as serving others) life, and was loved by a great many people. There are no greater accolades than these and not many people fully earn them. She did and we will miss her.

---

### **A tribute from Lucie Conradie**

My heart is soggy & sad. I loved your mum, not just as my fabulous, loving and crazy aunt – but for her absolute individualism, honesty and her unstinting fight for the underdog. I loved her interested and incisive mind, open heart and tenacity both mental & physical that belied that small, wiry frame. Beautiful hands, divine laugh and she always looked and smelled heavenly.

---

#### **A tribute from Caro Conradie**

Your beloved Mum and our beloved Annie ..... what a truly fabulous person, what a truly amazing life. Feisty and fighting and interested in everything and impossible to the end. How wonderful.

---

#### **A tribute from Paul**

So sad to hear of Ann's death, she was a wonderful woman who had more spark in her during her last years than most people have in their prime!!

---

#### **A tribute from Johnny Copelyn**

"I will remember her with lots good memories, including not wearing shoes, having the huskiest voice anyone could aspire to and having a great humbleness of being."

---

#### **A tribute from Alec Erwin**

"This is a sad moment. She was brave precisely because she was so gentle"

---

#### **A tribute from Jenny Cargill**

"I will always remember her as an exceptional person and mother – always active and interested in the world around her and a true friend to her children as well. "

---

#### **A tribute from Peta Thornycroft**

A life so very well lived. I have so many memories of Ann, not least her ferocious tussle on the tennis court in Harare when she and Wellman were foot faulting each other. I loved her competitiveness ....and how she embraced the fight for democracy in South Africa.

---

### **A tribute from the Sole Family**

“Our volunteers' Botanic Garden outing to the Albert Luthuli Museum and a mission station in Kranskop last month was made special by my having her company. Never one to take preferential treatment, Ann trooped it out with the best of everyone, declining lifts to the potting and milking sheds, ploughed fields and a pasta factory. It was a wonderful day, and a great way to remember Ann.”

---

### **A tribute from Elsa Pooley**

It is really terrible losing one's mother – the world never feels quite the same again. I felt privileged to have known Ann – and sorry not to have spent more time in her company. I only met her in her later years but had a sense of her passionate involvement in matters of conscience. She was so completely 100% alive and engaged in the world and its people – and plants! A real original.

---

### **A tribute from Sudeshan Reddy, National Information Officer, United Nations Information Centre, Pretoria**

To those of us who had the privilege of knowing Ann Colvin, she personified the ability of an individual to challenge and summount the artificial borders that society imposes - those of race, class, age and other human-induced boundaries.

When I started at DHS, Ann's home, across the road from the school, was my oasis as she gave me a key and made her home mine. Dealing with the prejudices and ignorance of my peers in pre-1994 South Africa was frustrating at times but somehow venting to Ann about it made it so much easier as she joined me in lambasting the 'bigots' and 'right-wingers' we had to contend with!

I vividly remember her picture splashed across the front page of the Daily News in 1989 with her "Free the Beaches" sun-visor as she joined thousands in challenging the 'whites-only' beach laws. She was never afraid to take on those who believe they have the monopoly on morality, power and authority and in doing so she spoke truth to power.

It is now that one has a chance to reflect on how selfless individuals like Ann Colvin have afforded us the opportunity to live in a better country that, though far from perfect, Ann



devoted her life to fighting for. She has had a profound influence both me but also on my brothers Micah and Niall who's social activism is a tribute to Ann.

Ann was a woman ahead of her time. Her principles, beliefs and values were that of a true humanitarian as she passionately and articulately spoke out on the side of justice, equality and a fairer world.No doubt, wherever she is, she is fighting the good fight!

---

### **A tribute from Kerry Harris**

I remember Ann as I first met her when she was national vice president of the Black Sash, and I was becoming politically active in anti-apartheid activities – 22 or so years ago. I have always had the greatest admiration for her. And will continue to hold her in high esteem.

We shall all meet again.

---

### **A tribute from Liz Palmer**

I've lit a candle - in a red glass. It glows as Ann did – her fiery passionate heart. Hard to imagine the world without her – or how it must be for you.

---

### **A tribute from Coral Vinsen**

Your mother was a unique woman and constant stalwart in the pursuit of justice. We who knew her will mourn her passing, but always remember her indefatigable spirit and boundless energy.

---

### **A tribute from Sarah Burns**

I was especially shocked to hear of Ann's death, as Mary Grice and I had spent a happy morning with her a couple of weeks earlier when she was as vibrant as ever; telling us about the books she was reading etc.

I shall always remember Anne as one of the most committed activists I ever met, with a wonderful courage and a brave spirit. I feel very privileged to have been one of her many friends and colleagues in the Black Sash and I liked and admired her enormously and will miss her very much. I am so sorry not to have been able to be at the celebration of her life which Patty Geerds tells me was a wonderful occasion.

---

**A tribute from Sandra at the Botanical Society KZN Coastal Branch**

I never got to say: I'm very sorry for your loss. Your mother was a very special person. What wonderful tributes. I really enjoyed listening to them, not least of which was yours! I think about them a lot and wish I could be more like your mother, and like you towards my own mother.

Thank you for the memorial evening. Best wishes to you and your family.