

# FRIDAY WRAP

#2.47.1

'A Glimpse of Humour'

18 November 2011



Adderley Street with Christmas lights

## Wrap

- ~ Rap -- to talk., *conversation*.
- ~ a piece of thin, flat bread *that can contain anything* eaten as a sandwich.
- ~ Signaling *the end (ie of a week)*
- ~ *Under wraps – secret.*

Nostalgia is a file  
that removes  
the rough edges  
from the  
good old days.  
Doug Larson

## Remember the Time...

(With Apologies to the late great Michael Jackson)

I am often reminded by those close to me, that as I am getting older, my memory is not what it used to be. In fact, to them, I am losing my memory and my mind. My memory is going faster than my mind though, or so they claim.

I must admit my memory is not what it used to be, whereas my long term memory is more or less intact my short term memory is just that, short. But as you get older your memory becomes choosier as to what it wants to remember. And it is through no choice of your own.

You may be able to remember your Sub A teacher's name and the first the first girl you kissed but you are unable to remember to buy toothpaste on your way home,



Launched as PRETORIA CASTLE on August 19th, 1947, sold to Safmarine in 1966 and three years was transferred to South African registry. Renamed S.A. ORANJE, she served with Safmarine until 1975 when she was sent to Taiwan for demolition. I work in the building in the middle.

So, just this morning, as I was cleaning my ears, it struck me as to just how much I really recall. So let's go back, way back.

Remember the time...

### **Parents**

... our Mother waking us up on the 21 July 1969 to say that 'a man has walked on the moon...'

... sitting with my Mother while she was doing the ironing and listening to the radio on a Monday night. If we were good and feeling peckish she used to make us toasted cheese sandwiches with the iron. It was delicious.

... going with my Father to the tailor to be measured and later fitted with clothes for 'Labarang' and how I progressed from short pants to long pants (yay!). And going to the clothing store 'Nashi Brothers' down on the corner of Lower Main Road to be fitted from head to toe on 'Account'.

... going for the day to Woodstock Beach with all the neighbourhood children. A neighbour took us in his Ford Prefect, he had to make two trips.

... going to visit my Aunt in District Six and an Uncle's Vegetable Shop next to the Fish Market. And to watch the coons dance up Hanover Street.

... when my Mother made my clothes.

... being allowed to go with all the other boys to Rhodes Memorial at the end of the last term in Standard Five. My parents allowed me to grow up.

... going for a haircut with my Father at the barber at the bottom of Addison Road, Salt River.

... getting crisps and chocolates on a Friday when I was young and getting to fall asleep in my mother's bed (all of us) when my Father went to watch soccer at Hartleyvale.

... going with my father to Hartleyvale to watch soccer when I was older. Cape Town City and Hellenic were the favourites at that time.

... my father always having to paint the stoep the night before Labarang.

... the twinkle in my father's eye on the birth of his first grandchild.



Jan van Riebeeck still keeping watch

## **School**

... living 25m from primary school and still coming late.

... Mr. Felton, our primary school principal making the boys eat the cigarettes they were caught smoking.

... suspecting any teacher who walks strange of having a wooden leg.

... Mr Marsh's black suit he wore every day for a whole term. And the next term.

## **Movies**

... going to watch movies at the Bijou in Lower Main Road Observatory and sitting upstairs (on the step with the other children) because downstairs was White's only.

... when movies was only showed in bioscope.

... Bioscopes and a double Feature at the bioscope was normal. And when going to bioscope was an occasion.

... when there were Drive-ins.

... Queuing to get into Sunset Drive-in to watch 'Hoor my lied'.

... when movies were appreciated.

... when you had to hire a video machine to watch a video at home.

## **Childhood**

... having to polish all the brass ornaments on a Thursday to get pocket money.

... Listening to 10 o'clock tales on a Thursday and getting so scared, you listen from outside the room.

... Rushing home on a Saturday afternoon to listen to the 'Hit Parade' at 1700.

... polishing the linoleum floor by tying rags to our feet and skating down the passage.

... 'Beano' and 'Dandy' comics kept us entertained.

... Going to watch Indian movies and crying your eyes out because that's what you do when you watch Indian movies.

... playing games like 'blikkies', 'bok-bok' (I was always the cushion), 'see-to-see' and my most favourite, hoepi-le.

... playing dominoes or kerim under the street lights at night in summer.



Cape Town Station where the Golden Acre is now.

... the children sitting in a heap telling stories, especially at night in the summer holidays. That time, when you saw a film you had to come tell the whole movie to your friends. Night time was especially good to tell horror stories.

... swirling your hair before you went to bed.

... 'Ruiters in Swart', 'Mark Condor', 'Sister Louise', 'Samson', 'Chunky Charlie'/ If you don't know what this is, ask someone older.

### South Africa

... when the Post Office had two entrances ~ Whites and non-Whites..

... going to a segregated beach.

... having to stand upstairs in a bus (coloureds) because it was so full and downstairs was empty but it was reserved for white's only.

... people thinking South Africa will change after Prime Minister Verwoerd was assassinated in Parliament on 6

September 1966. It wasn't to change for another 24 years.

... when nobody outside the prison system knew Nelson Mandela's face.

... the elation the day the ANC and all the other anti-apartheid political parties were unbanned.

... how I cried the day I voted for the first time.

...How proud I was of our new flag and our national anthem even though I struggled to learn it.

... How happy we all were when we won the Rugby World Cup in 1995.

### News

... experiencing the tremor on 29 September 1969 at 2203. Part of a major earthquake in the Tulbagh/Wolseley area. On the day Imam Haroun was buried (the biggest funeral I have ever seen). Nobody could separate the two events.

... Watching the news, transfixed, as the Space Shuttle 'Challenger' blew up on



Kalk Bay Harbour, not much has changed

takeoff on 28 January 1986. 8 days after my daughter was born.

... Watching Mandela leave Victor Verster Prison on his long walk to freedom.

... the jubilation when Nelson Mandela was released. I remember that day in detail.

### **Children**

... being present when my son was fetched one cold Ramadaan night at the City Park Hospital in 1986 after his heart beat started to fluctuate.

... being present when my daughter was fetched via Caesarian section one Friday morning at Constantiaberg in 1989 and being surprised it was a girl as I never gave it a thought.

... walking the children to school and stopping on the corner for my children to wave to their mother watching us and then she replies by flashing the patio light.

... my daughter's face when she rode a two wheel bike for the first time.

... my son driving the car around the block

as a laaitie, blowing the hooter and waving every time he passed.

... driving my son to his exam for his Driving Licence. In Swellendam. In Ramadaan. He got it though.

### **Friends**

... when friendships could only last a lifetime.

... Sitting with friends around the fire just chatting. Still do.

... when pain and heartache was not experienced yet.

### **Money**

... when toilet rolls cost 19c each.

...When you earned R25 a week and it cost R20 to fill your tank and you could buy a newspaper for 12c and a Roadworthy car for R120.

... when you could buy something with one cent.

Selling my Volksie with mags, sunroof and trumpet exhaust for R240. The buyer still owes me the R40.



Hanover Street, District Six

## Technology

...when not everybody had a phone, a house phone that is.

...when our house had only one phone and one phone number.

...when we only had one phone bill per household.

... when height of technology meant that you had a record player.

... when a radio and phone was the only link with the outside world.

... when TV came out for the first time and we only had 3 channels.

... and the channels use to shut down before midnight with the flag and national anthem. TV3 ended at 2130.

... when we had a MNET decoder but only a portable black and white TV.





The Lane between the Fish Market and the Greengrocer

## Other

- ... Star toffees and Wilson Blocks.
- ... when busses had conductors and the engine was electric and had a platform at the back.
- ... the busses in Hanover Street in District Six.
- ... the blind man selling shoelaces and matches out of a case in Plein Street.
- ... watching the electric trams in central Cape Town.
- ... going to Cape Town in December to see the Christmas lights.
- ... being woken by the Christmas choirs on Christmas morning.
- ... going to 'Was Bats'. Wash-houses to shower.
- ... when going to the Strand was very far.... when the lights on the N2 fascinated us.
- ... when Fish and Chips and rooti and curry were the only take-aways.
- ... when taxi drivers were real people.
- ... when ear buds did not hurt my ears.
- ... when nappies were not thrown away.
- ... when toilet paper protected my fingers.
- ... when my cough was wet and my fart was dry.

## The Green Thing

by Jim Knowles

Published in the San Leandro Times January 6, 2011

In the line at the store, the cashier told an older woman that she should bring her own grocery bags because plastic bags weren't good for the environment.

The woman apologized to him and explained, "We didn't have the green thing back in my day."

The clerk responded, "That's our problem today. Your generation did not care enough to save our environment."

He was right -- our generation didn't have the green thing in its day.

Back then, we returned milk bottles, soda bottles and beer bottles to the store. The store sent them back to the plant to be washed and sterilized and refilled, so it could use the same bottles over and over. So they really were recycled.

But we didn't have the green thing back in our day.

We walked up stairs, because we didn't have an escalator in every store and office building. We walked to the grocery store and didn't climb into a 300-horsepower machine every time we had to go two blocks.



The Grand Parade in all its glory on a wet winter's morning circa 1950

But he was right. We didn't have the green thing in our day. Back then, we washed the baby's diapers because we didn't have the throw-away kind. We dried clothes on a line, not in an energy gobbling machine burning up 220 volts -- wind and solar power really did dry the clothes.

Kids got hand-me-down clothes from their brothers or sisters.

But that was right we didn't have the green thing back in our day.

Back then, we had one TV, or radio, in the house -- not a TV in every room. And the TV had a small screen, not a screen the size of Table Mountain.

In the kitchen, we blended and stirred by hand because we didn't have electric machines to do everything for us.

When we packaged a fragile item to send in the mail, we used a wadded up old newspaper to cushion it, not Styrofoam or plastic bubble wrap.

Back then, we didn't fire up an engine and burn gasoline just to cut the lawn. We used a push mower that ran on human power. We exercised by working so we didn't need to go to a health club to run

on treadmills that operate on electricity.

But he's right; we didn't have the green thing back then.

We drank from a fountain when we were thirsty instead of using a cup or a plastic bottle every time we had a drink of water. We refilled writing pens with ink instead of buying a new pen, and we replaced the razor blades in a razor instead of throwing away the whole razor just because the blade became blunt.

But we didn't have the green thing back then.

Back then, people took the bus and kids rode their bikes to school or walked instead of turning their moms into a 24-hour taxi service.

We had one electrical outlet in a room, not an entire bank of sockets to power a dozen appliances. And we didn't need a computerized gadget to receive a signal beamed from satellites 2,000 miles out in space in order to find the nearest pizza joint.

But isn't it sad the current generation laments how wasteful we old folks were just because we didn't have the green thing back then?