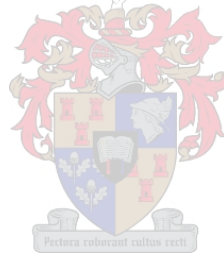


Keith Blundell, on and off stage: The life of Keith Blundell, 1927-2002

by
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at Stellenbosch University*



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Declaration

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December 2022

Abstract

This biographical study explores the life and career of Keith Blundell, with references to the South African Folk Music Association (SAFMA), and the careers of some of South Africa's prominent English Folk Musicians, including Jeremy Taylor, Jill Kirkland, Andy Dillon, David Marks and Des Lindberg. Little academic work has been done on the English Folk Music movement in South Africa and on Keith Blundell's contribution to this movement and his work as a musician.

Keith Blundell, born in 1927, went from being a sports lover to being a performer and entertainer in South Africa in the 1960s and 1970s. He was one of the early proponents of original English Folk Music in South Africa, despite only learning to play the guitar when he was 30 years old.

Blundell's career highlights include opening one of the first folk clubs in South Africa, the Troubadour, with Des Lindberg in 1964. This club played an influential role in establishing and developing the folk music movement in South Africa. Relating to his role at the Troubadour, Keith Blundell played a leading role in the South African Folk Music Association (SAFMA). SAFMA, formed in 1966, was responsible for arranging events and fundraising shows for musicians and encouraging the composition of original South African folk songs through song-writing competitions.

Apart from his involvement with SAFMA, Blundell organised a year-long tour with his family in 1970 and travelled all over South Africa and Zimbabwe (then Rhodesia), performing folk music concerts in small churches and city halls along their route. His wife and children, Caroline, Julie, Jonny and Teper, all performed with him during this tour. In 1976, shortly after the introduction of television, the Blundell family featured in one of the first family-friendly television shows to showcase local folk music. In the 1980s, Keith Blundell shifted his focus from folk music to country music and continued performing with his wife, Pamela, until 1989, when he became paralysed in a motorcycle accident. They eventually moved to Cape Town, where they stayed until his death in 2002.

This biographical study recounts the life and career of Keith Blundell and also touches on the lives of the folk musicians who performed with him and the events that formed part of the South African English Folk Music movement.

Opsomming

Hierdie biografiese studie ondersoek die lewe en loopbaan van Keith Blundell met verwysing na die Suid-Afrikaanse Volksmusiekvereniging (SAFMA) en die loopbane van 'n paar Suid-Afrikaanse volksmusikante soos Jeremy Taylor, Jill Kirkland, Andy Dillon, David Marks en Des Lindberg. Daar is weinig akademiese navorsing gedoen oor die Engelse Volksmusiekbeweging in Suid-Afrika of oor Keith Blundell se bydrae tot hierdie beweging en sy werk as 'n musikant.

Keith Blundell is in 1927 gebore. Hy was aanvanklik 'n sportliefhebber voordat hy sy loopbaan in die 1960's en 1970's in Suid-Afrika verander het na kunstenaar en vermaaklikheidster. Hy was een van die vroeë voorstanders van oorspronklike Engelse volksmusiek in Suid-Afrika, ten spyte daarvan dat hy eers op 30-jarige ouderdom geleer het hoe om kitaar te speel.

Blundell se loopbaanhoogtepunte sluit in die opening van een van die eerste volksmusieklubs, die Troubadour, saam met Des Lindberg in 1964. Hierdie klub het 'n invloedryke rol gespeel in die vestiging en ontwikkeling van die volksmusiekbeweging in Suid-Afrika. Behalwe vir sy rol by die Troubadour, was Keith Blundell 'n prominente figuur in die Suid-Afrikaanse Volksmusiekvereniging (SAFMA). SAFMA, wat in 1966 gestig is, was verantwoordelik om geleenthede en fondsinsamelingsvertonings vir musikante te reël en die komposisie van oorspronklike Suid-Afrikaanse volksliedjies aan te moedig deur liedjieskryfkompetisies .

Afgesien van sy betrokkenheid by SAFMA, het Blundell in 1970 'n jaarlange toer saam met sy gesin gereël en regoor Suid-Afrika en Zimbabwe (toe Rhodesië) gereis en al langs hul roete volksmusiekkonserte in klein kerke en stadsale gehou. Sy vrou en kinders, Caroline, Julie, Jonny en Teper, het almal saam met hom opgetree tydens hierdie toer. In 1976, kort na die bekendstelling van televisie, het die Blundell-gesin in een van die eerste gesinsvriendelike televisieprogramme verskyn om plaaslike volksmusiek bekend te stel. In die 1980's het Keith Blundell sy fokus van volksmusiek na country-musiek verskuif en verder saam met sy vrou, Pamela, opgetree tot hy in 1989 in 'n motorfietsongeluk verlam is. Hulle het uiteindelik na Kaapstad verhuis waar hulle tot sy dood in 2002 gebly het.

Hierdie biografiese studie vertel die verhaal van Keith Blundell se lewe en loopbaan en raak ook aan die lewens van die volksmusikante en gebeurtenisse wat deel gevorm het van die Engelse volksmusiekbeweging in Suid-Afrika.

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These past three years of hard work and research could not have been done without the following people helping me along the way.

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I would also like to thank Prof Lambrechts and the Music Library at Stellenbosch University for giving me access to the Hidden Years Music Archive for my research, especially during the Covid-19 pandemic. This archive is truly remarkable, and I cannot wait to see the future research projects that are going to happen from this archive.

I want to thank the Blundell family, Caroline, Julie, Jonny and Teper, for trusting me to tell their father's story and for sharing their amazing stories, life events and personal documents with me. Thank you for always being an email away to answer all of my questions. It was such a joy to research and write about your father's life, and your stories made this process come to life.

A special thank you goes to the musicians I interviewed for this thesis. Des Lindberg, thank you for being willing to answer all my questions, and sharing your love for the English Folk Music movement and its people. Andy Dillon, thank you for sharing some amazing stories of your time with the family and Keith. These accounts are not documented in research or archives and this illustrates the importance of oral histories and interviews when doing research.

A warm thank you goes to Tertius Louw, who helped me locate and listen to some of Keith Blundell's music from his music collection. I would also like to thank Kanja van der Merwe who translated the English abstract into Afrikaans.

Lastly, to my family and friends. Thank you for your continuous support over these past three years. Your words of encouragement during the process of writing the thesis, especially during the difficult times, has kept me going to do the work and to do my best. The emotional and physical support you have given to me means a lot.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Introduction

Keith Blundell is described by Roger Lucey, a South African musician and activist, as the elder statesman of South Africa's English Folk Music movement.¹ Blundell's life comprised different personality traits, some of which were a constant in his life that shaped and moulded newly acquired characteristics – sometimes intentionally but sometimes also unconsciously. This biographical study aims to give insight into the multi-dimensional and complex life of Keith Blundell as a White English-speaking South African son of an Anglican pastor of British descent – the navy recruit in a post-Second World War South Africa; the sports lover turned actor, folk musician, performer, entertainer, and active participant in organisations; the dedicated family man; the barn dancer after his motorcycle accident; and finally, the retired husband/grandfather hobbyist. All this unfolded against the background of an increasingly repressive state in post-war apartheid South Africa that stimulated but at the same time suppressed the development of an English Folk Music Movement and, as a result, challenged Blundell's motives and position as a folk musician and the performance genres he pursued following his folk career.

Throughout his life, Keith Blundell was known as a folk musician, a genre of music with elements of anonymous composition and oral transmission.² It is important to point out that genre classification does not have strict boundaries or definitions. Folk music, such as other musical genres, is a genre created by musicians, consumers, journalists, producers, and record companies to categorise and define music.³ The classification of genres also considers marketing, cultural and historical factors.⁴ It is used in this study not to restrict but to consider different musical styles.

¹ R. Lucey, *Back in from the Anger* (South Africa: Jacana Media, 2012), 126.

² G.D. Booth and T.L. Kuhn, "Economic and Transmission factors as essential elements in the definition of folk, art, and pop music," *The Musical Quarterly* 74, no. 3 (1990): 412; 422

³ G. Tzanetakis, "Musical Genre classification of audio signals," *IEEE Transactions on speech and audio processing* 10, no. 5 (2002): 293.

⁴ C. Ballantine, "Against Populism: Music, Classification, Genre," *Twentieth-Century Music* 17, no. 2 (2020): 260.

Blundell performed as a folk musician on theatre stages, in clubs, and on radio stations as a solo artist, in multiple collaborations with other artists, and with his wife and children.⁵ Some of the clubs where he performed included the Cul de Sac, the NiteBeat, and the Troubadour, arguably one of the most important venues for the development of English Folk Music in South Africa. These clubs, all located in Doornfontein and Hillbrow in Johannesburg, were seen as important live music venues for folk musicians as it was the only clubs dedicated specifically to folk music.⁶

Blundell is renowned for hosting one of the first television shows in South Africa, *Keith and Kin*, in 1976, when the South African Broadcasting Corporation first introduced television.⁷ This show not only included a variety of folk musicians invited by Blundell to join the show, but also included his wife and children, who were all proficient musicians. As a devoted family man, he regularly performed with his wife and children, including during a year-long tour all over the country, where they performed in small-town churches and city halls. Blundell also performed with numerous artists, including Jeremy Taylor, Des Lindberg and David Marks, musicians who all played influential roles in establishing the English Folk Music movement in South Africa. Apart from performing, Keith Blundell became a prominent figure in the South African Folk Music Association (SAFMA), a body responsible for organising folk music concerts such as the South African Folk Music Festival that took place every year from 1965 into the mid-1970s.

During the 1980s, when the interest in English Folk Music started to decline, Blundell shifted his focus to country music and started organizing barn dances for fellow country music lovers.⁸ Country music is a musical genre that combines multiple musical traditions from European immigrant communities, such as popular Irish and Celtic fiddle tunes, cowboy songs, traditional ballads and African-American blues.⁹ Blundell continued performing until a motorcycle accident left him paralysed from the waist down in 1989. Blundell remained

⁵ C. Blundell, "The Legacy: Where I come from," accessed April 16, 2021, <http://carolineblundell.com/the-legacy/>.

⁶ L. Lambrechts and J. Taylor, "They called me the 'Ag Pleez Deddy' Man: On the (Be)longing of Jeremy Taylor," *South African Music Studies (SAMUS)* 39 (2020): 46.

⁷ Blundell, "The Legacy: Where I come from."

⁸ Blundell, "The Legacy: Where I come from."

⁹ "Country Music," Oxford Music Online, accessed March 22, 2022, <https://www-oxfordmusiconline-com.ez.sun.ac.za/grovemusic/view/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.001.0001/omo-9781561592630-e-1002224075>.

devoted to his family off-stage despite his focus on music and performance.¹⁰ His family was integral to his music career before and after his accident.

Some publications include discussions of the English Folk Music movement of South Africa, such as Roger Lucey's memoir *Back in from the Anger* (2012) which recounts his struggles as a political folk musician in apartheid South Africa,¹¹ Mel Miller's on folk music in South Africa called *The 60s folk music scene of South Africa: The other folk scare South of the tropic of Capricorn* (2020), and Syd Kitchen's Master's thesis called "Where have all the flowers gone?: The shifting position of folk music within white South African popular music culture from 1960 to the present" (1997).¹² In his book, Mel Miller discusses his journey as a folk singer, the history of folk music, and some of its most important venues such as the Troubadour. Kitchen's thesis explores the rise of folk music in South Africa, its influences and how it evolved in the 1960s and 1970s. Kitchen's thesis also discusses the decline of folk music as a genre. While there are some books written on the subject and several autobiographies currently being written by musicians who were part of the English Folk Music movement, for example *Every Day is an Opening Night* (2021) by Des and Dawn Lindberg, two well-known South African English folk singers, academic work on this movement remains scant with relatively few engagements.¹³

Michael Drewett, whose work mainly focuses on music censorship during apartheid, wrote multiple articles touching on the English Folk Music movement in South Africa. One of these is his detailed study of the censorship of Roger Lucey's music, called "The Road from Crisis to Catharsis in the Songs of Roger Lucey" (2011).¹⁴ In this article, he discusses some popular folk musicians in the 1970s, focussing on the more overtly political music of Roger Lucey. He points out how Lucey's career was effectively destroyed by censorship, threats, and sabotage

¹⁰ Julie Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, May 24, 2021.

¹¹ Lucey, *Back in from the Anger*.

¹² M. Miller, *The 60s folk scene in South Africa: The other folk scare south of the tropic of Capricorn* (United States of America: Mel Green Publishing, 2020); S. Kitchen, "Where have all the flowers gone?: The shifting position of folk music within white South African popular music culture from 1960 to the present" (MA Thesis, University of Kwazulu-Natal, 1997).

¹³ D. and D. Lindberg, *Every Day is an Opening Night* (South Africa: Burnet Media, 2021).

¹⁴ M. Drewett, "The Road from Crisis to Catharsis in the Songs of Roger Lucey," *International Review of the Aesthetics and Sociology of Music* 42, no. 2 (2011): 381.

by the apartheid government.¹⁵ Lucey was forced to end his full-time music career because of the ongoing police harassment affecting the distribution of his music and his privacy.¹⁶

Apart from Syd Kitchen's work, another thesis that touches on the English Folk Music movement is Helen Lunn's thesis, "Hippies, radicals and the Sounds of Silence': Cultural Dialectics at two South African Universities 1966-1976" (2010).¹⁷ The focus of her study was to explore the impact of the counterculture on students at two Anglophone universities during the 1960s and 1970s in South Africa. In her thesis, she discussed folk music, the impact of this genre on white English-speaking students, and the National Folk Song Festivals. The information discussed in her study is useful for this study to understand the impact of folk music and South African folk music's influences. Lunn also discusses some of the most prolific folk musicians of the time, including Keith Blundell, Des Lindberg, Mel Miller, Colin Shamley, David Marks and Jeremy Taylor.¹⁸ Another author that mentions Blundell is Lizabé Lambrechts, who wrote an article with Jeremy Taylor called "They called me the 'Ag Pleez Deddy' Man: On the (Be)longing of Jeremy Taylor" (2020), which discusses the life of Jeremy Taylor as a folksinger.¹⁹

Other than publications that mention Keith Blundell, some websites also provide information about his life. One of these websites is managed by his daughter, Caroline Blundell, who talks about her life as a folksinger, being in a family band, and traveling the country performing to locals.²⁰ The other website about Blundell is Des and Dawn Lindberg's website where Des Lindberg wrote an obituary about Blundell when he died. Here Lindberg mentions that he, Blundell, and Dawn were known at the University of Witwatersrand as 321.²¹ Apart from these publications, no other secondary sources that discuss Keith Blundell or his family could be found, and no academic biographical study has yet been done on the life of Keith Blundell. This thesis is an attempt to fill this lacuna.

¹⁵ Drewett, "The Road from Crisis to Catharsis," 385.

¹⁶ Drewett, "The Road from Crisis to Catharsis," 385.

¹⁷ H. Lunn, "'Hippies, radicals and the Sounds of Silence': Cultural Dialectics at two South African Universities 1966-1976" (PhD diss., University of KwaZulu Natal, 2010).

¹⁸ Lunn, "'Hippies, radicals and the Sounds of Silence'," 81.

¹⁹ Lambrechts and Taylor, "They called me the 'Ag Pleez Deddy' Man," 44.

²⁰ Blundell, "The Legacy: Where I come from."

²¹ "Des and Dawn," *Encyclopaedia of South African Theatre, Film, Media and Performance (ESAT)*, accessed March 3, 2022, https://esat.sun.ac.za/index.php/Des_and_Dawn.

Biography as a historiographical genre

This biographical study will employ historical methodologies, including the reading, analysis and critical interpretation of primary and secondary sources. The purpose of a biography is to narrate, document and explain/analyse a person's life and experiences using words, images and other materials.²² This writing method was already prevalent during the Middle Ages, Renaissance and Victorian periods to document the lives of important figures.²³ According to John Tosh, the purpose of biography in the Victorian and Renaissance time was to present the subject as a model of Christian conduct, public virtue or as a commemorative text for public figures that they admired.²⁴ This style of biography, according to John Tosh, is something of the past.²⁵

In the early 1900s, biography writing became more popular. However, it was not seen as a genre for doing historical research. This was mainly due to the lack of a cultural-historical perspective and the role of Marxism.²⁶ In the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, different theories were developed for structuring and developing the history of humanity due to the influential work of Karl Marx. Marx's influence led to the institution of a materialist interpretation of history.²⁷ Within this body of scholarship, Marxist historians focused more on the economic and social processes of the world, leaving countless histories of cultural significance untold.²⁸ It was not until the "scientific" ambitions of Marxist or structuralist history were challenged in academics that biography writing became a focus of historical research.²⁹ As Marxism started to decline in the late 1960s as a theoretical approach and an intellectual influence, biography writing as a form of historical research was paired with the rise of new historical questions being asked.³⁰ These questions focused on categories such as gender and sexual identity, as well as theories and analyses of social and historical changes that

²² H. Renders and B. de Haan, "Towards Traditions and Nations," in *Theoretical discussions of Biography: Approaches from History, Microhistory, and Life writing*, eds. H. Renders and B. de Haan (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 13-14.

²³ J. Tosh, *The pursuit of history* (New York: Routledge, 2013), 38.

²⁴ Tosh, *The pursuit of history*, 119.

²⁵ Tosh, *The pursuit of history*, 2.

²⁶ Renders and De Haan, "Towards Traditions and Nations," 11.

²⁷ B. Caine, *Biography and History* (London: Red Globe Press, 2019), 17.

²⁸ Caine, *Biography and History*, 17.

²⁹ J.M. Sardica, "The content and form of 'conventional' historical biography," *Rethinking history* 17, no. 3 (2013): 385.

³⁰ Caine, *Biography and History*, 2.

have been accepted in the twentieth century.³¹ The rise of these questions led to an increase in the importance of individual lives because of the different ways people's wealth, class, religion, and other social aspects could affect historical experiences and understanding.³²

Biographical methods have since become an accepted and integral part of studying the past through the possibilities it offers to demonstrate the processes of social and historical change and to render the past more human, intimate and relatable.³³ Barbara Caine and Norman Denzin stated that a biographical approach in history offers an important addition to understanding general developments by providing a way of accessing subjective understanding and experience to these developments.³⁴ This also led to an exploration of groups and movements with little to no social status and economic and political power silenced in the early 1900s.³⁵ These groups and movements relate to forms of history that are part of the new approach to biography, which includes microhistory, post-colonial history and women's history.³⁶ The boom in biographical writing in historical studies and the revival of narrative as a medium to present historical knowledge were welcomed by younger historians and their older peers who were part of the anti-Marxist or post-Marxist movement.³⁷ Within these texts, writing started to focus more on the private life of individuals and on minor domestic incidents related to the subject instead of just focusing on the subject's public life.³⁸

Uncovering and critically engaging with a life's biographical nuances is challenging. Thus, an author should focus on how a biography should be approached in terms of the sources utilised and the form in which the evidence is presented. Paul Murray Kendall, author of *The Art of Biography*, writes that the way to write a biography is by bringing together the resources, memories, and all available evidence regarding the subject in the form of written, oral or pictorial evidence.³⁹ The historian should examine all primary and secondary sources that have a bearing on the life of the subject in order to start writing a good biography and to know the

³¹ Caine, *Biography and History*, 2.

³² Caine, *Biography and History*, 2.

³³ Caine, *Biography and History*, 1-2.

³⁴ Caine, *Biography and History*, 1; N. Denzin, *Interpretive Biography* (United States of America, SAGE Publications Inc, 1989), 28.

³⁵ Caine, *Biography and History*, 2-3.

³⁶ Caine, *Biography and History*, 2-3.

³⁷ Sardica, "The content and form," 385.

³⁸ Caine, *Biography and History*, 30.

³⁹ Renders and De Haan, "Towards Traditions and Nations," 14.

nature of the subject.⁴⁰ A biography written on a subject will mainly focus on the subject's life of the subject, but because of the circumstances in which the subject was present, a biography also describes the evolution of the context in which the person lived or at least the changing assessment of that context.⁴¹ Studying the life of a person, it gives extraordinary insights into how particular events and larger-scale social, political and economic developments were felt, experienced and understood by the people who lived through them.⁴² This is why John Tosh, in his book *The Pursuit of History*, states that the essential requirement for historians writing a biography is to understand the subject in their historical context.⁴³ These aspects of modern biography writing will be drawn into this study of Keith Blundell's life by not just writing his life story, but also writing about the English Folk Music movement in South Africa, and Keith Blundell's experiences in apartheid and post-apartheid South Africa.

Multiple options exist for structuring a biography. Some of these techniques include a linear, chronological presentation of the events in the person's life and other fictional devices such as omniscient narration and a coherent, unified voice.⁴⁴ Another option is to structure a biography according to a thematic approach according to the main events or themes in the subject's life.⁴⁵ The biographical study of Keith Blundell is structured chronologically. This structure was dictated by the archival material available and the lack of secondary sources for constructing Keith Blundell's life.

As biography writing became more popular in the twentieth century, new approaches emerged that complemented the earlier narrower definitions and ideas of biography writing. One of the approaches introduced is life-writing – an alternative term for auto/biography. Life-writing is a term that encompasses a wide range of writing forms which record or describe a person's life.⁴⁶ Some of these writing forms are diaries, memoirs, autobiographies, biographies, letters, travel writing and other forms that involve a “construction of the self”.⁴⁷ This genre was created

⁴⁰ Tosh, *The pursuit of history*, 120.

⁴¹ H. Renders, “Biography in Academia and the critical frontier in life writing: Where biography shifts into life writing,” in *Theoretical discussions of Biography: Approaches from History, Microhistory, and Life writing*, eds. H. Renders and B. de Haan (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 170.

⁴² Caine, *Biography and history*, 1.

⁴³ Tosh, *The pursuit of history*, 120.

⁴⁴ JT Pekacz, “Introduction”, in *Musical Biography: Towards New Paradigms*, ed. JT Pekacz, (England, Ashgate, 2006), 6.

⁴⁵ M. Rontsch, “An Anthology of Existence: Explorations into the Life and Works of Christopher Langford James (1952-2008)” (PhD diss., University of Stellenbosch, 2017), 12.

⁴⁶ Caine, *Biography and history*, 69.

⁴⁷ Caine, *Biography and history*, 69.

in the 1970s, and it served to question the earlier definitions and ideas about biography.⁴⁸ One of these questions was that the writing of a biography involves some form of autobiographical involvement on the part of the author.⁴⁹ The purpose of Life-writing was to show that many or even all lives are worthy of writing and reading about, not just those who were admired in society.⁵⁰ While some still consider life-writing as an inferior form of historical writing, links can be made between this term and biography writing.⁵¹

Even though life-writing and biography writing share many similarities, one of the main distinguishing factors is that life-writing includes everything from fictional to factual.⁵² While this is a valid pursuit, this study seeks to establish the life events of Blundell with as much historical accuracy as possible with the available sources while engaging critically with the biographical nuances of his life. It will therefore situate itself in the methodology of biography writing.

Some of the challenges include steering away from writing a hagiography. In a hagiographical study, the subject is idolised and praised without critically considering and reflecting on the subject's negative aspects or life events.⁵³ According to Carl Trueman, one of the problems with hagiography is that it runs the danger of seeing the world in Manichean terms of black and white, good versus bad, and it fails to understand the human condition's complexities.⁵⁴ This can easily happen, especially when the subject is in the public eye. By being in the public eye, perceptions of the subject are not just shared by family and friends but also through promoters, managers, agents, producers, publicists, photographers, directors, writers and audiences who surround the subject.⁵⁵ These people all create an opinion about the subject to project to the public.⁵⁶ When in the public eye, subjects act to create a positive image that will be remembered by their followers, even though this image can later be used as a "cover-up" for controversial actions in their lives.⁵⁷ This study will critically consider all primary and

⁴⁸ Caine, *Biography and history*, 66.

⁴⁹ Caine, *Biography and history*, 66.

⁵⁰ Caine, *Biography and history*, 67.

⁵¹ Sardica, "The content and form," 384.

⁵² B. de Haan, "The eclipse of biography in Life Writing," in *Theoretical discussions of Biography: Approaches from History, Microhistory, and Life writing*, eds. H. Renders and B. de Haan (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 180.

⁵³ Caine, *Biography and History*, 120.

⁵⁴ I.H. Clary, "Arnold Dallimore (1911-1996): Reformed Evangelicalism and the search for a usable past" (PhD diss., University of the Free State, 2014), 49.

⁵⁵ Caine, *Biography and History*, 120.

⁵⁶ H. Lee, *Biography: a very short introduction* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 55.

⁵⁷ Clary, "Arnold Dallimore (1911-1996)," 49.

secondary sources available to avoid such constructions. In doing so, this study will also attempt to consider aspects beyond Blundell's life as a performer and entertainer.

South African English Folk Music

Folk Music was defined in the early 20th century in Europe as music that uses functionalist models, such as rituals or work songs, to identify and classify songs in this genre.⁵⁸ This definition of folk music changed during the folk revivals in the 1940s and 1960s because folk singers started to resurrect older styles of folk music and also because they started to create new songs with personal or political lyrics.⁵⁹ This change redefined folk music into two categories, namely "contemporary folk music", which consists of protest songs or songs about social issues, and "traditional folk music", music that consists of instruments such as tin whistles and concertinas.⁶⁰ Blundell's music tended to span both these categories as this thesis will show.

Keith Blundell played a leading role in the South African English Folk Music movement, along with other prominent musicians, including Jeremy Taylor, Des Lindberg and David Marks. According to Gelbart, folk music is considered as a practice that evolved through the process of oral transmission.⁶¹ With the development of technology through the 20th century, this definition was expanded to include music practices that travel by means of records, jukeboxes and radio.⁶² Bob Dylan, a well-known American folk singer from the 1960s, explained in an article called "What is a folk song?" some of the complexities of defining folk music. He wrote:

Many claim that a folk song has no particular author but grows out of the people, and is then handed on from generation to generation with extra lyrics and musical changes made to it as it passes through the years. Others believe that a folk song is any song that is taken up as an expression of the feelings of some part of the population. But it is certainly true that most folk songs have evolved over many years, changed here and there by generations of singers. But

⁵⁸ Tzanetakis, "Musical Genre," 293.

⁵⁹ Tzanetakis, "Musical Genre," 293.

⁶⁰ Tzanetakis, "Musical Genre," 293.

⁶¹ M. Gelbart, *The invention of 'Folk Music' and 'Art Music': Emerging categories from Ossian to Wagner* (London: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 2, 203.

⁶² Hidden Years Music Archive, Documentation Centre for Music, Stellenbosch University. David Marks collection, Scrapbook 1, Magazines. Andrew Levy, "The folk rock kick," *The Folksinger*, Vol. 1, no. 1, September 1967, 7.

there are also composed songs that are accepted and expressing true folk feeling. [...] folk singing is also a mirror for reflecting life – not just for the sake of telling people what you are all about – but to tell them what they are all about. [...] most folk songs are ballads because they tell a story, and many have their origins in the days of the minstrels, or come from country balladeers. [...] folk music today is becoming more and more organised and commercialised, and, like jazz, will eventually find itself separated into two sections – a soloist’s art, and a people’s art. This is already happening.⁶³

In Dylan’s understanding of folk music, he – similarly to Gelbart – describes the changes in folk music production from orally transmitted to a practice impacted by its context. Folk music, according to Dylan, is a combination of Western European music heritage and the rhythm and scales from Africa, including the blues.⁶⁴ Ronald Cohen similarly suggested that folk music originated from specific cultures or regions.⁶⁵ According to him, folk music includes elements such as unknown authorship, compositions that are simple with little complexity in order to be performed and shared communally by non-professionals, and it is passed down through oral transmissions.⁶⁶

Keith Blundell also wrote a piece about what qualifies as a folk song. Blundell wrote that he “believes that to qualify as folk’, songs must have the ability to survive the passing of time – a lot of time. We can only wait and see how some of the modern songs [fare] in, say, 25 years’ time. My guess is that many of them will not survive, but I could easily be wrong.”⁶⁷ Comparing Dylan’s article and Cohen’s definition of folk music with Blundell’s written piece, a broad similarity can be seen, which is that a folk song’s popularity depends on the people and how the song travels through generations and stays popular. Although touched on by all three authors, this is not necessarily a characteristic restricted to only folk music.

⁶³ Hidden Years Music Archive Documentation Centre for Music, Stellenbosch University. David Marks and 3rd Ear Records Collection, Digital sources, Programme. Bob Dylan, “What is a folk song?,” *Folk fest 69 programme* (1969), 4, <http://hdl.handle.net/10019.2/17922>.

⁶⁴ Hidden Years Music Archive. David Marks and 3rd Ear Records Collection, Digital sources, Programme. Bob Dylan, “What is a folk song?” *Folk fest 69 programme* (1969), 4, <http://hdl.handle.net/10019.2/17922>.

⁶⁵ R. Cohen, *Folk Music: The Basics* (Great Britain: Routledge imprint of Taylor and Francis Group (LLC), 2016), 1.

⁶⁶ Cohen, *Folk Music: The Basics*, 1-2.

⁶⁷ Marq Vas’s Southern African Music Collectibles, “Keith Blundell: Square Folk Songs,” Facebook, accessed February 5, 2022, <https://www.facebook.com/251922131233/photos/a.10150489295686234/10150489307346234/>.

In the early 1960s, English Folk Musicians in South Africa mainly sang covers of American and British songs. These songs included sea shanties, love songs, and songs that protested against hatred and violence.⁶⁸ By the late 1960s, more and more original songs were being composed locally, inspired by the music written and performed by musicians such as David Marks, Jeremy Taylor and Des Lindberg. According to Blundell, the folk music movement in South Africa grew and changed quite significantly in the late 1960s.⁶⁹ Des Lindberg attributed this change to the fact that some people heard the same songs too often, and this made room for a new folk public whose taste was “more for humour rather than history”.⁷⁰ This new audience created a demand for a change in the lyrics of folk music.⁷¹ Jeremy Taylor similarly points out this change in the lyrics and melodies of folk music during an interview with Lizabé Lambrechts. He posits that the show *Wait a Minim!* (1962) and his song “Ag Pleez Deddy” (1962) inspired musicians and songwriters to engage with the English Folk Music genre.⁷² Soon after its release, “Ag Pleez Deddy” was censored by the South African apartheid government because the song incorporated slang and mixed English and Afrikaans languages.⁷³

The Troubadour was an important venue where musicians were exposed to original English Folk Music in South Africa. Keith Blundell and Des Lindberg founded this venue in 1964 in Doornfontein, Hillbrow. The Troubadour, along with the Cul de Sac, was one of the first folk clubs in South Africa.⁷⁴ The venue also served an educational purpose with open mic nights and lessons for prospective musicians.⁷⁵ Artists that played in this club included Jeremy Taylor and David Marks, two well-known English Folk Musicians from South Africa. David Marks became well-known in local music circles after releasing the now international hit song “Master Jack” in 1967.

⁶⁸ Hidden Years Music Archive, Documentation Centre for Music, Stellenbosch University. David Marks collection, Box nr. 24, Newspaper article. Pierre Coetzee, “So praat hulle van hulself – en van ons,” *The Star*, March 3, 1967.

⁶⁹ Hidden Years Music Archive Documentation Centre for Music, Stellenbosch University. David Marks collection, Scrapbook 1, Magazine. Keith Blundell, “Reflections,” *The Folksinger*, Vol. 1, no. 1 September 1967, 4.

⁷⁰ Hidden Years Music Archive Documentation Centre for Music, Stellenbosch University. David Marks collection, Box nr. 16, Programme. Des Lindberg, “Des Lindberg, this year's director talk about the folk scene and the festival,” *67' Folk Festival programme* (1967), 1.

⁷¹ Hidden Years Music Archive. David Marks collection, Box nr. 16, Programme. Des Lindberg, “Des Lindberg, this year's director talk about the folk scene and the festival,” *67' Folk Festival programme* (1967), 2.

⁷² Lambrechts and Taylor, “They called me the ‘Ag Pleez Deddy’ Man,” 50.

⁷³ Lunn, “‘Hippies, radicals and the Sounds of Silence’,” 53.

⁷⁴ M. Andersson, *Music in the mix: The story of South African popular music* (Michigan: Raven Press, 1981), 114.

⁷⁵ Andersson, *Music in the mix*, 114.

English and American musicians largely inspired English Folk Music in South Africa through the music local musicians listened to and the influence of musicians who came to South Africa from abroad. Jeremy Taylor, one of the early figures of this movement, was born in England and studied at Trinity College Oxford.⁷⁶ He noted that his big influences were musicians like Burl Ives, Brownie McGee and Woody Guthrie.⁷⁷ Helen Lunn wrote in her study that Des Lindberg, South African English Folk Musician and performer, initially sang mostly Bob Dylan covers.⁷⁸ Bob Dylan was a folk musician, influenced by Woody Guthrie and Pete Seeger's music.⁷⁹ Dylan played an important role in shaping the 1960s folk music revival in the United States.⁸⁰ This revival brought musicians together who sang about the events occurring in America such as the Civil Rights Movement. The civil rights movement was a mass protest movement that started in the 1950s against racial segregation and discrimination in the United States.⁸¹ Bob Dylan's song "Blowing in the wind" (1963) is one such song that was used in the anti-Vietnam war protests.⁸² Songs such as these were well-known in South Africa and influenced local musicians such as David Marks and Roger Lucey.⁸³

In America, there were two folk music revivals. One in the 1930s and the other in the 1960s. Through these revivals, a cultural movement and social change were created in American society by taking traditional American music and transforming it into a political and cultural expression of the real-life experiences of musicians.⁸⁴ It created an opportunity for activists to come together and sing the music that spoke about the events happening in the country. Woody Guthrie was mostly known for his part in the 1930s folk music revival. He was one of the musicians, along with others such as Pete Seeger and Burl Ives, who impacted traditional American music into becoming more rural, straightforward, homey, and political.⁸⁵ In the

⁷⁶ Lambrechts and Taylor, "They called me the 'Ag Pleez Deddy' Man," 46.

⁷⁷ Lambrechts and Taylor, "They called me the 'Ag Pleez Deddy' Man," 50.

⁷⁸ Lunn, "'Hippies, radicals and the Sounds of Silence'," 85.

⁷⁹ Lunn, "'Hippies, radicals and the Sounds of Silence'," 79; R. Eyerman and S. Barretta, "From the 30s to the 60s: The folk music revival in the United States," *Theory and Society* 25, no. 4 (1996): 525.

⁸⁰ D.J. Goczy, "The folk music movement of the 1960s: Its rise and fall," *Popular music and society* 10, no. 1 (2008): 21.

⁸¹ "American civil rights movement," accessed January 26, 2022, <https://www.britannica.com/event/American-civil-rights-movement>.

⁸² Goczy, "The folk music movement of the 1960s," 21.

⁸³ Drewett, "The Road from Crisis to Catharsis," 381.

⁸⁴ Eyerman and Barretta, "From the 30s to the 60s," 501.

⁸⁵ Eyerman and Barretta, "From the 30s to the 60s," 513-514.

1960s, the folk music revival hosting National Folk Festivals became popular events where unknown singers, dancers and musicians were given a chance to perform.⁸⁶

David Marks, another seminal figure in developing original English Folk Music in South Africa, spent 1969 in America and attended some of these festivals, including the Newport Folk and Jazz festival and the Woodstock Music and Arts Fair. These were important events that shaped Marks as a musician and later as a record producer and manager of a number of live music venues in Hillbrow, Johannesburg.⁸⁷ Throughout his career, David Marks was an influential role player in establishing and maintaining South African English Folk Music.

Before SAFMA and the Troubadour, English Folk Musicians mostly performed covers of American and British folk songs.⁸⁸ It took a concerted effort from SAFMA, the Troubadour events, National Folk Festivals and Singer-Songwriter competitions to inspire musicians with the confidence to start writing their own material that reflected the realities of South Africa. During these events, popular folk musicians, such as Colin Shamley and John Oakley-Smith, were invited to help amateur folk musicians with their songs, performances and lyrics. SAFMA hosted multiple workshops to help musicians improve these elements.⁸⁹

Increasingly, original music was being composed by South African English Folk Musicians who engaged with the events in the country and reflected on their experiences in apartheid South Africa. These songs could be categorised as topical songs. Topical songs played a big part in the 1960 folk music revival in America, with songs reflecting on the social and political issues of the day, such as the threat of a nuclear war, the fight for civil rights, and the complexity inherent in the upheaval of this period.⁹⁰

Although the majority of songs written by South African folk musicians are not generally classified as protest songs, some songs do reflect the political situation and realities of the South

⁸⁶ E.K. Wells, "Some currents of British Folk Song in America 1916-1958," *Journal of the English Folk Dance and Song Society* 8, no. 3 (1958): 137.

⁸⁷ Andersson, *Music in the mix*, 79.

⁸⁸ Hidden Years Music Archive. David Marks collection, Box nr. 24, Newspaper article. Pierre Coetzee, "So praat hulle van hulself-en van ons," *The Star*, March 3, 1967.

⁸⁹ Hidden Years Music Archive Documentation Centre for Music, Stellenbosch University. David Marks collection, Box nr. 16, Programme. Ben Segal, "SAFMA's achievements 1967", '67 *National Folksong festival programme* (1967), 9. To learn more about Colin Shamley and John Oakley-Smith, please consult the index on pages v and vi.

⁹⁰ Gonczy, "The folk music movement of the 1960s," 19.

African environment. In an interview with Ian Lawrence, he noted that South African English Folk Musicians sang in their compositions about humankind and about the people who just wanted to be free during this difficult time in the 1960s.⁹¹ Other musicians, such as Roger Lucey, who openly wrote about the atrocities of the apartheid system,⁹² and John Oakley-Smith, Colin Shamley, Mick Dickman and Brian Finch were all singing for and writing about a new and free South Africa, according to Muff Andersson.⁹³ Due to the political opinions and content of their songs and shows, many of these songs were censored by the government and most were not allowed to be aired on the state-controlled radio broadcaster.⁹⁴ This was taken to its extreme with the banning of Roger Lucey's 1979 album, *The Road is Much Longer*, which carried a penalty of possession and distribution of five years in jail or a R10 000 fine.⁹⁵ Michael Drewett wrote in his study about the censorship of South African music that if politically inclined musicians wanted their music to be aired on the radio, or gain recording contracts, they had to self-censor their music, manipulating, camouflaging and obscuring their lyrics to bypass the censorship boards.⁹⁶ Some of Blundell's music was censored, as was music by multiple artists mentioned in this thesis, including Des and Dawn Lindberg and Jeremy Taylor. This will be engaged with further in the study.

Methodology

The research for this thesis was primarily conducted in two archives. Firstly, the Blundell family archive and secondly, the Hidden Years Music Archive. The Blundell family archive holds documents from their personal collections, which hold correspondence, music programmes, posters, documents, photographs and music. A part of this collection was donated to the Hidden Years Music Archive, where most of the research was conducted.

The Hidden Years Music Archive is an archive project based at the Africa Open Institute for Music, Research, and Innovation (AOI) at Stellenbosch University, and the material is

⁹¹ Hidden Years Music Archive. David Marks collection, Box nr. 24, Newspaper article. Pierre Coetzee, "So praat hulle van hulself-en van ons," *The Star*, March 3, 1967.

⁹² Drewett, "The Road from Crisis to Catharsis," 381.

⁹³ Andersson, *Music in the mix*, 116.

⁹⁴ M. Drewett, "Aesopian Strategies of Textual Resistance in the Struggle to Overcome the Censorship of Popular Music in Apartheid South Africa," in *Censorship & Cultural Regulation*, ed. B. Müller (Netherlands: Brill, 2016), 183-201.

⁹⁵ M. Drewett. "Stop this filth': The Censorship of Roger Lucey's music in Apartheid South Africa," *South African Journal of Musicology (SAMUS)* 25, no. 1 (2005): 60.

⁹⁶ Drewett, "Aesopian Strategies," 192.

preserved in the Documentation Centre for Music at Stellenbosch University. The archive was collected by David Marks before its donation to Stellenbosch University in 2013. Marks was an avid collector and started his personal collection in the late 1960s. His collection grew to include recordings, his diaries, posters, documents, notebooks, newspaper clippings and other primary material that was donated to him. To protect the material and to make it accessible, Marks formed the Hidden Years Music Archive Project (HYMAP) in 1990.⁹⁷ After its donation to Stellenbosch University, the archive was officially opened to the public in October 2017.⁹⁸ After its donation to Stellenbosch University, the archive collection grew to include the collections of Roger Lucey, Jeremy Taylor, Des and Dawn Lindberg and the Blundell family, amongst others.

Other primary sources that were used for this study were the *Rand Daily Mail* newspaper and three editions of the magazine *The Folk Singer*, a magazine created by the South African Folk Music Association (SAFMA) in the late 1960s. There were only three editions of the magazine before the association decided to create a new magazine called *Notes and Music*.

Interviews were conducted with Keith Blundell's three children, Jonny, Caroline and Julie Blundell, and musicians Des Lindberg and Andy Dillon. These musicians all worked closely with Blundell. Due to the restrictions imposed because of the Covid-19 virus, these musicians were interviewed via email or phone calls for their health and safety.

Piecing together this biographical study came with severe methodological challenges. The bedrock of biography is situated in the availability of a substantial body of primary sources – sources that did not exist in the case of the Blundell study. In most cases where primary material was available, for example about the South African Folk Music Association, Blundell was not the focus of the documents but only one of many role players. The lack of correspondence and notes that may reveal details about a person's personality and characteristics impacted the level of detail that could be included in this study.

The thesis, therefore, had to draw mainly on documents in the public domain, including reviews, press clippings, programme notes, album covers, recorded music, and the few archival

⁹⁷ Lambrechts and Taylor, "They called me the 'Ag Pleez Deddy' Man'," 77.

⁹⁸ Lambrechts and Taylor, "They called me the 'Ag Pleez Deddy' Man'," 77.

records that do exist of his concert performances and radio shows. This meant that the majority of the character references and even the empirical factual evidence used in this thesis rely heavily on oral evidence from Keith Blundell's family, friends and acquaintances. It was therefore challenging to fill certain gaps and verify possibly biased sources. For these events, the memory of family and friends was used to piece together as much detail as possible. A big challenge was finding sources on the year-long tour undertaken by Blundell and his family. Very little information exists about this tour: national newspapers did not cover it, and the children were still too young to remember much detail. Information might be available in the local church records or small-town newsletters where they performed. This could be an interesting angle to pursue in subsequent research.

The lack of archival resources on Keith Blundell speaks to a general challenge in writing histories of communities and individuals in South Africa who were not considered important to preserve by national archival institutions. Despite this, traces of these individuals can be found in newspapers and the archival collections of individuals, such as the Hidden Years Music Archive collected by David Marks, wherein countless such histories are documented.

This study is written in chronological order, with some chapters focussing on the thematic thread that dominated Blundell's life at the time. In Chapter one provides an introduction to this study, which includes, among others, historiographical and methodological aspects, the motivation as well as the significance of this study. Chapter two discusses the birth of Keith Blundell and his young adult life until 1959, just before his folk music career started. This chapter touches on his family's experience during the Second World War and the Great Depression while also discussing the events in South Africa during this time. The third chapter focuses on the start of Blundell's career as a folk musician and discusses the folk music movement in South Africa and how it grew from 1960 until 1965. Chapter four explores Blundell's career from 1966 to 1970. This chapter also discusses the start of the South African Folk Music Association (SAFMA) and the National Folk Festivals. The fifth chapter engages with the 1970s when Blundell started exploring alternative avenues of creative expression. This chapter is divided into four sub-sections: Blundell as a musician; as a radio host; as a television show presenter, and as an actor and producer. Chapter six looks at Blundell as a country musician from 1980 to 1988 and concludes with the final years of his life. Chapter seven draws some conclusions from the research and summarises the main findings and arguments of the study.

Chapter 2: A child of the Depression and War Years 1927-1959



Figure 1: Childhood photograph of Keith Blundell, circa 1933.¹

Introduction

Keith Graham Blundell was born on 24 July 1927 in King William's Town and was raised during a time marked by the Great Depression, the Second World War as well as the rise of Afrikaner Nationalism. This chapter will explore the context wherein Blundell grew up and discuss his upbringing, childhood and early adult years.

Keith Blundell grew up in an Anglican household, born as the third child of Keith Senior and Dorothy Blundell (née Graham).² Keith Senior was an Anglican priest, and Dorothy was part

¹ Hidden Years Music Archive, Documentation Centre for Music, Stellenbosch University. Keith Blundell collection, Miscellaneous, Blue file, 13.

² Hidden Years Music Archive, Documentation Centre for Music, Stellenbosch University. Keith Blundell collection, Keith Blundell 1927-2002 file. Project, Introduction, 1.

of the Graham family.³ It is uncertain what her occupation was when she met Keith Senior, but Dorothy Graham was the great great granddaughter of Colonel John Graham.⁴ Colonel John Graham was a military commander of the British Army.⁵ The town of Grahamstown (now known as Makhanda) in the Eastern Cape was named after him to honour his exceptional services as a military commander during the Fourth Frontier War of 1811-1812.⁶ He was honoured for the campaign under his military direction in the war that cleared the Zuurveld (presently known as Albany), a district in the Eastern Cape near Grahamstown and Uitenhage, of Xhosa groups that settled in that region.⁷

Blundell was not just the third of four children in the Blundell family but also the only son.⁸ He had two older sisters, namely Jean, born on 6 January 1920, and Gill, born on 3 March 1925. Mariota, born on 25 April 1931, was the youngest sibling.⁹ The family resided in King William's Town until 1928, after which they moved to Makhanda, also known as the "City of Saints", because of the number of churches in the town – currently 52 churches in total.¹⁰ The move was prompted by the appointment of Keith Senior as the Dean of Grahamstown in 1928, a position that included being the diocese of the Grahamstown Cathedral.¹¹ Blundell had a close relationship with his siblings, especially Gill and Mariota because the age gaps between them were small.¹² Throughout Keith's upbringing, the Blundell family were part of the middle class. Through his father's work as an Anglican minister, they were supported by an income from the church that included accommodation.¹³ This income helped to provide a decent

³ Hidden Years Music Archive. Keith Blundell collection, Keith Blundell 1927-2002 file, Project. Introduction, 1.

⁴ Hidden Years Music Archive. Keith Blundell collection, Keith Blundell 1927-2002 file, Project. Introduction, 1; Hidden Years Music Archive. Keith Blundell collection, Keith Blundell 1927-2002 file, Project. Ancestry, 1.

⁵ W.J. de Kock (ed), *Suid-Afrikaanse Biografiese Woordeboek Deel 1* (Kaapstad: Raad vir Geesteswetenskaplike Navorsing, 1968), 329.

⁶ J. de Villiers, "Perspective on John Graham and the fourth Cape Eastern frontier war," *New Contree* 68 (2013): 45.

⁷ De Villiers, "Perspective on John Graham," 29; J.S. Bergh and J.C. Visagie, *The Eastern Cape Frontier Zone* (Durban: Butterworths, 1985), 22.

⁸ Hidden Years Music Archive. Keith Blundell collection, Keith Blundell 1927-2002 file, Project. Introduction, 2.

⁹ Julie Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, May 24, 2021; Julie Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, April 22, 2022.

¹⁰ Hidden Years Music Archive. Keith Blundell collection, Keith Blundell 1927-2002 file, Project. Written piece, 1.

¹¹ Hidden Years Music Archive. Keith Blundell collection, Keith Blundell 1927-2002 file, Project. Written piece, 1; "St Michael and St George Cathedral, Makhanda explained," accessed March 1, 2022, https://everything.explained.today/St_Michael_and_St_George_Cathedral%2C_Makhanda/.

¹² Mariota Muller, document sent via email to Marion Webber, June 18, 2021.

¹³ Julie Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, October 25, 2021.

education for the children.¹⁴ An Anglican minister is offered new posts every five years, after which they have to move to a new ministry.¹⁵ As will be demonstrated in the thesis, this led to the family having to move regularly – an aspect which affected Blundell directly, specifically during his childhood and school-going years but also indirectly in determining the trajectory of his later years.

Dorothy Blundell was also an active church member, joining the Church Women’s Fellowship and the Mother’s Union. The Women’s Fellowship was a society that aimed to promote and further the life of the church in all spheres, co-operated with and maintained good relations with welfare organisations, and participated in ecumenical activities.¹⁶ The Mother’s Union was a society for mothers of all social classes with the purpose to support one another and to train women into motherhood.¹⁷ These types of societies and Anglicanism served as one of the ways White English-speaking South Africans maintained their British identities.¹⁸

Britishness in South Africa

According to John Lambert, British identities in South Africa were, like Afrikaner identities, also maintained and formed through remembrance, commemoration and memory.¹⁹ The English speakers bonded over the First World War and other memories of war, including the South African War.²⁰ The remembrance of the First World War was seen as a part of linking them with their British kith and kin in the United Kingdom, and throughout the empire.²¹ According to Krishan Kumar, the First World War shaped an image of England, and the consistency of this image can be seen as a tribute to the artists and writers’ creativity during the war.²² Another historical event that the English speakers commemorated is the 1820 settlers. The 1820s settlers were British settlers that arrived in Makhanda, under the

¹⁴ Julie Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, October 25, 2021.

¹⁵ Julie Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, May 24, 2021.

¹⁶ “Anglican Women’s Fellowship,” accessed March 1, 2022, <https://grahamstowndiocese.org.za/Default.aspx?pageid=86>.

¹⁷ “Mother’s union,” accessed March 1, 2022, <https://grahamstowndiocese.org.za/Default.aspx?pageid=86>.

¹⁸ D. Gaitskell, “Crossing boundaries and building bridges: The Anglican Women’s Fellowship in Post-apartheid South Africa,” *Journal of religion in Africa* 34, no. 3 (2004): 269.

¹⁹ J. Lambert, “‘Tell England, Ye Who Pass this Monument’: English-speaking South Africans, memory and war remembrance until the eve of the Second World War,” *South African History Journal* 66, no. 4 (2014): 679.

²⁰ Lambert, “‘Tell England,’” 681, 683.

²¹ Lambert, “‘Tell England,’” 683.

²² K. Kumar, *The Idea of Englishness: English Culture, National Identity and Social Thought* (England: Ashgate (Pty) Ltd, 2015), 126.

appointment of Lord Charles Somerset, to form an agricultural community.²³ The agricultural community was set up to act as a barrier against Xhosa tribes in the region.²⁴ The settlers founded schools, libraries, financial institutions and learned societies and contributed to the agricultural business in the Eastern Cape.²⁵ English speakers made sure to publish stories about the settlers to commemorate them and to expose English-speaking South Africans to their heritage.²⁶ These historical events bring White English speakers together by memorialising those who had died fighting for their South African homes and the protection of the British Empire.²⁷ These events helped shape a sense of identity and belonging in a country colonised by the British.

White English speakers in South Africa also used other methods to stay connected to their British identities. Helen Lunn writes that in the 1960s, young English-speaking university students from South Africa listened to folk musicians such as Woody Guthrie, who sang songs of belonging, and Bob Dylan, whose songs discussed the feelings of young people growing up in the Cold War and listening to their parent's stories about the Second World War.²⁸ She further points out that these students listened to the folk music that was performed in clubs to hold on to their British identities.²⁹ The songs performed by folk singers such as Des Lindberg, Mel Miller, Colin Shamley, Ritchie Morris and Blundell, included songs from the United Kingdom and the United States.³⁰

The Great Depression

Just a year after their move to Grahamstown, the Great Depression took hold of the world and South Africa. The worldwide economic downturn caused Great Depression after the stock market crash of October 1929.³¹ The crash started in the United States after the Wall Street stock market panic caused millions of investors to lose their money.³² This economic crash

²³ G. Overstone, "‘Wars are won by men not weapons’: The invention of a militarised British settler identity in the Eastern cape c. 1910-1965" (MA Thesis, University of Cape Town, 2019), 26.

²⁴ Overstone, 'Wars are won by men not weapons,' 26.

²⁵ Overstone, 'Wars are won by men not weapons,' 67-68.

²⁶ Overstone, 'Wars are won by men not weapons,' 88.

²⁷ Lambert, "‘Tell England’," 683.

²⁸ Lambert, "‘Tell England’," 75, 76.

²⁹ Lunn, "‘Hippies, radicals and the Sounds of Silence’," 75.

³⁰ Lunn, "‘Hippies, radicals and the Sounds of Silence’," 75.

³¹ L. Thompson, *A History of South Africa, fourth edition* (United States: Yale University Press, 2014), 161.

³² Thompson, *A History of South Africa*, 161.

spread across the world, with consumers spending less and investments dropping, which caused declines in industrial output and employment as failing companies laid off workers.³³

In South Africa, the Great Depression started to affect the country in 1929, and affected the diamond mining industry and the agricultural industry, especially the wool farmers in the Eastern Cape.³⁴ In addition to the Great Depression, a severe drought plagued the country in 1932, and many farmers had to leave their farms because of the financial burden they experienced.³⁵ In December 1932, South Africa abandoned the gold standard³⁶ and the economy started recovering.³⁷ Regarding the financial downturn of the Great Depression, the Blundell family seemed to have been unaffected.³⁸ Julie Blundell, Blundell's daughter, said that according to Mariota, Blundell's sister, the family were already not very wealthy, and they were used to getting by with less.³⁹ Mariota also recalled that as children, she and her siblings were not aware of the financial hard-times of the Great Depression.⁴⁰

High school, war and apartheid

In 1933, the Blundell family left South Africa and moved to Leicester in England after Keith Senior was offered a post to serve as the Anglican minister at Saint Paul's Church.⁴¹ They boarded a Union Castle Liner, the Warwick Castle, in Port Elizabeth, and the voyage to England took two months.⁴² Blundell, six years old at the time, wrote in a piece that he could not remember much from that trip, but he can recall his mother and sisters getting seasick.⁴³

³³ J. Moser, "The great depression," in *A companion to World War II*, eds. T.W. Zeiler and D.M. DuBois (United States of America: John Wiley and Sons, 2013), 1.

³⁴ A. Minnaar, "The Great Depression 1929-1934: Adverse exchange rates and the South African wool farmer," *South African Journal of Economic History* 5, no. 1 (1990), 31, 43.

³⁵ Minnaar, "The Great Depression," 44.

³⁶ The gold standard is a system in which a country's currency is tied to gold and countries agree to exchange paper money for a fixed amount of gold.

³⁷ A. Minnaar, "Graaff-Reinet and the great depression (1929-1933)" (PhD diss., Rhodes University, 1979), 16.

³⁸ Julie Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, May 24, 2021.

³⁹ Julie Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, May 24, 2021.

⁴⁰ Julie Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, May 24, 2021.

⁴¹ Hidden Years Music Archive. Keith Blundell collection, Keith Blundell 1927-2002 file, Project. Introduction, 2; Julie Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, May 24, 2021.

⁴² Hidden Years Music Archive. Keith Blundell collection, Keith Blundell 1927-2002 file, Project. Written piece, 2; Hidden Years Music Archive. Keith Blundell collection, Keith Blundell 1927-2002 file, Project. Introduction, 2.

⁴³ Hidden Years Music Archive. Keith Blundell collection, Keith Blundell 1927-2002 file, Project. Written piece, 2.

He could also remember the crew having a fancy dress competition for the passengers, and his family dressed him up as an Austrian boy with braces.⁴⁴

In England, the Blundell family lived in the rectory next to Saint Paul's church.⁴⁵ His father worked at the Saint Paul's church, a small Anglican parish church located on Kirby Street, Leicester.⁴⁶ While in England, Blundell was sent to a boarding school, namely Westbourne House Preparatory school.⁴⁷ Westbourne House was located in Folkestone,⁴⁸ 96 miles from where his family lived.⁴⁹ Blundell hated leaving home when going to school, and he cried whenever leaving.⁵⁰

Folkestone is a port town now known for being at the English terminus of the Channel Tunnel to France and forming part of the Strait of Dover.⁵¹ The Strait of Dover is the narrow water channel that separates England from France and connects the English Channel with the North Sea.⁵² The town of Folkestone is known for its very cold weather and raging winds. Blundell described the school building as a very cold place, complaining that he got chilblains on the edge of his ears because of the cold.⁵³ Despite not enjoying being far away from his family, he did well at school, excelling in English and French.⁵⁴ It was at this school that he developed his love for sports. Blundell started boxing when he was eight years old. Although he was thrown into boxing without being asked if he wanted to participate, he kept the practice for

⁴⁴ Hidden Years Music Archive. Keith Blundell collection, Keith Blundell 1927-2002 file, Project. Written piece, 2.

⁴⁵ Hidden Years Music Archive. Keith Blundell collection, Keith Blundell 1927-2002 file, Project. Introduction, 2.

⁴⁶ Hidden Years Music Archive. Blundell collection, Keith Blundell 1927-2002 file, Project. Written piece, 2; "Leicester: St Paul," accessed August 5, 2021, <https://www.leicester.anglican.org/acny/city-of-leicester/619043-leicester-st-paul>.

⁴⁷ Hidden Years Music Archive. Keith Blundell collection, Keith Blundell 1927-2002 file, Project. Written piece, 2.

⁴⁸ Westbourne House is currently located in Chichester, but in the time that Keith was a pupil at the school, the school was in Folkestone and was 96 miles from where his family lived.

⁴⁹ Hidden Years Music Archive. Keith Blundell collection, Keith Blundell 1927-2002 file, Project. Written piece, 2; "Our History," accessed September 3, 2021, <https://www.westbournehouse.org/our-school/our-history>; "An Inspiring location," accessed September 3, 2021, <https://www.westbournehouse.org/our-school/inspiring-location>.

⁵⁰ Hidden Years Music Archive. Keith Blundell collection, Keith Blundell 1927-2002 file, Project. Written piece, 2.

⁵¹ "Folkestone," accessed July 20, 2021, <https://www.britannica.com/place/Folkestone>.

⁵² "Strait of Dover," accessed July 20, 2021, <https://www.britannica.com/place/Strait-of-Dover>.

⁵³ Hidden Years Music Archive. Keith Blundell collection, Keith Blundell 1927-2002 file, Project. Written piece, 4.

⁵⁴ Hidden Years Music Archive. Keith Blundell collection, Keith Blundell 1927-2002 file, Project. Written piece, 3.

most of his young adult life.⁵⁵ His first fight was against a bigger and older boy called Peter V'lasto, and he lost the fight.⁵⁶ That was the last fight he lost for the next ten years.⁵⁷ Besides boxing, he also did athletics, specifically long jump and 100 yards race, and he played soccer for the school's first team.⁵⁸ His participation in these sports and his academics show him as a determined person who works hard to achieve what he sets his mind to.

In 1938, when Blundell was 11 years old, the Blundell family moved back to South Africa.⁵⁹ Once again, his father's job as an Anglican minister led to the move. Blundell noted that he was very happy when he heard the news.⁶⁰ In November 1938, the Blundell family boarded the Union Castle Liner ship, Windsor Castle, and undertook the two-month-long journey back to South Africa.⁶¹

When they arrived in Port Elizabeth, they rented a car, drove to Cape Town, and from there took the train to Yeoville in Johannesburg where they settled down.⁶² They stayed in the rectory of St. Aidan's Church, located on the corner of Regent Street and Cavendish Road.⁶³ This church was built in 1912 as a place of worship. There is little information regarding Yeoville at the time of the Blundell's arrival. However, during and after apartheid, the town was considered a migrant-dominant area home to mainly working-class people, due to Yeoville's proximity to Johannesburg.⁶⁴ During the apartheid years, Yeoville had a predominantly white population, and it was classified as a white area under the Group Areas Act.⁶⁵ Yeoville later

⁵⁵ Hidden Years Music Archive. Keith Blundell collection, Keith Blundell 1927-2002 file, Project. Written piece, 3.

⁵⁶ Hidden Years Music Archive. Keith Blundell collection, Keith Blundell 1927-2002 file, Project. Written piece, 3.

⁵⁷ Hidden Years Music Archive. Keith Blundell collection, Keith Blundell 1927-2002 file, Project. Written piece, 3.

⁵⁸ Hidden Years Music Archive. Keith Blundell collection, Keith Blundell 1927-2002 file, Project. Written piece, 3.

⁵⁹ Hidden Years Music Archive. Keith Blundell collection, Keith Blundell 1927-2002 file, Project. School, 2.

⁶⁰ Hidden Years Music Archive. Keith Blundell collection, Keith Blundell 1927-2002 file, Project. School, 2.

⁶¹ Hidden Years Music Archive. Keith Blundell collection, Keith Blundell 1927-2002 file, Project. Written piece, 5.

⁶² Hidden Years Music Archive. Keith Blundell collection, Keith Blundell 1927-2002 file, Project. Written piece, 4; Hidden Years Music Archive. Keith Blundell collection, Keith Blundell 1927-2002 file, Project. Introduction, 2.

⁶³ M. Smithers, *Re-imagining post-apartheid Yeoville Bellevue: The journey and reflections of a resident archivist/archivist resident* (Johannesburg: University of Witwatersrand, 2013), 60.

⁶⁴ C. Nishinwe, "An African women's theology of relatedness in the context of Black African migrant women in South Africa" (PhD diss., University of Johannesburg, 2019), 4.

⁶⁵ "Overview of Yeoville," accessed February 12, 2022, <https://s4.ad.brown.edu/Projects/southafrica/Reports/Johannesburg/Yeoville.pdf>.

became well-known in the 1980s for its night clubs where young anti-apartheid musicians played the music from the Voëlvrý movement.⁶⁶

The move to Yeoville was an important part of Blundell's life because it was the first time he was part of a church's choir.⁶⁷ In this choir, there were 17 boys, eight men and six women, and their conductor was Phil Srainners.⁶⁸ Srainners taught the choir hymns and the psalms, and he taught the choir how to read music.⁶⁹ Reading music and learning how to harmonise were skills that would help Blundell throughout his career as a musician. Blundell became very close to choir boys and spend his free time with them playing pranks on the neighbourhood.⁷⁰ One of the activities they did together was to play a game known in the present day as 'toktokkie', where they knocked on a stranger's front door and ran away before the stranger opened it.⁷¹ Blundell remembers this childish game as filled with excitement because there was always the chance that the homeowner could catch them.⁷² At the start of 1939, he attended Parktown Preparatory school located in Mountain View, Johannesburg.⁷³ He attended this school for two years before going to St. Andrews College.⁷⁴

Blundell was 12 years old when the Second World War broke out in 1939, and the War and its impact on South Africa formed the broader canvass of his secondary school years and his passage into the adult world. Britain declared war on Germany on 3 September 1939, and three

⁶⁶ M. Suriano and C. Lewis, "Afrikaners is Plesierig! Voëlvrý Music, Anti-apartheid identities and rocky street nightclubs in Yeoville (Johannesburg), 190s-90s," *African Studies* 74, no. 3 (2015), 405. The Voëlvrý movement was a music movement started by a band named the Gereformeerde Blues Band who sang lyrics that made fun of the apartheid system as well as the Afrikaans political leaders. See A. Grundlingh, "'Rocking the boat' in South Africa? Voëlvrý music and Afrikaans Anti-Apartheid Social Protest in the 1980s," *The International Journal of African Historical studies* 37, no. 3 (2004), 484.

⁶⁷ Hidden Years Music Archive. Keith Blundell collection, Keith Blundell 1927-2002 file, Project. Introduction, 2; Hidden Years Music Archive. Keith Blundell collection, Keith Blundell 1927-2002 file, Project. Written piece, 4.

⁶⁸ Hidden Years Music Archive. Keith Blundell collection, Keith Blundell 1927-2002 file, Project. Written piece, 4.

⁶⁹ Hidden Years Music Archive. Keith Blundell collection, Keith Blundell 1927-2002 file, Project. Written piece, 4.

⁷⁰ Hidden Years Music Archive. Keith Blundell collection, Keith Blundell 1927-2002 file, Project. Written piece, 4.

⁷¹ Hidden Years Music Archive. Keith Blundell collection, Keith Blundell 1927-2002 file, Project. Written piece, 4.

⁷² Hidden Years Music Archive. Keith Blundell collection, Keith Blundell 1927-2002 file, Project. Written piece, 4.

⁷³ Hidden Years Music Archive. Keith Blundell collection, Keith Blundell 1927-2002 file, Project. Timeline; Hidden Years Music Archive. Keith Blundell collection, Keith Blundell 1927-2002 file, Project. School, 2.

⁷⁴ Hidden Years Music Archive. Keith Blundell collection, Keith Blundell 1927-2002 file, Project. School, 2.

days later, South Africa became involved by fighting on the Allied side.⁷⁵ South Africa's decision to participate in the war was divided politically. J.B.M. Hertzog, the prime minister of South Africa and leader of the United Party (UP), felt that South Africa should not participate in the war, and J.C. Smuts, former prime minister of South Africa from 1919 to 1924, demanded the country take part.⁷⁶ A parliamentary debate was held to establish South Africa's involvement in the Second World War, and J.C. Smuts won the debate.⁷⁷ Hertzog resigned, and Smuts became South Africa's prime minister – a position he held for the entire period of the Second World War.⁷⁸ Hertzog and his followers left the United Party and eventually agreed to collaborate with D.F. Malan, leader of the Purified National Party (PNP).⁷⁹ This collaboration led to the formation of a new party called the Reunited National Party or People's Party in January 1940.⁸⁰

The country was not ready to participate in military actions, and normally the Minister of Defence needed six months to prepare for readiness.⁸¹ The South African Army had only 5 000 soldiers, of which 260 were officers, and participation in the army was voluntary.⁸² The army took part in the fights in East Africa at the beginning of the war and later moved to fight in Europe.⁸³ On 27 January 1943, Smuts requested the government to send troops to Europe to fight in the war, and the government approved the request.⁸⁴ South Africa then also started to produce explosives on a large scale near Johannesburg.⁸⁵ The country played a significant role in sending troops, military equipment and raw materials to support Great Britain.⁸⁶ According to Mariota, Blundell's sister, the Second World War did not immediately impact the family.⁸⁷ The parish priests simply went about their business in the church.⁸⁸ However, during this time, Blundell, aged 18, joined the Navy, and the impact this had on the family will be discussed

⁷⁵ T.N. Mhlambi, "Sound in urban public space: loudspeaker broadcasts in Johannesburg and Durban in South Africa, 1940s," *Cultural Studies* 34, no. 6 (2020): 960.

⁷⁶ A. Zukowski, "The union of South Africa towards the outbreak of the Second World War," *Politeja* 42 (2016): 20-21.

⁷⁷ Zukowski, "The union of South Africa," 21-22.

⁷⁸ Zukowski, "The union of South Africa," 23.

⁷⁹ L. Korf, "DF Malan: A political biography" (PhD diss., University of Stellenbosch, 2010), 384.

⁸⁰ Korf, "DF Malan," 393.

⁸¹ Zukowski, "The union of South Africa," 28.

⁸² Zukowski, "The union of South Africa," 28.

⁸³ Zukowski, "The union of South Africa," 29.

⁸⁴ Zukowski, "The union of South Africa," 23.

⁸⁵ Zukowski, "The union of South Africa," 29.

⁸⁶ Zukowski, "The union of South Africa," 28.

⁸⁷ Julie Blundell, email sent to Marion Webber, October 11, 2021.

⁸⁸ Julie Blundell, email sent to Marion Webber, October 11, 2021.

later in the chapter.⁸⁹ The idea that the Blundell family was not affected by the Great Depression and the Second World War raises questions. The reason for them not being affected is uncertain. However, it could be related to the family living in a “religious cocoon” that might have sheltered them from the realities of war.

In 1941, Blundell left home to attend St Andrew’s College in Makhanda as a boarder, 650 miles away from home.⁹⁰ There were multiple reasons for picking this particular school. As one of the best Anglican schools in South Africa at the time, Blundell’s parents preferred to send him there, and Makhanda was a familiar place to the Blundell family.⁹¹ The Blundell family also had the tradition of sending their sons to boarding school, and Blundell Senior wanted his son to have the same experience.⁹² Because of his father’s career as an Anglican priest, there could have been a financial incentive for their decision. However, there is no recording of such benefits.⁹³ It was a 6-hour train journey each year to go back to Parktown to spend time with his family.⁹⁴ Blundell went home three times a year because the college followed a three-term program.⁹⁵ Music formed an important element of his family life during school holidays. At home they sang in four-part harmony around the piano with his mother or sisters playing.⁹⁶

At St. Andrew’s, Blundell stayed in Armstrong boarding house, which stood at the top end of Somerset Street.⁹⁷ Armstrong house was the second boarding house to be built at the College and the house had an English House system. The English House system meant that each house had a ‘tone’ and a character determined by the housemaster.⁹⁸ The housemaster in charge during Blundell’s high school years was W.E.C. ‘Cocky’ Clark.⁹⁹ Within these systems, boys were taught that “their entire existence was linked to their house and their honour” with the boys also nurturing their “manly ‘grit’”.¹⁰⁰ Between the different houses at the school, there

⁸⁹ Julie Blundell, email sent to Marion Webber, October 11, 2021.

⁹⁰ Hidden Years Music Archive. Keith Blundell collection, Keith Blundell 1927-2002 file, Project. Introduction, 3; Hidden Years Music Archive. Keith Blundell collection, Keith Blundell 1927-2002 file, Project. Written piece, 6.

⁹¹ Julie Blundell, email to Marion Webber, August 4, 2021.

⁹² Julie Blundell, email to Marion Webber, August 4, 2021.

⁹³ Julie Blundell, email to Marion Webber, April 22, 2022.

⁹⁴ Hidden Years Music Archive. Keith Blundell collection, Keith Blundell 1927-2002 file, Project. Written piece, 6.

⁹⁵ Julie Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, September 27, 2021.

⁹⁶ Julie Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, May 24, 2021.

⁹⁷ Armstrong House,” accessed August 5, 2021. <https://www.sacschool.com/dayboy-boarding/armstrong-house/>.

⁹⁸ M. Poland, *The boy in you: A biography of St. Andrew’s College, 1855-2005* (Makhanda: Fernwood Press, 2008), 121.

⁹⁹ Poland, *The boy in you*, 121.

¹⁰⁰ Poland, *The boy in you*, 121.

were attendant competitions, rivalries, and loyalties.¹⁰¹ The rivalries and competitions included cricket and rugby against Espin, the other house at the college and the winner received the Hill Challenge Cup.¹⁰² These inter-house competitions were held to give depth to the sports, and it made students “honour their house” by participating in them.¹⁰³



Figure 2: Armstrong House.¹⁰⁴

While at St. Andrew’s, Blundell was bullied, especially at the beginning of his high school years, and he was also extremely homesick.¹⁰⁵ Being bullied, and longing for home negatively impacted his enjoyment of boarding school experiences. Despite this, he actively participated in school activities, especially sports. He did not excel in his academic work, and his report cards repeatedly described him as “intelligent but lazy”.¹⁰⁶ While his academics were not up to standard, Blundell played rugby in Grade 8 and was part of the team for Armstrong college.¹⁰⁷ He continued with his boxing practice and won every match except for the last one.¹⁰⁸ This match was in 1944, and it was part of a boxing event between Armstrong House and Espin

¹⁰¹ “Armstrong House.”

¹⁰² Poland, “*The boy in you*,” 141.

¹⁰³ Poland, “*The boy in you*,” 141.

¹⁰⁴ Poland, “*The boy in you*,” 92.

¹⁰⁵ Jonny Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, May 24, 2021; Julie Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, September 27, 2021.

¹⁰⁶ Hidden Years Music Archive. Keith Blundell collection, Keith Blundell 1927-2002 file, Project. School, 3.

¹⁰⁷ Liezel Coetzee, email to Marion Webber, June 17, 2021.

¹⁰⁸ Hidden Years Music Archive. Keith Blundell collection, Keith Blundell 1927-2002 file, Project. Timeline.

house.¹⁰⁹ His house lost the event, with a score of 7-4 for Espin House.¹¹⁰ After this event and the match he lost, he never boxed again.¹¹¹ The reason for his decision not to continue with the sport is uncertain.¹¹² He also played hockey and ran cross-country for his school.¹¹³

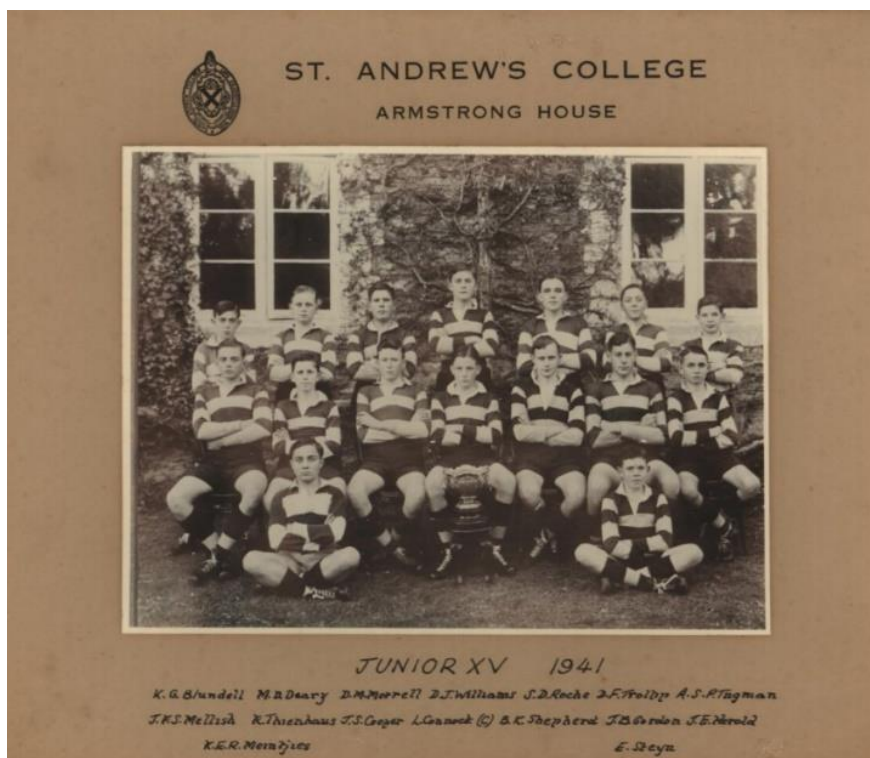


Figure 3: Keith Blundell (top row on the left) with his rugby team for Armstrong College in Grade 8, 1941.¹¹⁴

Other than sports activities, Blundell also participated in various musical activities, such as singing for the school and the church's choir as part of the tenor voice group.¹¹⁵ He also learned how to play the bagpipes, and he was in the college cadet band.¹¹⁶ The cadet system was first implemented in the schools in Kwazulu-Natal and the Eastern Province. The system was based

¹⁰⁹ Liezel Coetzee, email to Marion Webber, June 17, 2021.

¹¹⁰ Liezel Coetzee, email to Marion Webber, June 17, 2021.

¹¹¹ Hidden Years Music Archive. Keith Blundell collection, Keith Blundell 1927-2002 file, Project. Written piece, 6.

¹¹² Julie Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, September 27, 2021.

¹¹³ Hidden Years Music Archive. Keith Blundell collection, Keith Blundell 1927-2002 file, Project. Written piece, 6.

¹¹⁴ Liezel Coetzee, email to Marion Webber, June 17, 2021.

¹¹⁵ Hidden Years Music Archive. Keith Blundell collection, Keith Blundell 1927-2002 file, Project. Written piece, 6; Hidden Years Music Archive. Keith Blundell collection, Keith Blundell 1927-2002 file, Project. School, 3.

¹¹⁶ Hidden Years Music Archive. Keith Blundell collection, Keith Blundell 1927-2002 file, Project. Written piece, 6.

on the British cadet organisation that existed since 1860.¹¹⁷ According to Colonel M.J. Viljoen, the cadet system was implemented in South African schools to prepare boys for military service.¹¹⁸ The South African Army financed it and the training in the schools was done by teachers who were officers in the Commandos or who have already done their national service.¹¹⁹ The cadet system was first established at St. Andrews College in 1875 by Dr Charles Gould Ross, the headmaster at the time, and other schools followed.¹²⁰ Initially, it was voluntary for boys to join the cadet groups. However, in 1903 the government made it compulsory for government or aided schools in the colony to have instituted Cadet corps or classes of instruction in military drill.¹²¹ Blundell was part of his school's cadet band during the Second World War. According to Viljoen, the cadet programme experienced a slump during this time due to the shortage of education officers.¹²² This shortage was due to the officers and teachers that took leave to join the military service.¹²³



Figure 4: Keith Blundell, in the middle front, in the cadet band at St. Andrew's College in 1942.¹²⁴

¹¹⁷ M.J. Viljoen, "Die ontstaan en die ontwikkeling van die skoolkadette-stelsel in die RSA: Grepe uit die geskiedenis en 'n oorsig oor die huidige stelsel," *Scientia Militaria, South African Journal of Military Studies* 15, no. 3 (1985): 38.

¹¹⁸ T. du Plessis, G. van der Westhuizen and I. Liebenberg, "The willing and the not so willing: Conscripted and resistance to compulsory military service in South Africa, 1968-1989," *Joernaal/Journal* 37, no. 2 (2012): 151.

¹¹⁹ Du Plessis, Van der Westhuizen and Liebenberg, "The willing and the not so willing," 151.

¹²⁰ Viljoen. "Die ontstaan en die ontwikkeling van die skoolkadette-stelsel," 41; Overstone: "Wars are won by men not weapons," 11.

¹²¹ Viljoen, "Die ontstaan en die ontwikkeling van die skoolkadette-stelsel," 41.

¹²² Viljoen, "Die ontstaan en die ontwikkeling van die skoolkadette-stelsel," 42.

¹²³ Overstone, "Wars are won by men not weapons," 54.

¹²⁴ Hidden Years Music Archive. Keith Blundell collection, Keith Blundell 1927-2002 file, Project. The Navy.

Blundell attended St Andrew's for his entire high school education. However, he did not finish high school because he failed his matric exam.¹²⁵ The reason for this is unknown. He wrote the exam again in the first month of 1945, but he failed again.¹²⁶ Because of this, and without matriculating from High School, Blundell decided to join the Navy in 1945.¹²⁷ Blundell always wanted to join the Navy but was turned down the previous year because he could not make the required minimum weight limit.¹²⁸ He had a love for the sea and ships, and according to his daughter, Caroline, he decided to keep applying for the Navy until he was accepted.¹²⁹ His son Jonny Blundell noted that one of the reasons for joining the Navy could also relate to the pride in serving one's country.¹³⁰

Blundell joined the South African Naval Forces (S.A.N.F.) and moved to Saldanha Bay, where he started his basic disciplinary and seamanship training.¹³¹ He completed his training in three months after which he went to the base in Simons Town, where he specialised in Anti-Aircraft gunnery (A.A. gunnery). He was trained in handling Oerlikon 20mm guns and Bofors 40mm guns.¹³² He was then drafted to the frigate S.A.S. Good Hope and, after six months, was transferred to S.A.S. Transvaal for the next 14 months.¹³³ From there, he sailed to Mombasa and up the Red Sea to Port Tewfik.¹³⁴ The S.A.S. Transvaal and the S.A. Good Hope, at this time, was tasked to repatriate South African servicemen that took part in the War from Egypt between November 1945 and March of 1946.¹³⁵ On his trip, he went ashore and saw the pyramids and sphinx in Egypt.¹³⁶ Blundell returned home to Johannesburg after 14 months of serving in the Navy.¹³⁷ According to Teper Blundell, his son, the reason for his return might

¹²⁵ Hidden Years Music Archive. Keith Blundell collection, Keith Blundell 1927-2002 file, Project. Written piece, 6.

¹²⁶ Hidden Years Music Archive. Keith Blundell collection, Keith Blundell 1927-2002 file, Project. Written piece, 6.

¹²⁷ Hidden Years Music Archive. Keith Blundell collection, Keith Blundell 1927-2002 file, Project. Introduction, 3.

¹²⁸ Jonny Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, May 24, 2021.

¹²⁹ Jonny and Teper Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, May 24, 2021; Caroline Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, April 22, 2022.

¹³⁰ Jonny Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, May 24, 2021.

¹³¹ Hidden Years Music Archive. Keith Blundell collection, Keith Blundell 1927-2002 file, Project. The Navy.

¹³² Hidden Years Music Archive. Keith Blundell collection, Keith Blundell 1927-2002 file, Project. Written piece, 7.

¹³³ Hidden Years Music Archive. Keith Blundell collection, Keith Blundell 1927-2002 file, Project. The Navy.

¹³⁴ Hidden Years Music Archive. Keith Blundell collection, Keith Blundell 1927-2002 file, Project. The Navy.

¹³⁵ A. du Toit, *South Africa's Fighting Ships: Past and present* (Johannesburg: Ashanti, 1992), 161.

¹³⁶ Hidden Years Music Archive. Keith Blundell collection, Keith Blundell 1927-2002 file, Project. The Navy.

¹³⁷ Hidden Years Music Archive. Keith Blundell collection, Keith Blundell 1927-2002 file, Project. Introduction, 3.

have been because by the cessation of hostilities at the end of the Second World War, as part of the general discharge of wartime troops.¹³⁸ This is confirmed in an archive document that notes that Blundell came home after “the argument with Hitler cooled off”.¹³⁹

Blundell found work at the Public Utility Transport Corporation (PUTCO) in Johannesburg.¹⁴⁰ PUTCO was a bus company that built the bodies, engines, and gearboxes for busses.¹⁴¹ His role at the PUTCO bus company is uncertain.¹⁴² While working at the Bus company, Blundell met Pamela Ashley Brathwaite, who became his wife. Pamela was at this time a music teacher at the Ridge Primary School for boys located in Westcliff, Johannesburg.¹⁴³ They met on the steps of the St. George’s Anglican Church in Parktown at a carol service in 1949.¹⁴⁴ The church is situated between the Northern suburbs and the inner city of Parktown, Johannesburg, and is known as the church of Nicky Oppenheimer and his family.¹⁴⁵ Blundell and Pamela were both part of the church choir and according to Julie and Caroline Blundell, when their mother first saw Blundell, she pointed him out to a friend and said “That’s the man I’m going to marry”.¹⁴⁶ Blundell and Pam dated for two years before they got married on 27 January 1951.¹⁴⁷ After their marriage, Pamela continued working as a music teacher while Blundell continued his work at the PUTCO Bus company.¹⁴⁸ It was just over a year after their marriage that Blundell and Pamela welcomed their first child, Caroline.¹⁴⁹ Two years later, in 1954, they had their second child, Julie.¹⁵⁰

¹³⁸ Teper Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, April 22, 2022.

¹³⁹ Hidden Years Music Archive. Keith Blundell collection, Scrapbook, Programme. “Keith.” *Keith and the Balladeers in concert programme*, (1966), 7.

¹⁴⁰ Hidden Years Music Archive. Keith Blundell collection, Keith Blundell 1927-2002 file, Project. Career, 1.

¹⁴¹ “History of PUTCO,” accessed July 29, 2021, <https://putco.co.za/Pages/Our-History.asp?mini-product=1>; “‘Asinamali’, We have no money,” accessed August 9, 2021, <https://www.sahistory.org.za/archive/asinamali-we-have-no-money>.

¹⁴² Julie Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, August 4, 2021.

¹⁴³ Julie Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, May 24, 2021; “The Ridge School: Where boys are known and grown,” accessed April 20, 2022, <https://www.ridgeschool.co.za/>.

¹⁴⁴ Hidden Years Music Archive. Keith Blundell collection, Keith Blundell 1927-2002 file, Project. Introduction, 3.

¹⁴⁵ “Parish history,” accessed July 29, 2021, <https://www.stgeorgesparktown.org/history>.

¹⁴⁶ Julie and Caroline Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, May 24, 2021.

¹⁴⁷ Julie Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, May 24, 2021; Hidden Years Music Archive. Project, Keith Blundell collection, Keith Blundell 1927-2002 file, Project. Introduction, 3.

¹⁴⁸ Julie Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, May 24, 2021.

¹⁴⁹ Caroline Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, May 24, 2021.

¹⁵⁰ Julie Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, May 24, 2021.



Figure 5: Keith Blundell (left) and his wife, Pamela Blundell, (right) on their wedding day, 1951.¹⁵¹

In 1956, Blundell decided to leave his work at the Bus company to buy a sports and travel shop called Gullivers, located in Rosebank.¹⁵² Gullivers specialised in racquet repairs and re-stringing, travel and sports goods.¹⁵³ Blundell bought this shop because he wanted to pursue a career related to sports.¹⁵⁴ This was a versatile shop for all sports including boxing, tennis and cricket.¹⁵⁵ In 1958, their first son, Jonny Blundell was born.¹⁵⁶

Throughout Blundell's childhood, religion formed part of his upbringing and his family's lifestyle. Although his father and mother stayed religious during Blundell's life, Blundell's relationship with the Anglican religion did not last. According to Julie Blundell, his daughter, Blundell had to go to church and sing in the church choir during his childhood, and his participation was not negotiable.¹⁵⁷ Julie recalls her father's relationship with religion, pointing out that "as far as we understood, 'God' and 'Dad' got a little mixed up for our father".¹⁵⁸ From these words, one can deduce that Blundell associated religion with the pressure of his father, and he, a sensitive man, was unlike his stern father.¹⁵⁹ This could have influenced Blundell's break with his religious upbringing, however, he was tolerant of his wife, Pamela, and her deep

¹⁵¹ Hidden Years Music Archive. Keith Blundell collection, Video. Mi's 80th birthday slideshow.

¹⁵² Hidden Years Music Archive. Keith Blundell collection, Keith Blundell 1927-2002 file, Project. Career, 1.

¹⁵³ *Rand Daily Mail*, September 25, 1959, "Pleasure & Leisure," 8.

¹⁵⁴ Jonny Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, May 24, 2021.

¹⁵⁵ Jonny Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, May 24, 2021.

¹⁵⁶ Jonny Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, May 24, 2021.

¹⁵⁷ Julie Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, October 25, 2021.

¹⁵⁸ Julie Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, October 25, 2021.

¹⁵⁹ Julie Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, October 25, 2021.

faith in the Anglican religion.¹⁶⁰ Blundell also decided to not pass his religious upbringing on to any of his children, and they were not forced to attend church.¹⁶¹

The rise of apartheid

The 1950s in South Africa saw the institutionalisation of apartheid. The National Party (NP) won the general election in 1948 and started to implement apartheid legislation and policies of separate development.¹⁶² Some of these laws and policies included the Population Registration Act (1950) and the Group Areas Act (1950).¹⁶³ The Population Registration Act classified people into three broad categories, Europeans (whites), Blacks and Coloureds with coloured and black people being classified according to ethnic associations, such as Indian, African, and Asian.¹⁶⁴ This act required every citizen of South Africa to have identity papers marked with one of these racial identities.¹⁶⁵ The Group Areas Act applied racial grouping to the landscape and the law determined the ownership and occupation of land according to skin colour.¹⁶⁶ The implementation of this law meant the forced removals of entire communities from areas that were now classified as white.¹⁶⁷ This went hand in hand with the Separate Amenities Act (1953) according to which racial grouping was also used to demarcate the use of public facilities such as trains, buses, park benches and restaurants.¹⁶⁸

In 1950, the 1927 Immorality Act was also further refined.¹⁶⁹ This act banned any sexual relationship between different races as constructed by the government of the time, explicitly banning sex between “white” and any “non-white”¹⁷⁰ person.¹⁷¹ In protest to these laws, the African National Congress (ANC) and the Communist Party launched the Defiance Campaign in 1952.¹⁷² This campaign was created to protest against the government’s discriminatory

¹⁶⁰ Julie Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, October 25, 2021.

¹⁶¹ Julie Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, October 25, 2021.

¹⁶² Thompson, *A History of South Africa*, xxi.

¹⁶³ M. Morris, *Apartheid: An illustrated history* (Johannesburg: Jonathan Ball Publishers, 2012), 32.

¹⁶⁴ Morris, *Apartheid: An illustrated history*, 35.

¹⁶⁵ Morris, *Apartheid: An illustrated history*, 32.

¹⁶⁶ Morris, *Apartheid: An illustrated history*, 32.

¹⁶⁷ Morris, *Apartheid: An illustrated history*, 32.

¹⁶⁸ Morris, *Apartheid: An illustrated history*, 37.

¹⁶⁹ Morris, *Apartheid: An illustrated history*, 36.

¹⁷⁰ The term “non-white” was a Eurocentric term used to indicate any race that was not considered white in the Apartheid era. This term is no longer an acceptable race descriptor in South Africa.

¹⁷¹ Morris, *Apartheid: An illustrated history*, 32.

¹⁷² N. Worden, *The making of modern South Africa: conquest, apartheid, democracy* (United Kingdom: John Wiley and Sons, 2012), 109.

legislation with the purpose of mobilizing widespread defiance of unjust laws such as the pass laws and segregation of amenities.¹⁷³ The pass regulations ensured that black people were separated from white people in social, educational and occupational domains.¹⁷⁴ 1953 saw the implementation of the Bantu Education Act, a law that took away the control of schools from provinces, and placed the control in the hands of Verwoerd's Department of Bantu Administration and Development.¹⁷⁵ In 1956, the government prohibited 'open universities', including Wits University and the University of Cape Town, from admitting students who were not classified as white.¹⁷⁶ For everyone else separate universities were established.¹⁷⁷ There were exceptions to the rule when a course a student wanted to enrol for was not offered at any of the newly established universities.

Keith Blundell was classified as a White English-speaking South African. White English-speaking South Africans were categorised as either being from the British Isles or as descendants of British settlers.¹⁷⁸ Most White English-speaking South Africans supported the United Party, which was under the leadership of Jan Smuts.¹⁷⁹ The main policies of the United Party was to maintain South Africa's close relationship with Great Britain, and to continue the country's racial policy of segregation.¹⁸⁰ The United Party was also the official opposition against the National Party.¹⁸¹ As mentioned earlier, when Smuts was the prime minister, South Africans fought alongside Britain in the Second World War, and this historical event created pride in White English-speaking South Africans to fight for their country.¹⁸² In 1948, the National Party won the National elections for the first time. Their victory changed the country with the implementation and establishment of apartheid, officially ending in 1994 with the first democratic elections.

¹⁷³ Worden, *The making of modern South Africa*, 109.

¹⁷⁴ Worden, *The making of modern South Africa*, 109.

¹⁷⁵ Morris, *Apartheid: An illustrated history*, 46.

¹⁷⁶ M. Shear, *Wits: a university in the apartheid era* (Johannesburg: University of Witwatersrand, 1996), 1.

¹⁷⁷ Shear, *Wits*, 1.

¹⁷⁸ J. Lambert, "'Tell England'," 678.

¹⁷⁹ H. Suzman, *In no uncertain terms* (London: Mandarin, 1994), 13.

¹⁸⁰ N.L. Waddy, "The folk in the road? British reactions to the election of an apartheid government in South Africa, May 1948," *Historia* 55, no. 1 (2010): 78-79.

¹⁸¹ Suzman, *In no uncertain terms*, 13.

¹⁸² Zukowski, "The union of South Africa," 23.

During apartheid, White English-speaking South Africans were, according to Lawrence Schlemmer, associated with white opposition politics.¹⁸³ They were caught in the tension between Afrikaner nationalism and rising black nationalism.¹⁸⁴ As a result of this, they did not identify with either side of the conflict.¹⁸⁵ In addition, they were a minority group in South Africa which meant that they did not have a significant impact when it came to political events.¹⁸⁶ Pamela Blundell, speaks of this conflict during an interview with Roger Lucey, pointing out that English speakers “weren’t politically driven ... they hoped that the Nats [National Party] would be driven out of power but didn’t see how it could happen ... they weren’t about to support a black revolution ... terrified of a black revolution”.¹⁸⁷

Some of the White English-speaking population of South Africa, including Blundell, followed an Anglican upbringing and lifestyle. Thus, it is important to look at how Anglicans and the Anglican church viewed apartheid and the legislation. In Anglican churches, people are taught from the New Testament that “difference of skin pigmentation, place of residence, race, spiritual condition or cultural and educational development cannot alter the fact that men and women belong together and are responsible for each other as members of one universal family”.¹⁸⁸ Some Anglican churches continued teaching their members about the inclusivity of all, unlike the Dutch Reformed Church, the main religious denomination of Afrikaans speakers, that taught their members that people from different racial groups are “equal but different”.¹⁸⁹ International Anglican communities looked upon the Anglican churches of South Africa to form a resistance to the racial policies instituted by the government at the time, but the church did not achieve this resistance.¹⁹⁰

Even with the Anglican church’s teachings, some Anglican churches agreed with the concept of racial segregation. These churches contributed to the maintenance of racial segregation and white hegemony in South Africa, even though the churches were multilingual and open to any

¹⁸³ L. Schlemmer, “South African Politics and the English speakers,” *Document and Memorandum Series: Centre for Applied Social Sciences, University of Natal* (1985): 5.

¹⁸⁴ T. Salusbury, “Discourses of whiteness informing the identity of white English-speaking South Africans” (MA Thesis, University of Cape Town, 2003), 26.

¹⁸⁵ Salusbury, “Discourses of whiteness,” 26.

¹⁸⁶ Salusbury, “Discourses of whiteness,” 25.

¹⁸⁷ Hidden Years Music Archive. Keith Blundell collection, Pamela Blundell interviewed by Roger Lucey. Rough transcript of interview [n.d.].

¹⁸⁸ The rev T.N.W. Bush, “Anglicans and Apartheid”, Africa South, accessed April 20, 2022, <https://www.sahistory.org.za/sites/default/files/archive-files2/asjul61.6.pdf>, 28.

¹⁸⁹ Bush, “Anglicans and Apartheid,” 29.

¹⁹⁰ Bush, “Anglicans and Apartheid,” 31.

race.¹⁹¹ The members of the Anglican religion supported the legislation because of the business benefits it gave. Anglicans led many commerce and industry businesses in the country.¹⁹² Similarly, in the broader White English community, while they had relatively little political power, they dominated the country economically.¹⁹³ This was partly due to their historical rootedness in the commercial world of the British Empire.

According to his children, Julie, Jonny, and Teper, Blundell was not outspoken about his views on apartheid and he did not seem interested in politics.¹⁹⁴ It thus remains uncertain if he had any opinions on the government and the apartheid legislation. However, Teper did say that his father spoke on occasion about the legislation the apartheid government brought into the country, and he had criticised it but that he was a family man and did not want to put his family at risk.¹⁹⁵ It is uncertain whether he did speak about politics with his friends, but the statement Pamela shared in her interview with Roger Lucey could give an idea of what the political views were like in the house.

From the statement made by Pamela, as well as what Blundell's children said, one can argue that Keith Blundell portrayed himself in his family circle as an a-political figure, a persona he also cultivated in public. As his life unfolded, certain actions compromised his confessed a-political stance.

Keith Blundell's actions during his childhood, his determination to win every boxing match, and later deciding to separate himself from the Anglican faith that he grew up with, paint Blundell as an individualistic person with strong willpower and drive to succeed, although not academically. These characteristics of his identity persist throughout his life, especially when his career as a folk musician started.

¹⁹¹ F. Hale, "The impact of apartheid on the educational endeavours of two missionary agencies," *Studia Historiae Ecclesiasticae* 36, no. 2 (2010): 168.

¹⁹² Bush, "Anglicans and Apartheid," 29.

¹⁹³ Salusbury, "Discourses of whiteness," 26.

¹⁹⁴ Julie, Jonny and Teper Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, May 24, 2021.

¹⁹⁵ Teper Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, July 2, 2022.

Chapter 3: The South African with one eyebrow: Early years of Blundell's career (1960-1965)¹



Figure 6: Keith Blundell with his wife, Pamela Blundell, and three of his children, 1962.²
Top row from left to right: Caroline Blundell and Keith Blundell.
Bottom row from left to right: Julie Blundell, Jonny Blundell and Pamela Blundell.

Introduction

During the 1960s, the apartheid government ramped up its strategies of separate development and forced removals. Entire communities were destroyed through forced removals, for example in Sophiatown, and increasing resistance to the restrictions on freedom of movement enforced through the Pass Laws Act (1952) saw the Sharpeville massacre during which police fired on a crowd of protesting black people killing or wounding more than 250 people.³ After the massacre on 21 March 1960, the African National Congress (ANC) and the Pan Africanist Congress (PAC) were outlawed and their leadership were imprisoned or driven into exile.⁴ In

¹ Hidden Years Music Archive, Documentation Centre for Music, Stellenbosch University. Keith Blundell collection, Scrapbook, Programme. "Keith Blundell," *Stringalong folk programme*, (1968), 11.

² Hidden Years Music Archive, Documentation Centre for Music, Stellenbosch University. Keith Blundell collection, Miscellaneous. Loose photographs.

³ D.B. Coplan, *In Township Tonight!: South Africa's Black City Music and Theatre, Second Edition* (South Africa: Jacana Media (Pty) Ltd, 2007), 224.

⁴ Coplan, *In Township Tonight*, 224.

1963, the Publications and Entertainments Act was set up to direct and censor books, magazines, films, plays and recordings of South African musicians.⁵ This act allowed a Publications Control Board to be established, and their decisions on censoring material could be set aside only on appeal by the Supreme Court.⁶ On 7 June 1965, the Police Amendment Act was passed, which allowed police to search any person or place without a warrant within one mile of the South African border.⁷ When searching the person or place, the police could also seize anything they found without a warrant and often censored or banned material was confiscated.⁸

During this time of increasing political unrest and the censorship and banning of material, folk music grew in popularity. More music venues, such as the Troubadour, opened, and the South African Folk Music Association was founded. This chapter will discuss the start of Keith Blundell's career as a folk musician, the start of the Troubadour, and the first National Folk Festival in 1964.

The start of Keith Blundell's career as a folk musician

In 1960, Blundell was running a sport's shop in Johannesburg called Guillivers.⁹ While working there, he was approached by Rob Busvine to play Macheath in the play *The Beggars Opera*, a musical comedy that captures the atmosphere of London's underworld in 1728 and tells the story of a group of thieves and prostitutes.¹⁰ Rob Busvine was part of the Nicholson choir, where he met Blundell, Blundell's wife, Pamela, and Blundell's sister, Mariota, who also sang in the choir.¹¹ Busvine was the director of the play and cast Blundell in the role of Highwayman Macheath and Mariota as Polly Peachum.¹² The play was produced by the Trinity Players, an amateur drama society active in the 1960s.¹³ The society is known for performing

⁵ Coplan, *In Township Tonight*, 224.

⁶ J.C.W. van Rooyen, "1963-1988: From absolutism to differentiation. An analysis of the changing perceptions informing the work of the Publications Appeal Board," *South African Law Journal* 106, (1989): 341.

⁷ Morris, *Apartheid: an illustrated history*, 85.

⁸ Morris, *Apartheid: an illustrated history*, 85.

⁹ *Rand Daily Mail*, May 6, 1976, "Cornering a market," 3.

¹⁰ *Rand Daily Mail*, August 13, 1962, Advertisement: "The Beggars Opera," 8.

¹¹ Julie Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, September 27, 2021. The Nicholson choir was started by Guy Nicholson, headmaster of the Ridge Preparatory School in Johannesburg. In: "Where we've come from – Introduction," accessed August 14, 2022, <https://jhbbachchoir.co.za/about/where-weve-come-from-introduction/> 9.

¹² Julie Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, September 27, 2021.

¹³ Hidden Years Music Archive. Keith Blundell collection, Keith Blundell 1927-2002 file, Project. Career, 1.

different theatre productions in Johannesburg and was run by Mark Shute.¹⁴ Other performers who were part of the play included Jill Kirkland and John Ramsbottom.¹⁵ Jill Kirkland and Keith Blundell later collaborated on several musical projects in the mid-1960s.¹⁶

In an interview for the *Rand Daily Mail*, Blundell said that he “accepted the part more as a ‘joke’ than anything else”.¹⁷ During their rehearsal for the play, his fourth child Peter, nicknamed Teper, was born.¹⁸ The play was performed from 15 August to 1 September 1962 at the Intimate Theatre in Johannesburg.¹⁹ The play did well with many sold-out shows. However, Blundell’s acting was criticised.²⁰ Oliver Walker, a critic from *The Star* newspaper, commented that he had “never seen a more unthreatening Highwayman”.²¹ Blundell also admitted that his performance was “incredibly bad”.²² L. Sowden from the *Rand Daily Mail* published another critical review. In his review, “‘Beggar’s Opera’ is too genteel”, he said the work done on the play was not enough.²³ He noted that there was “too much gentility and not nearly enough vulgarity” in the play.²⁴ He found the play as a whole “too well dressed” for the setting, and said, “one waited for the music to breathe life into the performance.”²⁵

Although the play received strong critiques, it formed a decisive moment in Keith Blundell’s career. More than ten years later, he stated in a newspaper interview that the performance bug bit him when performing in this play. It inspired him to practise his guitar more to start performing folk music.²⁶ This guitar was a gift from Jeremy Taylor, whom Blundell met in 1962.²⁷

¹⁴ *Rand Daily Mail*, August 3, 1962, “Alphabetical phone fun,” 6; *Rand Daily Mail*, August 14, 1961, 7.

¹⁵ *Rand Daily Mail*, “Cornering a market.” For more information about John Ramsbottom, please consult the index on page v.

¹⁶ See below for more information.

¹⁷ *Rand Daily Mail*, “Cornering a market.”

¹⁸ Teper Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, May 24, 2021.

¹⁹ L. Sowden, “‘Beggar’s Opera’ is too genteel,” *Rand Daily Mail*, August 16, 1962, 6.

²⁰ Hidden Years Music Archive. Keith Blundell collection, Keith Blundell 1927-2002 file., Project. Career, 1; *Rand Daily Mail*, August 13, 1962, 8; *Rand Daily Mail*, August 23, 1962, 8.

²¹ Hidden Years Music Archive. Keith Blundell collection, Keith Blundell 1927-2002 file, Project. Career, 1.

²² *Rand Daily Mail*, “Cornering a market.”

²³ Sowden, “‘Beggar’s Opera’.”

²⁴ Sowden, “‘Beggar’s Opera’.”

²⁵ Sowden, “‘Beggar’s Opera’.”

²⁶ *Rand Daily Mail*, “Cornering a market.”

²⁷ Caroline Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, May 24, 2021.

Jeremy Taylor was born in England in 1937 and moved to South Africa in 1959 to work as a schoolteacher in the southern suburbs of Johannesburg.²⁸ Here he became fascinated with the diphthong of White English speakers and captured the accent and culture in the song “Ag Pleez Deddy” (1962).²⁹ This song became one of the most well-known songs of the English Folk Music movement in South Africa. The song was later included in the musical revue, *Wait a Minim!* (1962) and became one of its showpiece songs, reaching national and international audiences.³⁰ The song describes the lives, accents and culture of young working-class South Africans and mixes Afrikaans and English. The song was censored in 1970 because of the mixing of languages, and Taylor’s working permit was revoked.³¹ He returned to England in 1970, and continued performing on the British folk music circuit.³² He returned to work in South Africa in 1979 after his application for a work permit was approved.³³ He settled in Broederstroom, a farming area in Gauteng, and started performing again and showcasing songs about his life back in South Africa.³⁴ Through his song “Ag Pleeze Deddy,” and his continued investment in South African folk music, Jeremy Taylor had a lasting impact on folk music in South Africa. This is highlighted through his work with Andrew and Paul Tracey on *Wait a Minim!* (1962).

Wait a Minim! was a South African produced satirical and musical revue that greatly influenced the folk music movement.³⁵ The original cast consisted of Jeremy Taylor, Andrew and Paul Tracey and Kendrew Lascelles and was produced and directed by Leon Gluckman.³⁶ Andrew and Paul Tracey were the sons of Hugh Tracey. Throughout his life, Hugh Tracey collected music and instruments from across the African continent, and in 1954 he established the International Library of African Music, one of the biggest repositories of African music on the continent.³⁷ The Tracey brothers could play numerous African instruments, as well as the guitar.³⁸ In *Wait a Minim!*, the brothers performed with the Kalimba, the Bamboo Pipe and the

²⁸ Miller, *The 60s folk scene in South Africa*, 16.

²⁹ Miller, *The 60s folk scene in South Africa*, 49.

³⁰ Lambrechts and Taylor, “They called me the ‘Ag Pleez Deddy’ Man,” 46.

³¹ Lambrechts and Taylor, “They called me the ‘Ag Pleez Deddy’ Man,” 46.

³² Miller, *The 60s folk scene in South Africa*, 49.

³³ Miller, *The 60s folk scene in South Africa*, 50.

³⁴ Miller, *The 60s folk scene in South Africa*, 50.

³⁵ Miller, *The 60s folk scene in South Africa*, 21.

³⁶ Miller, *The 60s folk scene in South Africa*, 49; D. Sowden, “Music makers-modern style,” *Rand Daily Mail*, January 17, 1962, 6. For more information about Kendrew Lascelles and Leon Gluckman, please consult the index, p. iii.

³⁷ C.A. Muller. *South African Music: A century of traditions in transformation, Volume 1* (California: ABC-CLIO, 2014), 224.

³⁸ Miller, *The 60s folk scene in South Africa*, 40.

Mbira.³⁹ *Wait a Minim!* toured South Africa for one year, and the revue played a leading role in exposing audiences to folk music. As such, it is credited with influencing the establishment and growth of the White English Folk Music movement in South Africa.⁴⁰ The show played in South Africa in 1961 and 1962 and went on to tour London for two years and, afterwards, New York for another two-and-a-half years.⁴¹

Wait a Minim! referenced what was happening in the country at the time and was at risk of being censored, however, it was not. While this can point to the haphazard way the publication board applied its mandate, it can also point to how the musicians self-censored their lyrics when they recorded the album (1962), discussed in more detail in Chapter 4. Jeremy Taylor remarked during his interview with Lambrechts that during the recording of the *Wait a Minim!*, the group decided to remove the last verse of the song “Black-White Calypso” because of the fear that the government would censor the song.⁴² The lack of censorship could also have resulted from the Publications and Education Act implemented in 1963, when the group went overseas to perform the show. At this time, the law became even more stringent, but because the show was not performed in South Africa, it was not at risk of censorship. Director Leon Gluckman said in an article written in the *Rand Daily Mail* in 1966, when the show was in New York, that *Wait a Minim!* “would probably not be allowed to be presented again in South Africa”.⁴³ This comes after the show’s stage manager, Frank Rembach, said that if he returned to South Africa, he would face personal danger from the government.⁴⁴

During the performances of *Wait a Minim!* in 1962 in Johannesburg, Jeremy Taylor stayed with the Blundell family. To thank them for their hospitality, Jeremy gave Blundell and Caroline, Blundell’s first daughter, each a guitar.⁴⁵ Blundell was 35 years old, and Caroline

³⁹ Sowden, “Music.” The kalimba is an instrument similar to the mbira produced and exported by Hugh Tracey in the 1950s. He tuned the instrument to a western scale so that the instrument could be enjoyed by musicians around the world. In: “Kalimbas,” accessed May 16, 2022, <https://www.kalimba.co.za/old/kalimba.htm>. The mbira is a musical instrument made and used by the Shona culture in Zimbabwe. The instrument consists of a wooden board with attached staggered metal tines. In: “The Mbira instrument: Instrument construction,” accessed May 16, 2022, <https://mbira.org/what-is-mbira/mbira-music/the-mbira-instrument/>; “Kalimbas,” accessed May 16, 2022, <https://www.kalimba.co.za/old/kalimba.htm>.

⁴⁰ Lambrechts and Taylor, “They called me the ‘Ag Pleez Deddy’ Man,” 53.

⁴¹ C. Lucia, “Spirits of Africa: An interview with Andrew Tracey,” *South African Music Studies (SAMUS)* 26, no. 1 (2006): 132-133.

⁴² Lambrechts and Taylor, “They called me the ‘Ag Pleez Deddy’ Man,” 52.

⁴³ *Rand Daily Mail*, March 21, 1966, “Apartheid attack by ‘Minim’ cast,” 3.

⁴⁴ *Rand Daily Mail*, “Apartheid attack by ‘Minim’ cast.”

⁴⁵ Caroline Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, May 24, 2021.

was 11 years old.⁴⁶ He started to teach himself the guitar, and according to Pamela, once he had learnt the chords, he was delighted to discover that he could learn new folk songs from books.⁴⁷ He quickly learned how to play the instrument, and Pamela remembered that she once said that he had to stop because his fingertips were getting raw from too much playing.⁴⁸ It took Blundell a year to learn the guitar before he started to perform in public.⁴⁹

Less than a year after the *Beggars Opera*, Blundell was invited to perform in the operetta, *The Gypsy Baron*, produced and directed by Michael Bird and Douglas Reid.⁵⁰ This operetta tells the story of a landowner who just returned from exile, marrying a gypsy girl, revealed to be the daughter of a Turkish pasha and the owner of a hidden treasure.⁵¹ The performance of the operetta was organised by the University of Witwatersrand's Choral Society and performed at the University of Witwatersrand's Great Hall from 12 to 25 May 1963.⁵² Bird and Reid asked Blundell to play the leading role as a tenor in this operetta alongside Rita Roberts, Louise Wessels and Pat Shaw.⁵³ A review of the play noted that he tackled his solos with spirit and had a "leading-man look" about him.⁵⁴ During this operetta, Blundell met Des Lindberg.⁵⁵

Des Lindberg is a performer and musician known in South Africa for his folk music and his contribution to the folk music movement in the country. He was born in Johannesburg on 14 April 1945 and was a language student at the University of Witwatersrand.⁵⁶ Like other folk musicians of the time, he became more attuned to folk music through *Wait a Minim!*⁵⁷ During his time at Wits University he met his wife, Dawn Silver. They started to perform together as Des and Dawn in the 1960s – a partnership that lasted until Dawn Lindberg died in 2021 from covid related complications.⁵⁸ They did numerous performances and television appearances

⁴⁶ Caroline Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, May 24, 2021.

⁴⁷ Julie Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, May 24, 2021.

⁴⁸ Caroline Blundell and Teper Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, May 24, 2021.

⁴⁹ Caroline Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, May 24, 2021.

⁵⁰ *Rand Daily Mail*, May 7, 1963, "Tenor discovery in 'Gypsy Baron'," 6.

⁵¹ "Der Zigeunerbaron", *Encyclopaedia of South African Theatre, Film, Media and Performance (ESAT)*, accessed May 13, 2021, https://esat.sun.ac.za/index.php/Der_Zigeunerbaron.

⁵² *Rand Daily Mail*, May 22, 1963, 10.

⁵³ *Rand Daily Mail*, "Tenor discovery;" *Rand Daily Mail*, May 22, 1963, 10. For more information about these individuals, please consult the index on pages vi and vii.

⁵⁴ D. Sowden, "The dons see a 'Baron' who is an eye-ful," *Rand Daily Mail*, May 15, 1963, 8.

⁵⁵ Hidden Years Music Archive. David Marks collection. Scrapbook 1, Magazine. Keith Blundell, "Reflections," *The Folksinger*, Vol. 1, no. 1, September 1967, 4.

⁵⁶ "About Us," accessed June 7, 2021, <https://www.desdawn.co.za/about-us/>; Green, *The 60s folk scene in South Africa*, 37.

⁵⁷ Green, *The 60s folk scene in South Africa*, 37.

⁵⁸ *ESAT*, "Des and Dawn."

together, and they travelled as a folk duo for three years performing around the country in their show *Folk on Trek*.⁵⁹ During this tour from 1965 to 1968, they moved all over South Africa, performing in small venues and camping in people's backyards in their caravan. They also toured Zimbabwe (then Rhodesia) and released an album with the same title on their return home.⁶⁰

In the 1970s, they shifted their focus to theatre work and produced multiple plays. One play they produced was *Godspell*, directed by Dawn Lindberg.⁶¹ This play, a rock musical about the life of Christ, was first shown in Maseru, Lesotho, in 1973 because its mixed-race cast would not have been allowed to perform together in South Africa.⁶² In 1974 the production did come to South Africa for a performance at the Wits University Great Hall. However, it was banned under the Publications and Control Act (1963) because of ostensibly presenting Christ as a clown.⁶³ This play also challenged the racial laws of South Africa by using a mixed-race cast for the play, and they wanted to perform the play to a mixed-race audience.⁶⁴ Des and Dawn decided to challenge this banning of the play in the Supreme Court, hiring Anton Mostert as their attorney.⁶⁵ Anton Mostert was an attorney and became one of the youngest judges of the Supreme Court of South Africa.⁶⁶ He was appointed in 1978 to lead a commission of inquiry into exchange control regulations.⁶⁷ Des and Dawn won the case, and the musical could be

⁵⁹ ESAT, "Des and Dawn."

⁶⁰ "About us," accessed June 7, 2021, <https://www.desdawn.co.za/about-us/>.

⁶¹ ESAT, "Des and Dawn."

⁶² "Godspell," *Encyclopaedia of South African Theatre, Film, Media and Performance (ESAT)*, accessed February 2, 2022, <https://www.esat.sun.ac.za/index.php/Godspell>.

⁶³ ESAT, "Godspell."

⁶⁴ ESAT, "Godspell.,"; C. Rickard, *Thank you, Judge Mostert* (Johannesburg: Penguin Books (Pty) Ltd, 2010), 58.

⁶⁵ Rickard, *Thank you, Judge Mostert*, 58.

⁶⁶ Rickard, *Thank you, Judge Mostert*, v.

⁶⁷ Rickard, *Thank you, Judge Mostert*, 83.

performed in South Africa at the Wits University Great Hall with the requirement that the programme included a note stating that all the acts in the play are symbolic.⁶⁸



Figure 7: Des Lindberg (left) and Keith Blundell (right).⁶⁹

The start of collaborations and the Troubadour

From their initial meeting at the Wits University Great Hall, Keith Blundell and Des Lindberg stayed connected throughout their lives and regularly performed together. They started performing together in 1963 and formed their own folk group, the Bottle Tops.⁷⁰ They decided on the name because, according to Lindberg, “it seemed like a fun name”.⁷¹ The band played traditional folk songs, especially British Isles Appalachian Folksongs, and occasionally they wrote original songs.⁷² Lindberg recalled that when the group was booked to perform for the launch of Orlon Clothing Fabric, they wrote a couple of original songs for the launch.⁷³

In 1964, Lindberg and Blundell recorded their first two singles called “Blow ye winds in the morning” and “Shady Grove”. Both are traditional folk songs, respectively from the United

⁶⁸ *ESAT*, “Godspell.”

⁶⁹ Hidden Years Music Archive. Keith Blundell collection, Miscellaneous. Loose photographs.

⁷⁰ Hidden Years Music Archive. Keith Blundell collection, Keith Blundell 1927-2002 file, Project. Career, 2.

⁷¹ Des Lindberg, telephonic interview with Marion Webber, September 26, 2021.

⁷² Des Lindberg, telephonic interview with Marion Webber, September 26, 2021.

⁷³ Des Lindberg, telephonic interview with Marion Webber, September 26, 2021.

States and the United Kingdom. “Blow ye winds in the morning” is a sea shanty⁷⁴ commonly known as “Blow ye winds”.⁷⁵ This song warns potential recruiting sailors of the conditions they will face while at sea.⁷⁶ It was first recorded by Gale Huntington in 1958 and has since been recorded in a variety of adaptations.⁷⁷ The song is considered one of the best examples of a song that relates to the whale trade in New England.⁷⁸

The other song on the record, “Shady Grove”, is an 18th-century Appalachian folk song originally performed in the United States.⁷⁹ According to Ritchie and Orr, the song was derived from a British Isles ballad called “Little Matty Grove” and tells the story of a young man’s true love and the hopes that he and his true love will marry.⁸⁰ The song was recorded by multiple artists, including Jean Ritchie and The Kingston Trio.⁸¹

After the release of this single, Blundell and Lindberg played a number of successful concerts in the side halls of the Johannesburg city hall.⁸² At these concerts, they would perform ten to twelve songs, including some solos from both Blundell and Lindberg.⁸³ It was after these concerts that they decided to take folk music more seriously and start playing professionally.⁸⁴ Their decision, according to Lindberg, was bolstered by the rising popularity of folk music.⁸⁵

However, there were no dedicated venues for folk music, so Lindberg started planning and scouting in 1963 to open a folk club.⁸⁶ It was not long before Blundell joined Lindberg in the process and a year later, they opened the Troubadour, which was to become one of the most influential folk music venues in the country.

⁷⁴ A sea shanty is a genre of traditional folk music which was originally sung by sailors while they were aboard merchant sailing vessels. In: “Shanty,” accessed January 20, 2022, <https://www.britannica.com/art/shanty>.

⁷⁵ “Blow ye winds in the morning,” accessed February 13, 2022,

<https://www.fresnostate.edu/folklore/ballads/LxU044.html>.

⁷⁶ “Blow ye winds in the morning.”

⁷⁷ “Blow ye wind,” accessed February 13, 2022,

http://www.girlonawhaleship.org/jernapp/refCard.do?shortName=music_blow_winds.

⁷⁸ “Blow ye wind.”

⁷⁹ “Shady Grove,” accessed February 13, 2022, <http://folkslingers.com/shady-grove/>; “Shady Grove,” accessed February 13, 2022, <http://www.stephengriffith.com/folksongindex/shady-grove/>.

⁸⁰ F. Ritchie and D. Orr, *Wayfaring Strangers: The musical Voyage from Scotland and Ulster to Appalachia* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2014), 182.

⁸¹ “Shady Grove.”

⁸² Hidden Years Music Archive. Keith Blundell collection, Keith Blundell 1927-2002 file, Project. Career, 2; Des Lindberg, telephonic interview with Marion Webber, September 24, 2021.

⁸³ Des Lindberg, document sent via email to Marion Webber, September 24, 2021.

⁸⁴ Hidden Years Music Archive. Keith Blundell collection, Keith Blundell 1927-2002 file Project. Career, 2.

⁸⁵ Des Lindberg, document sent via email to Marion Webber, September 24, 2021.

⁸⁶ Des Lindberg, document sent via email to Marion Webber, September 24, 2021.



Figure 8: The entrance of the Troubadour club.⁸⁷

The Troubadour opened in Doornfontein, Johannesburg, in mid-1964 as a live performance space dedicated to folk music.⁸⁸ The front of the club had a sign that said “The Troubadour Steakhouse”.⁸⁹ Even though the sign says that the Troubadour was a steakhouse, it was more of a coffee house.⁹⁰ Mel Miller recounts that the only steak the Troubadour offered was the Toasted Steak sandwich, which was part of the menu of the coffee house.⁹¹ The club was in a small one-story building, and Mel Miller remembers his first experience at the Troubadour, writing that he was “enthralled by the hubbub of subdued voices, the clink of coffee cups and the aroma of toasted sandwiches”.⁹² The venue was made up of an L-shaped room and a narrow triangular stage.⁹³ The L-shaped room was filled with tables and benches along the walls, and there were chairs backing onto the narrow aisles, seating 120 people to come and listen to folk music.⁹⁴ The performances were all acoustic and there were no amplifiers or microphones.⁹⁵

⁸⁷ Miller, *The 60s folk scene in South Africa*, 28.

⁸⁸ Lambrechts and Taylor, “They called me the ‘Ag Pleez Deddy’ Man,” 78.

⁸⁹ Miller, *The 60s folk scene in South Africa*, 28.

⁹⁰ Miller, *The 60s folk scene in South Africa*, 28.

⁹¹ Miller, *The 60s folk scene in South Africa*, 28.

⁹² Miller, *The 60s folk scene in South Africa*, 36.

⁹³ Miller, *The 60s folk scene in South Africa*, 30, 36.

⁹⁴ Miller, *The 60s folk scene in South Africa*, 30-31.

⁹⁵ Miller, *The 60s folk scene in South Africa*, 37.

The performers went on stage with their steel-string guitars and just sat on stage and performed their songs.⁹⁶

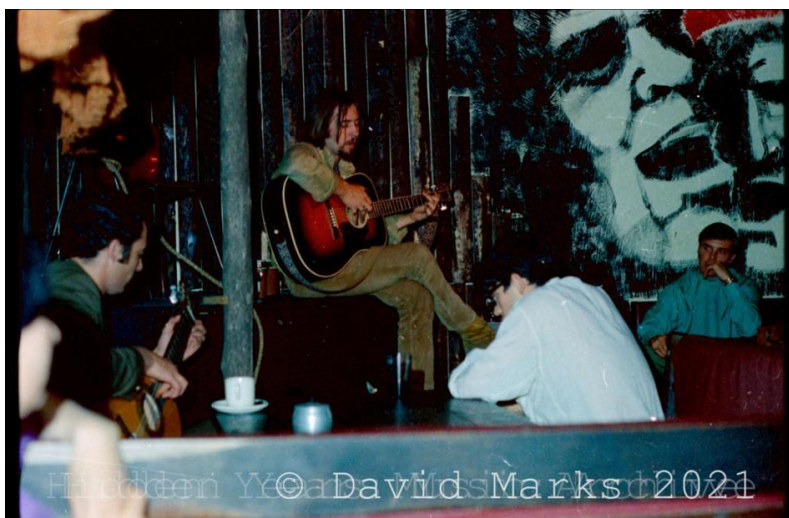


Figure 9: Mike Dickman performing in the Troubadour in 1968.⁹⁷

Mel Miller is an actor and stand-up comedian who started his career as part of the folk-singing group Mel, Mel and Julian.⁹⁸ He grew up in Yeoville and studied Industrial design at the Johannesburg School of Art.⁹⁹ During lunch breaks, he used to entertain his classmates with comic sketches. Mel Miller met Mel Green in 1964, and they started to harmonise together.¹⁰⁰ Mel Green then persuaded Mel Miller to go to the Troubadour, and they asked Keith Blundell if they could have an opportunity to sing at the club.¹⁰¹ Blundell agreed, and after hearing them, he offered them a regular Wednesday night gig.¹⁰² The duo started mixing folk music with comedy and was later joined by Julian Laxton. Mel Miller also played in one of South Africa's first television comedy series, *Biltong and Pot-Roast*.¹⁰³

⁹⁶ Miller, *The 60s folk scene in South Africa*, 44.

⁹⁷ Hidden Years Music Archive, Documentation Centre for Music, Stellenbosch University. David Marks and 3rd Ear Records Collection, Digital sources, Photograph. "Mike Dickman, Duccio and Jeff Radford 003," <http://hdl.handle.net/10019.2/18876>.

⁹⁸ "About Mel Miller," accessed November 22, 2021, <https://www.melmillercomedian.co.za/mel-miller-about.html>.

⁹⁹ "Big Mel," M, M & J... The who, the how and the where, accessed November 22, 2021, <https://melgreensings.com/mel-mel-julian-bios>.

¹⁰⁰ "Big Mel."

¹⁰¹ "Mel and Mel and sudden popularity," M, M & J... The who, the how and the where, accessed November 22, 2021, <https://melgreensings.com/mel-mel-julian-bios>.

¹⁰² "Mel and Mel and sudden popularity."

¹⁰³ "About Mel Miller," accessed November 22, 2021, <https://www.melmillercomedian.co.za/mel-miller-about.html>.

For the first month of the club's existence, Des Lindberg ran the club on his own while Keith Blundell filled in for Nick Taylor for a few performances at The Hideaway, a restaurant in Johannesburg.¹⁰⁴ The following month, Blundell joined Des at the Troubadour with John Seeliger.¹⁰⁵ The club quickly gained popularity and became a sought-after venue for aspiring folk musicians to perform.¹⁰⁶ Various folk musicians accredit their careers to the Troubadour club, including Leon Rabinowitz and Mike Sonnenberg.¹⁰⁷ The club did well, with over 30 to 40 songs being performed every night and customers regularly filling the venue to listen to folk music with a cup of coffee and something to eat from the coffee house menu.¹⁰⁸ Mel Green, a folk musician who performed as part of the folk duo, Mel and Mel, recalls from his visits to the Troubadour the performances of Lindberg and Blundell in the Troubadour. He particularly remembers one performance during which Lindberg and Blundell sang "The Golden Vanity" and "The Stuttering Lover".¹⁰⁹ "The Golden Vanity" is a traditional song about a British ship attacked by an enemy vessel. It was performed and recorded by Pete Seeger in 1957 and Burl Ives in 1953.¹¹⁰ "The Stuttering lover" is a song that was performed by the Clancy Brothers, an Irish folk group that was well-known in America during the American Folk Revival in the early 1960s.¹¹¹

As mentioned, most musicians performing on the folk music circuit in South Africa sang covers of popular folk music by international folk musicians such as Bob Dylan, Pete Seeger, Joan Baez, The Kingston Trio and others.¹¹² This gradually started changing with more folk musicians starting to write their own songs reflecting on their personal lives, loves and the events occurring in South Africa.¹¹³ The performance of original songs established a uniquely

¹⁰⁴ Hidden Years Music Archive. David Marks collection. Scrapbook 1, Magazine. Keith Blundell, "Reflections," *The Folksinger*, Vol. 1, no. 1, September 1967, 4. *Rand Daily Mail*, September 12, 1962, 10. For more information about Nick Taylor, please consult the index, p. vi. Is this page still correct?

¹⁰⁵ Hidden Years Music Archive. David Marks collection, Scrapbook 1, Magazines. Keith Blundell, "Reflections," *The Folksinger*, Vol. 1, no. 1, September 1967, 4. To learn more about John Seeliger, please consult the index on page vi.

¹⁰⁶ Lunn, "Hippies, radicals and the Sounds of Silence," 88.

¹⁰⁷ Lindberg, *Every Day is an Opening Night*, 46. For more information on Leon Rabinowitz and Mike Sonnenberg, please consult the index on pages v and vii.

¹⁰⁸ Hidden Years Music Archive, Documentation Centre for Music, Stellenbosch University. Keith Blundell collection, Scrapbook, Magazine entry. No author, "Living." *News Check*, August 4, 1967, 41.

¹⁰⁹ Miller, *The 60s folk scene in South Africa*, 30.

¹¹⁰ L. Lofgren, "Remembering the old songs: The Golden Vanity (Child #286)," *Inside Bluegrass*, January 2007, accessed February 15, 2022, <https://www.lizlyle.lofgrens.org/RmOISngs/RTOS-GoldenVanity.html>.

¹¹¹ D. Dicaire, *The folk music revival, 1958-1970: Biographies of fifty performers and other influential people* (United States of America: McFarland Inc. Publishers, 2011), 186.

¹¹² Miller, *The 60s folk scene in South Africa*, 25.

¹¹³ Miller, *The 60s folk scene in South Africa*, 57.

South African folk music style with its own characteristics.¹¹⁴ These characteristics included the different musical instruments used in South African folk music, for example, in the production of *Wait a Minim!* that included the Mbira, Kalimba and Bamboo pan flute.¹¹⁵ The Tracey Brothers took these indigenous musical instruments and played them in impromptu groups outside the *Wait a Minim!* shows.¹¹⁶



Figure 10: Keith Blundell and Des Lindberg performing at the Troubadour.¹¹⁷

***The Wizard of Oz* and the first National Folksong Festival**

From 8 to 9 January 1965, Blundell performed with Des Lindberg and Dawn Silver in the musical *The Wizard of Oz*.¹¹⁸ *The Wizard of Oz* is a well-known play based on the novel *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* by L. Frank Baum, and this performance was the first time this musical was performed in South Africa.¹¹⁹ This musical was also Des and Dawn's first professional on-stage musical together.¹²⁰ The play was staged at the Wits Great Hall, and it was directed by Taubie Kushlick.¹²¹ Taubie Kushlick, an actress and producer, is described by Des and Dawn Lindberg as "the grande dame of the South African stage".¹²² She formed part of the

¹¹⁴ Miller, *The 60s folk scene in South Africa*, p. 12.

¹¹⁵ Miller, *The 60s folk scene in South Africa*, p. 43.

¹¹⁶ Miller, *The 60s folk scene in South Africa*, p. 45.

¹¹⁷ Miller, *The 60s folk scene in South Africa*, p. 34.

¹¹⁸ *Rand Daily Mail*, January 9, 1965, 8.

¹¹⁹ "The Wizard of Oz," *Encyclopaedia of South African Theatre, Film, Media and Performance (ESAT)*, accessed May 10, 2021, https://esat.sun.ac.za/index.php/The_Wizard_of_Oz.

¹²⁰ Lindberg, *Every Day is an Opening Night*, 133.

¹²¹ *Rand Daily Mail*, January 9, 1965, Advertisement: "The Wizard of Oz," 8; *Rand Daily Mail*, January 6, 1965, Advertisement: "The Wizard of Oz," 8.

¹²² Lindberg, *Every Day is an Opening Night*, 133.

Johannesburg Repertory Society (REPS), one of South Africa's influential amateur theatre societies of the 20th century.¹²³ She started acting in the plays of the society and later produced and directed plays for them.¹²⁴ Blundell was appointed as musical director for the performance of the Wizard of Oz, and he was in charge of putting together a folk-style group for the musical.¹²⁵ The group was made up of Blundell and Lindberg on guitars, Pamela, Blundell's wife, on melodica, and Caroline Blundell on banjo.¹²⁶ The band played the original songs of the musical written by Harold Arlen.¹²⁷ The actors included Hilary Reichman, Joey Wishnia and Michael Fisher.¹²⁸ The show was well received by critics, and after it sold out, additional show dates were added to the program.¹²⁹ A special performance was scheduled for black audience members at a reduced ticket price as part of the run.¹³⁰ This was a requirement of shows that were part of the Johannesburg Theatre programme to allow black people to see performances.¹³¹ It possibly also brought in more money to the theatres.¹³² These special performances were an established part of the theatre seasons.¹³³ Des Lindberg recalls this performance stating that "... we did have a non-white performance, because we weren't allowed to have mixed audiences".¹³⁴ Because of the implementation of the Pass Laws (1952) and the implementation of the Separate Amenities Act (1953), which forbade mixing races in any social, educational, and workspace spheres, a mixed audience was prohibited.¹³⁵

This special performance of *The Wizard of Oz* was held on 12 January 1965, and the price per seat was 25 cents.¹³⁶ It was held at the Wits University Great Hall, quarter past eight in the evening.¹³⁷ The *Rand Daily Mail* reported that the performance was held at night because of the Muslim Fast of Ramadan, which would have interfered with the performances scheduled

¹²³ "Taubie Kushlick," *Encyclopaedia of South African Theatre, Film, Media and Performance (ESAT)*, accessed May 10, 2021, https://esat.sun.ac.za/index.php/Taubie_Kushlick; "Johannesburg Repertory Society," *Encyclopaedia of South African Theatre, Film, Media and Performance (ESAT)*, accessed May 10, 2021, https://esat.sun.ac.za/index.php/Johannesburg_Repertory_Society.

¹²⁴ *ESAT*, "Taubie Kushlick."

¹²⁵ Lindberg, *Every Day is an Opening Night*, 134.

¹²⁶ Lindberg, *Every Day is an Opening Night*, 134.

¹²⁷ Lindberg, *Every Day is an Opening Night*, 134.

¹²⁸ *Rand Daily Mail*, January 6, 1965, Advertisement: "The Wizard of Oz," 8. Please refer to the index for more information about these individuals on pages ii, v and viii.

¹²⁹ *The Star*, January 18, 1965, 18; *The Star*, January 4, 1965, Advertisement: "The Wizard of Oz," 14.

¹³⁰ *The Star*, January 4, 1965, Advertisement: "The Wizard of Oz," star14.

¹³¹ *Rand Daily Mail*, January 8, 1965, "The Ramadan Fast may affect theatre takings," 5.

¹³² *Rand Daily Mail*, "The Ramadan Fast."

¹³³ L. Sowden, "More or less civilised?," *Rand Daily Mail*, January 23, 1965, 12.

¹³⁴ Des Lindberg, telephonic interview with Marion Webber, September 24, 2021.

¹³⁵ Worden, *The making of modern South Africa*, 109.

¹³⁶ *Rand Daily Mail*, January 11, 1965, Advertisement: "The Wizard of Oz," 8.

¹³⁷ *Rand Daily Mail*, January 11, 1965, Advertisement: "The Wizard of Oz," 8.

in the day.¹³⁸ The Indian community were strong supporters of the theatre and regularly attended performances.¹³⁹ However, this change in the performance time did not improve the audience attendance of the show, and the Great Hall was only filled to forty per cent of its capacity.¹⁴⁰ In the newspaper reporting on the poor turnout for the concert, they note that some of the reasons for the poor attendance could be because of Ramadan and possibly transportation problems faced by the black population.¹⁴¹

After performing in *The Wizard of Oz* in May 1965, Blundell performed in the play *Paint your Wagon*, a musical about the California Gold Rush in 1850.¹⁴² This play was organised by the University of Witwatersrand's Choral Society, and was held in the Wits Great Hall.¹⁴³ Dawn Silver was the choreographer, and Keith Blundell played the lead role.¹⁴⁴ According to Verlein 'Ginger' Seipp, founder of the Natal Folk Music Association in 1967, with David Marks and others, the cast always had parties at the Blundell family house.¹⁴⁵ These parties were held with students from the university who were part of the cast and with the other performers, including Ben Rumson, Dietrich Reinecke, and Jill Kirkland, all folk musicians.¹⁴⁶

Jill Kirkland is a folk musician that started composing folk songs in her spare time.¹⁴⁷ She studied at the College of Music at the University of Cape Town and is a qualified piano teacher.¹⁴⁸ She became well-known as a musician performing folk songs in the Troubadour.¹⁴⁹ Kirkland also performed as an actor and is known for her memorable acting role in the South African film *Katrina*.¹⁵⁰

¹³⁸ *Rand Daily Mail*, "The Ramadan Fast."

¹³⁹ *Rand Daily Mail*, "The Ramadan Fast."

¹⁴⁰ *Rand Daily Mail*, January 20, 1965, "Attendances 'disastrous'," 9.

¹⁴¹ *Rand Daily Mail*, "Attendances 'disastrous'."

¹⁴² *Rand Daily Mail*, May 11, 1965, "Students bank on musical to cash in," 8.

¹⁴³ *Rand Daily Mail*, "Students bank on musical."

¹⁴⁴ Hidden Years Music Archive, Documentation Centre for Music, Stellenbosch University. Verlein 'Ginger' Seipp, Interviewed by Dr. Lizabé Lambrechts, March 15, 2017.

¹⁴⁵ Hidden Years Music Archive. Verlein 'Ginger' Seipp, Interviewed by Dr. Lizabé Lambrechts, March 15, 2017.

¹⁴⁶ Hidden Years Music Archive. Verlein 'Ginger' Seipp, Interviewed by Dr. Lizabé Lambrechts, March 15, 2017.

¹⁴⁷ "A charmed life – Jill Kirkland," accessed June 7, 2021, <https://www.plett-tourism.co.za/a-charmed-life-jill-kirkland/>.

¹⁴⁸ Hidden Years Music Archive. Keith Blundell collection, Scrapbook, Programme. *Stringalong folk programme* (1965), 2.

¹⁴⁹ A. English, "A singer who loves live," *Rand Daily Mail*, August 27, 1969, 14; Lindberg, *Every Day is an Opening Night*, 47.

¹⁵⁰ *Katrina* is a controversial South African film about a white priest falling in love with a famous singer who is a coloured woman. (The term "coloured" is a race descriptor that was used in the apartheid era, and in the

Just after the performance of *Paint your Wagon*, the first ever National Folk Festival of South Africa was held at the Wits Great Hall on 28 to 29 May 1965.¹⁵¹ It was organised by the Wits Rag committee, a sub-committee of Wits University's Student Representative Council (SRC), and Des Lindberg, who put the programme together.¹⁵² The workshops and shows were held at the Troubadour. All the events were sold out, and 2 500 people attended these concerts.¹⁵³ It was attended not just by folk music enthusiasts but also by luminaries of local show business.¹⁵⁴ It featured some of South Africa's top folk singers, including Nick Taylor, Mel and Mel, and Jeremy Taylor.¹⁵⁵ Blundell and Lindberg performed together at this festival, and Lindberg recalls that the festival's success could be ascribed to the acoustic nature of the performances.¹⁵⁶ He noted that they "worked without mics or amplifiers".¹⁵⁷

Jill Kirkland and Keith Blundell performed together for the first time at the National Folk Festival. Their show included songs such as "Waltzing Matilda", "The Three Ravens", and "Four Strong Winds," a Canadian folk song.¹⁵⁸ The festival was recorded by Columbia South Africa (CBS), and the record sold out quickly.¹⁵⁹ The album featured songs of Blundell and Lindberg, including "The Stuttering Lovers" and "Bimini Bay", a sea shanty about a boat that arrives at Bimini Bay. It also included "Time of Man," a folk song by the Limelites, an American folk group.¹⁶⁰ Blundell and Kirkland's performance of "The Three Ravens" was also included on the album.¹⁶¹ The final track on the album was "Go Tell it on the Mountain".¹⁶²

present, it is considered as a derogatory term to identify a race.) This film came to the attention of the government, and they suggested multiple changes and additions to the film, such as the film being labelled as "political dynamite", and an alternative ending which cannot be "misused as distasteful propaganda". In J.J. Bothma, "Hemel op die platteland": The intersections of land and whiteness in selected Afrikaans language films: 1961-1994" (MA Thesis, University of Pretoria, 2017), 31-39.

¹⁵¹ *Rand Daily Mail*, May 20, 1965, Advertisement: "Paint your Wagon," 8.

¹⁵² Andersson, *Music in the mix*, 114; Hidden Years Music Archive. David Marks collection, Scrapbook 1, Magazine. Keith Blundell, "Reflections," *The Folksinger*, Vol. 1, no. 1, September 1967, 4; Des Lindberg, document sent via email to Marion Webber, August 26, 2021; Miller, *The 60s folk scene in South Africa*, 58.

¹⁵³ Miller, *The 60s folk scene in South Africa*, 58.

¹⁵⁴ Miller, *The 60s folk scene in South Africa*, 58.

¹⁵⁵ *Rand Daily Mail*, May 20, 1965, Advertisement: "Paint your Wagon," 8.

¹⁵⁶ Des Lindberg, document sent via email to Marion Webber, August 26, 2021.

¹⁵⁷ Des Lindberg, document sent via email to Marion Webber, August 26, 2021.

¹⁵⁸ Hidden Years Music Archive. David Marks Collection, Audio recordings. hymap-dm-reel-bebbington-blundell-lindberg-1965-001-Channell.

¹⁵⁹ Miller, *The 60s folk scene in South Africa*, 59.

¹⁶⁰ "National Folksong Festival '65," accessed February 2, 2022, <https://www.discogs.com/release/4102405-Various-National-Folk-Song-Festival-65>; "Bimini Gal", Comparative video 101, accessed February 2, 2022, <http://compvid101.blogspot.com/2013/08/bimini-gal.html>; "The time of man – lyrics," accessed February 2, 2022, <https://www.limelites.net/the-time-of-man---lyrics.html>.

¹⁶¹ "National Folksong Festival '65."

¹⁶² "National Folksong Festival '65."

This song was sung by all the musicians who performed at the festival, including Des Lindberg, Jill Kirkland, Mel and Mel, Louis Meyer, Leon Rabinowitz, Brenda Newfield and Mike Sonnenberg.¹⁶³ The song “Go Tell it on the Mountain” is originally a Christmas song about the birth of Jesus, but the cover performed at the Folk Festival was based on a version performed by the American folk group Peter, Paul and Mary. They adapted the song to refer to the civil rights movement in America.¹⁶⁴ The lyrics of the song are as follows:

Go tell it on the mountain,
Over the hill and everywhere
Go tell it on the mountain
To let my people go.

Who’s that yonder dressed in red?
(Let my people go)
Must be the children that Moses led.
(Let my people go)

Chorus

Who’s that yonder dressed in white?
Must be the children of the Israelite.

Who’s that yonder dressed in black?
Must be the hypocrites turning back.¹⁶⁵

It is significant that a song with such strong political connotations was performed at the folk festival, especially if one considers Des Lindberg’s statement that the audience members were really attentive during the shows. Performing a song about the civil rights movement in South Africa would have caught the attention of the government, and indeed, it was censored by the SABC. The SABC indicated this by writing the word “Avoid” beneath the song on the

¹⁶³ For more information on Louis Meyer and Brenda Newfield, please consult the index on page iv.

¹⁶⁴ “Freedom (Civil Rights) Adaptations of “Go tell it on the mountain” (United States),” accessed January 26, 2022, <http://pancocojams.blogspot.com/2015/12/freedom-civil-rights-adaptations-of-go.html>.

¹⁶⁵ “Freedom (Civil Rights) Adaptations.”

album.¹⁶⁶ Blundell's participation in and association with this song also challenged his stated a-political stance regarding the folk music he performed.

Stringalong Folk Festival and *Folksome* album

Two months after the festival, Keith Blundell and Jill Kirkland performed together on 12 October 1965 at the Concertorium in Anstey's City Store.¹⁶⁷ This performance was organised by the Johannesburg Philharmonic Society, and the concert sparked the idea that Blundell and Kirkland should form a folk duo.¹⁶⁸ As a folk duo, they recorded an album, *Folksome* (NLP 286), with the Renown LP company in 1965. The album contains covers of traditional folk songs and the songs they performed at the 1965 National Folksong festival, including "Waltzing Matilda", and "The Three Ravens".¹⁶⁹

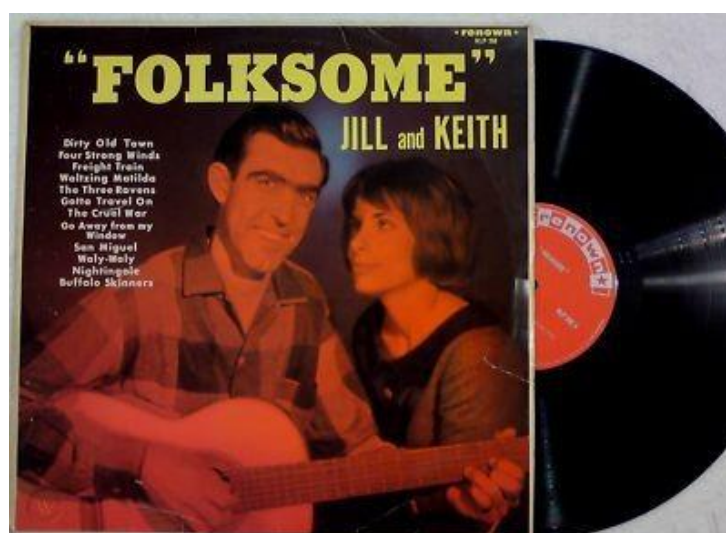


Figure 11: *Folksome* (NLP 286) album cover, 1965.¹⁷⁰

¹⁶⁶ Tertius Louw, email to Marion Webber, January 25, 2022.

¹⁶⁷ *Rand Daily Mail*, October 12, 1965, Advertisement: "Lunch hour musicale," 12.

¹⁶⁸ *Rand Daily Mail*, October 12, 1965, Advertisement: "Lunch hour musicale," 12.

¹⁶⁹ "Jill and Keith LP – "Folksome" (Rare!)," accessed December 8, 2021, <https://www.worthpoint.com/worthopedia/jill-keith-lp-folksome-131489829>.

¹⁷⁰ "Jill and Keith LP."

As a duo, they performed at the Stringalong Folk Festival held in December 1965.¹⁷¹ This festival took place at the Brooke Theatre, located on De Villiers Street in Johannesburg. Zwi Fefer and Des Lindberg constructed the festival. Johnny Kongos did the group vocal arrangements, Dawn Lindberg designed the poster and programme and Brian Brooke, the owner of the Brooke Theatre, produced the festival.¹⁷² Amongst the performers were Des and Dawn Lindberg, and John Hayter acted as the narrator.¹⁷³ The concerts included covers of traditional English folk songs and original folk songs.¹⁷⁴ The traditional folk songs included songs such as “Death by Queen Jane”, sung by Jill Kirkland, “My Love is like a Nightingale”, sung by Keith Blundell, Johnny Kongos, Sven van Zyl and Kevin Lee, and “Polly Vaughn”, sung by Des and Dawn Lindberg.¹⁷⁵ Some of the original songs that were performed included Des Lindberg’s song “Banjo” and Jill Kirkland’s song “Call of the Guinea Fowl”.¹⁷⁶

In an article, “‘Folksinging’ moet teen iets wees,” translated as “Folksinging has to be against something”, a student wrote that Des and Dawn Lindberg performed songs that were part of the songs sang in the anti-war protests by the Freedom Riders in America.¹⁷⁷ South African musicians often used protest songs from the anti-Vietnam war and the civil rights movement in America to reflect on the situation in South Africa where racial discrimination was rife.¹⁷⁸ Their performance further included a song called “Ballad of the Townships”, a song that, according to the article in *Die Perdeby*, made fun of the Security Police, the Ninety Day-clause and mocks the government for banning people who held different political views.¹⁷⁹ The Ninety-Day Clause refers to the Ninety-Day Detention Law, which gave the police the authority to detain suspects for extended periods until they answered questions to the

¹⁷¹ *Rand Daily Mail*, November 19, 1965, “Youth takes over at the ‘Brooke’,” 13.

¹⁷² Hidden Years Music Archive. Keith Blundell collection, Scrapbook, Programme. *Stringalong folk programme* (1965), 1; Lindberg, *Every Day is an Opening Night*, 136. For more info on these individuals, please consult the index, pages ii and iii.

¹⁷³ Lindberg, *Every Day is an Opening Night*, 137.

¹⁷⁴ Hidden Years Music Archive. Keith Blundell collection, Scrapbook, Programme. *Stringalong folk programme* (1965), 1.

¹⁷⁵ Hidden Years Music Archive. Keith Blundell collection, Scrapbook, Programme. *Stringalong folk programme* (1965), 1.

¹⁷⁶ Hidden Years Music Archive. Keith Blundell collection, Scrapbook, Programme. *Stringalong folk programme* (1965), 1.

¹⁷⁷ No author, “‘Folksinging’ moet teen iets wees – Life,” *Die Perdeby*, June 10, 1966, 3. “Freedom Riders” was a group of white and African American people who were activists for the civil rights movement in America that participated in freedom rides protesting against segregated bus terminals. In: “Freedom Riders,” accessed June 29, 2022, <https://www.britannica.com/event/Freedom-Rides>.

¹⁷⁸ Andersson, *Music in the mix*, 112; K. Power, “Musical influence on Apartheid and the Civil Rights Movement,” *Student Publications* (2014): 3-4.

¹⁷⁹ *Die Perdeby*, “‘Folksinging’ moet teen iets wees.”

satisfaction of the head of the Security Police, a special branch of the South African police force. According to Dennis Goldberg, this was a licence to torture detainees by denying them access to lawyers, relatives, and friends.¹⁸⁰

The show ran for nine weeks, and more than 28 000 people attended the performances.¹⁸¹ Clearly, strong political content was being transmitted to large audiences during live shows and folk concerts in South Africa.¹⁸² Notably, a performance with songs such as “Ballad of the Township” was not banned or sabotaged by the police. Surely, this indicated the government’s inability to monitor everything and is how original English Folk Music started playing a part in spreading the news and commenting on what was happening in South Africa to local audiences.



Figure 12: Stringalong folk festival program cover, 1965.¹⁸³

The Stringalong Folk programme describes Keith Blundell as “the South African with one eyebrow,” referencing his distinct facial features.¹⁸⁴ The programme does not add anything else

¹⁸⁰ D. Goldberg, *A life for freedom: The mission to end racial injustice in South Africa* (United States of America: University Press of Kentucky, 2016), 6.

¹⁸¹ Andersson, *Music in the mix*, 114.

¹⁸² Andersson, *Music in the mix*, 114.

¹⁸³ Hidden Years Music Archive. Keith Blundell collection, Scrapbook, Programme. *Stringalong folk programme* (1965), cover page.

¹⁸⁴ Hidden Years Music Archive. Keith Blundell collection, Scrapbook, Programme. “Keith Blundell,” *Stringalong folk programme* (1965), 11.

to this description. In the advertisements for the festival in the *Rand Daily Mail*, Blundell was advertised alongside Des Lindberg and Johnny Kongos as one of “South Africa’s Top Folk Singers”.¹⁸⁵ By looking at the description of Blundell in the programme and the advertisements, one could see that he was becoming a prominent public figure in the folk music scene of South Africa. While Blundell did not perform any original songs or songs that reflected on the realities of South Africa, he did perform with others who sang about the civil rights movement in America and the conditions in black South African townships. Blundell similarly performed at shows with Des and Dawn Lindberg, where they made fun of the apartheid government’s laws. While this did not necessarily indicate Blundell’s political views, it did illustrate the two streams forming on the folk music circuit and that concerts could include protest and light songs during performances. Blundell did, however, portray a complex public persona, on the one hand, framed through his self-professed a-political stance, and on the other, framed through his association and cooperation with musicians and performers with protest aims.

¹⁸⁵ *Rand Daily Mail*, December 14, 1965, Advertisement: “Stringalong Folk,” 8.

Chapter 4: Folk music performances and the start of the South African Folk Music Association, 1966-1969



Figure 13: Keith Blundell conducting the Balladeers, circa 1966.¹⁸⁶

Introduction

The late 1960s was a tumultuous period in South Africa's history, with increased enforcement of racial legislation that sought to separate people according to their race. One of the biggest proponents of separate development, Hendrik Verwoerd, was assassinated on 6 September 1966.¹⁸⁷ He was the leader of the National Party (NP) and the prime minister of South Africa from 1958 until his death.¹⁸⁸ After Verwoerd's assassination, B. J. Vorster took over as prime minister.¹⁸⁹

¹⁸⁶ Hidden Years Music Archive. Keith Blundell collection, Miscellaneous. Loose photographs.

¹⁸⁷ Thompson, *A history of South Africa: Fourth edition*, 212.

¹⁸⁸ Thompson, *A history of South Africa: Fourth edition*, 212.

¹⁸⁹ Thompson, *A history of South Africa: Fourth edition*, 212.

The late 1960s saw the rise of Black Consciousness and the establishment of the South African Students' Organisation (SASO) in 1969.¹⁹⁰ Black Consciousness was a movement that stood for black power and challenged the discriminatory racial structure of South Africa.¹⁹¹ This movement was most prominent at black universities such as Fort Hare University, where SASO functioned as an organisation for black students to speak for themselves, breaking away from the white leadership of the National Union of South African Students (NUSAS).¹⁹²

For Keith Blundell, this period was a productive time in his career. He was part of the formation of the South African Folk Music Association (SAFMA), established the group, the Balladeers, and collaborated regularly with musicians such as Andy Dillon. His reputation grew, and he was increasingly regarded, alongside musicians Nick Taylor and Des Lindberg, as one of the most influential South African folk musicians.¹⁹³ This period was not just productive for Blundell, but it was also the first time that the music he released commercially was touched by apartheid legislation.

Folk music in the late-1960s

Folk music was increasingly gaining popularity amongst young adults, and concerts were regularly scheduled at universities.¹⁹⁴ In Johannesburg, a prime venue was the University of the Witwatersrand's Great Hall. Wits University, along with the Universities of Cape Town and KwaZulu-Natal, allowed black students to enrol if they academically qualified for admission.¹⁹⁵ In South Africa, mixed line-ups and racially mixed audiences were prohibited. However, because Wits Great Hall was on private property, the venue could be used for multi-racial concerts (with the university's permission).¹⁹⁶ This meant that the University Great Hall was, in the words of Sowden "about the only place in this civilised city where Coloureds, Indians and Africans can sit and watch a play on the same nights as Whites".¹⁹⁷

¹⁹⁰ Worden, *The making of modern South Africa*, 126.

¹⁹¹ D. Hirschmann, "The Black Consciousness Movement in South Africa," *The Journal of Modern African Studies* 28, no. 1 (1990): 4.

¹⁹² Hirschmann, "The Black Consciousness Movement," 3.

¹⁹³ Hidden Years Music Archive, Documentation Centre for Music, Stellenbosch University. Keith Blundell collection, Scrapbook, Article. *Teenage Supplement to Personality Magazine*, April 28, 1966, "The third man of folk singing," 7.

¹⁹⁴ *Die Perdeby*, "'Folksinging' moet teen iets wees."

¹⁹⁵ Shear, *Wits*, xi.

¹⁹⁶ Lambrechts and Van der Merwe, "Ghosts of the popular," 1324.

¹⁹⁷ Sowden, "More or less civilised?"

The liberal views of the University of the Witwatersrand, which provided the opportunity for folk musicians to perform, are starkly contrasted by reports from other universities, most notably Afrikaans universities. An article written by David A. Noebel in the University of Pretoria's weekly newspaper, *Die Perdeby*, referred to folksingers as communists, and stated that their music was part of the communist movement of Russia.¹⁹⁸ In the same newspaper, the University of Pretoria announced the formation of a national council against communism.¹⁹⁹ This council called for folk singing to be banned, as it "further[ed] the aims of communism".²⁰⁰ Just after the formation of the council, the University of Pretoria's Student Representative Council banned a meeting to create a folk-singing group at the University of Pretoria because folk singers were being "subversive, communistic," and because they "threaten the future of the Afrikaner".²⁰¹ This statement was supported by J.D. Vorster, the brother of prime minister B.J. Vorster and chairman of the National Council to Combat Communism.

The banning of folk music on the campus of the University of Pretoria was later denied in an article, "Folk songs on campus must not 'Protest'". In this article, folk singer Theo Coetzee wrote, "The Students' council at the University of Pretoria has not banned folk-singing at the university and has indicated that it is willing to consider proposals to form a folk-singing society on the campus."²⁰² Coetzee wrote that the meeting to form a folk-singing group was banned for multiple reasons, including that the group did not submit a proper constitution, and the council was afraid the group would sing "protest" songs on campus. According to the article, the University of Pretoria was open for a traditional folk-singing group and there was a lot of support to form the traditional folk group that sings traditional folk songs and not protest songs.²⁰³

Various folk musicians responded to the so-called banning of folk music on Pretoria's campus. Des Lindberg shared his views on the banning by saying the following after the incident:

¹⁹⁸ *Die Perdeby*, "'Folksinging' moet teen iets wees."

¹⁹⁹ Andersson, *Music in the mix*, 116.

²⁰⁰ Andersson, *Music in the mix*, 116.

²⁰¹ No author, "Vergadering van Sanggroep aan U.P. Belet deur V.S.R.," *Die Perdeby*, June 10, 1966, 1; Andersson, *Music in the mix*, 116.

²⁰² Hidden Years Music Archive, Documentation Centre for Music, Stellenbosch University. David Marks and 3rd Ear Records Collection, Digital collection, Newspaper article. "Folk songs on campus must not 'Protest'," <http://hdl.handle.net/10019.2/17324>.

²⁰³ Hidden Years Music Archive. David Marks and 3rd Ear Records Collection, Digital collection, Newspaper article. "Folk songs on campus must not 'Protest'," <http://hdl.handle.net/10019.2/17324>.

People who leave criticism against us apparently have never been to one of our sessions. We would like to invite these misinformed people to spend an evening with us – unannounced if they wish – to see if we are a threat to the safety of our country. The people we sing to are ordinary citizens who have never even worried about politics. Their interest is enjoying a quiet evening listening to a bit of entertainment that is not meant to be sinister.²⁰⁴

Keith Blundell also had something to say regarding the banning. In an article published in the *Sunday Times* (1966), he pointed out, “we strongly object to people suggesting that we are not patriotic... and that we are communistic and subversive ... we are not interested in politics”.²⁰⁵ These statements by Lindberg and Blundell illustrate some of the different understandings and viewpoints of English Folk Music in South Africa at the time, where some musicians saw it as a tool for protest and others did not.

Helen Lunn describes these two groups as the folk singers who sang covers of influential folk musicians, such as Bob Dylan, and the folk singers who “were trying to emulate his example in a more original way”.²⁰⁶ The musicians who sang covers showed their creativity and originality by interpreting the songs and making them their own with a change in lyrics, instruments or tunes.²⁰⁷ This stood in contrast to musicians who used music as a tool for protest, such as David Marks, Jeremy Taylor, Des Lindberg and Colin Shamley, who openly sang about the injustices of the country in songs such as “Mountains of Men” (1964), “Peace of Ground” (1972), and “Born Guilty” (1979). According to Lunn, singers were starting to take the language of folk music and use it to explore the environment of the country.²⁰⁸ By doing this, musicians started to sing about a world their audience recognised and share personal statements about what occurred in the country.²⁰⁹

Blundell’s songs and performances did not, in general, comment on the political situation of South Africa. According to his children, Caroline, Julie, Jonny and Teper, he rarely spoke about politics and didn’t seem interested.²¹⁰ Des Lindberg also commented on Blundell’s songs, saying, “he did not do any of these political songs. But that was because it was not his chosen

²⁰⁴ Staff reporter, “We’re not sinister – Lindberg,” *Rand Daily Mail*, June 13, 1966, 1.

²⁰⁵ Andersson, *Music in the mix*, 116, Report by Lionel Atwell, *Sunday Times*, June 19, 1966.

²⁰⁶ Lunn, “‘Hippies, radicals and the Sounds of Silence’,” 85.

²⁰⁷ Miller, *The 60s folk scene in South Africa*, 46.

²⁰⁸ Lunn, “‘Hippies, radicals and the Sounds of Silence’,” 85.

²⁰⁹ Lunn, “‘Hippies, radicals and the Sounds of Silence’,” 90.

²¹⁰ Julie, Jonny and Teper Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, May 24, 2021.

metier”. He thereby implied that Blundell had nothing against political songs, but that it was not what he preferred to perform.²¹¹ Lindberg remembers that Blundell enjoyed the songs he wrote, which were considered political, but that Blundell never wrote his own political songs.²¹² Even though Blundell was seemingly not interested in politics, a number of his songs were banned by the government, including “Ou Tante Koba”, “It’s not Time”, and “Bronkhorstspuit”. These will be further discussed below.

Pamela Blundell was also part of the Black Sash movement, an anti-apartheid group for women formed in 1955.²¹³ The organisation launched many campaigns, including protesting against discrimination in education and work opportunities, health and child care, and the oppression of women.²¹⁴ The women of the organisation wore black sashes and carried placards during their protests.²¹⁵ In the late 1970s and 1980s, the Black Sash protests increased as more women protested against apartheid. Many members were arrested, kept under surveillance, and harassed.²¹⁶

Pamela stopped participating in the organisation’s protests in the early 1980s. According to Julie, her father “gave Pamela an ultimatum to choose between family or go to jail.”²¹⁷ Caroline also recalls her mother being good friends with Gillian Slovo.²¹⁸ Gillian Slovo is the daughter of Joe and Ruth Slovo, two anti-apartheid activists who fought against the government’s racist laws.²¹⁹ Caroline went to play at the Slovo’s house a few times, and she recalls her father “being anxious about our phone being tapped” because of her friendship with Gillian.²²⁰ In 1982, Ruth

²¹¹ Des Lindberg, document sent via email to Marion Webber, July 28, 2021.

²¹² Des Lindberg, document sent via email to Marion Webber, July 28, 2021.

²¹³ M. Burton, “The Black Sash Story: Protest and Service Recorded in the Archives,” *English Academy Review* 27, no. 2 (2010): 129. The Black Sash movement was formed during a meeting attended by six English-speaking women from Johannesburg, namely Ruth Foley, Helen Newton Thompson, Elizabeth Maclaren, Jean Sinclair, Tercia Pybus, and Jean Bosazza. Some of its members included Molly Blackburn, an advice office volunteer from Port Elizabeth (currently known as Gqeberha), and Di Bishop, the wife of Brian Bishop who was part of the Civil Rights League and the Institute of Race Relations in South Africa, and former vice-president of the Black Sash. She became the vice-president in 2000. From: E. Benjamin, “An Historical analysis of aspects of the Black Sash, 1955-2001” (Masters thesis, University of Stellenbosch, 2004).

²¹⁴ Burton, “The Black Sash Story,” 129-131.

²¹⁵ Burton, “The Black Sash Story,” 131.

²¹⁶ “Standing up against apartheid: 1964-1980s,” History of the Black Sash, accessed December 15, 2021, <https://www.blacksash.org.za/index.php/our-legacy/history-of-the-black-sash>.

²¹⁷ Julie Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, May 24, 2021.

²¹⁸ Caroline Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, April 22, 2022.

²¹⁹ A. Wieder, *Ruth First and Joe Slovo in the war against apartheid* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 2013), 12.

²²⁰ Caroline Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, April 22, 2022.

Slovo was assassinated in her office in Maputo by the South African security police because of her work in the anti-apartheid movement.²²¹

Living and performing in South Africa during the apartheid regime was not clear-cut for Keith Blundell and his family. While some of his songs, not considered political by Blundell, were censored, he denied any political interest and portrayed himself as a-political. However, his interest, friends, and wife's activities in the Black Sash movement, bring into question his stance. While Blundell asked his wife to stop participating in protest marches and cut ties with her prominent anti-apartheid friends to protect their family, Blundell was friends with musicians who were outspoken about their political views against the apartheid government and performed alongside them at concerts. Clearly, his stance and life were complex and multi-faceted.

Square Folk Songs, the Balladeers, and the start of SAFMA

In 1966, Blundell released his first solo album, *Square Folk Songs* (NLP 278). Despite the growing unrest and intimidation in 1966 from the government after Verwoerd was assassinated, the album consists of a-political folk songs from around the world, offering no political commentary or critique of South Africa. Instead, the album includes some of Blundell's favourite folk songs, according to the album information, such as "Oyster Girl," a traditional English folk song, and "Stuttering Lover," a song Blundell regularly performed with Des Lindberg.²²²

²²¹ W. Cobbett, "Obituary: Joe Slovo," *Review of African Political Economy* 22, no. 63 (1995): 96.

²²² Marq Vas Southern African Music Collectibles, "Keith Blundell: Square Folk Songs."



Figure 14: *Square Folk Songs* (NLP 278) album cover, 1966.²²³

In 1966, Blundell started giving workshops at the Downstairs Folk club to amateur folk singers to “take folk to wider audiences”.²²⁴ These workshops were available to anyone who wanted to try playing folk music.²²⁵ During the workshops, musicians played their music, after which it was critiqued.²²⁶ Many talented musicians performed at these workshops, and Blundell decided to form an amateur singing group.²²⁷ He hand-picked members from the workshops and created a group called the Balladeers.²²⁸ The Balladeers consisted of 18 members between the ages of 11 and 40.²²⁹ The members included Blundell’s children, Caroline, Julie, Jonny, and Teper Blundell, and a variety of other musicians, including Louis Meyer, Pat van Nierop, Oliver Barker, Chris McHale, Nina Rivera, Don Roberts and Shelagh Campbell.²³⁰ According to Pamela Blundell, the members were “willing conscripts to Blundell’s musical army,”

²²³ Marq Vas, “Keith Blundell: Square Folk Songs.”

²²⁴ Hidden Years Music Archive. Keith Blundell collection, Scrapbook, Magazine entry. No author, “Living.” *News Check*, August 4, 1967, 41.

²²⁵ Hidden Years Music Archive. Keith Blundell collection, Scrapbook, Magazine entry. No author, “Living.” *News Check*, August 4, 1967, 41.

²²⁶ Hidden Years Music Archive. Keith Blundell collection, Scrapbook, Magazine entry. No author, “Living.” *News Check*, August 4, 1967, 41.

²²⁷ Hidden Years Music Archive. Keith Blundell collection, Scrapbook, Magazine entry. No author, “Living.” *News Check*, August 4, 1967, 41; Julie Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, September 27, 2021.

²²⁸ Hidden Years Music Archive. Keith Blundell collection, Scrapbook, Programme. “The Balladeers,” *Keith and the Balladeers in concert programme* (1966).

²²⁹ Hidden Years Music Archive, Documentation Centre for Music, Stellenbosch University. Keith Blundell collection, Miscellaneous, Written piece. *Company Coming*, 1966, 1.

²³⁰ Hidden Years Music Archive, Documentation Centre for Music, Stellenbosch University. Keith Blundell collection, Miscellaneous, Programme. *Song and Country programme* (1970), 8. For more information regarding these individuals, please consult the index on pages i, iv, vi and vii.

following his commands of what to play and how to play it.²³¹ The group specialised in sea shanties, obscure Britfolk²³² and interpretations of African Music.²³³

Helen Lunn described the group as being non-political and conservative.²³⁴ The women in the group wore knee-length dresses, and the men wore jeans until the middle of 1968.²³⁵ This conservative dress code stood in stark contrast to the hippie fashion that arrived in South Africa during this time, such as the mini skirt for women.²³⁶



Figure 15: The Balladeers, circa 1966.²³⁷

In mid-1966, shortly after forming the Balladeers, Blundell, Pamela, and Des Lindberg met up at Blundell's house in Johannesburg to discuss the need for a coordinating body where folk music could be fostered.²³⁸ This meeting led to the election of the first folk festival steering

²³¹ Hidden Years Music Archive. Keith Blundell collection, Miscellaneous, Written piece. Company Coming, 1966, 1.

²³² 'Britfolk' is a form of folk rock that originated in the United Kingdom in the mid-1960s. In: "Folk rock," accessed June 29, 2022, <https://www.britannica.com/art/folk-rock>.

²³³ M. Green, "The Balladeers..." Facebook, June 30, 2009, <https://www.facebook.com/photo?fbid=1082145773854&set=a.1026687947443>.

²³⁴ Lunn, "'Hippies, radicals and the Sounds of Silence'," 97.

²³⁵ Lunn, "'Hippies, radicals and the Sounds of Silence'," 97.

²³⁶ Lunn, "'Hippies, radicals and the Sounds of Silence'," 90.

²³⁷ Hidden Years Music Archive. Keith Blundell collection, Miscellaneous, Photograph

²³⁸ Hidden Years Music Archive, Documentation Centre for Music, Stellenbosch University. David Marks collection, Box nr. 112, Resume. Ben Segal, "The South African Folk Music Association – a resumé."

committee that organised the 1966 National Folksong Festival.²³⁹ The members of the steering committee were Irene Frangs, Keith Blundell, Penelope Silver (Dawn Lindberg's sister), Ben Segal, Brian Bebbington and Jill Kirkland.²⁴⁰ This committee also organised the weekend Caravan Camp at Meredale.²⁴¹ According to Des Lindberg, this camp was the “informal” side of the National Folk Festival and was filled with workshops.²⁴² It was attended by folk enthusiasts from all over the country.²⁴³ It was at this camp that the South African Folk Music Association (SAFMA) was founded.²⁴⁴

SAFMA was a voluntary, part-time, non-profit music organisation located in Johannesburg, and run by musicians. Ray Sher served as the first chairperson but had to resign shortly after his election because he was transferred to Cape Town for work.²⁴⁵ He was replaced by Ben Segal, an avid amateur musicologist and collector. He started the 3rd Ear Music Company in 1967 and played an active role in folk music throughout his career.²⁴⁶ Segal was the chairperson of the society up until 1968, when Leon Rabinowitz was elected as chairperson.²⁴⁷

The first year of the society would focus on building memberships and creating activities and outlets for folk singing in the country.²⁴⁸ The members of this association were mostly English-speaking people from Johannesburg and surrounding cities.²⁴⁹ In 1966, SAFMA membership

²³⁹ Hidden Years Music Archive. David Marks collection, Box nr. 112, Resume. Ben Segal, “The South African Folk Music Association – a resumé.”

²⁴⁰ Des Lindberg, telephonic interview with Marion Webber, September 24, 2021. For more information on Irene Frangs and Brian Bebbington, please consult the index on pages i and ii.

²⁴¹ Hidden Years Music Archive. David Marks collection, Box nr. 112, Resume. Ben Segal, “The South African Folk Music Association – a resumé.”

²⁴² Hidden Years Music Archive. David Marks collection, Box nr. 112, Resume. Ben Segal, “The South African Folk Music Association – a resumé.”; Des Lindberg, document sent via email to Marion Webber, September 24, 2021.

²⁴³ Hidden Years Music Archive. David Marks collection, Box nr. 112, Resume. Ben Segal, “The South African Folk Music Association – a resumé.”

²⁴⁴ Des Lindberg, document sent via email to Marion Webber, September 24, 2021.

²⁴⁵ Hidden Years Music Archive. David Marks collection, Box nr. 112, Resume. Ben Segal, “The South African Folk Music Association – a resumé.”; Hidden Years Music Archive, Documentation Centre for Music, Stellenbosch University. David Marks collection, Box nr. 225, Letter. D. Marks-C. Hoffman, March 15, 1973; Hidden Years Music Archive, Documentation Centre for Music, Stellenbosch University. David Marks collection, Box nr. 120, Magazine, Ben Segal, “Chairman’s report,” *The Folksinger*, Vol. 1, no. 2, Winter 1968, 36.

²⁴⁶ L. Lambrechts, “The house where history ended up: Packing up the Ben Segal Collection,” *Fontes Artis Musicae* 62, no. 3 (2015): 167.

²⁴⁷ Hidden Years Music Archive, Documentation Centre for Music, Stellenbosch University. David Marks collection, Box nr. 77, Programme. Leon Rabinowitz, “SAFMA-1968,” *1968 Folk Festival programme* (1968).

²⁴⁸ Hidden Years Music Archive. David Marks collection, Box nr. 112, Resume. Ben Segal, “The South African Folk Music Association – a resumé.”

²⁴⁹ Hidden Years Music Archive, Documentation Centre for Music, Stellenbosch University. David Marks collection, Box nr. 374, Statements. Statement for South African Folk Music Association. 1968

was R2 per person and R1 per student.²⁵⁰ This membership gave people financial benefits, which included discounts on records and instruments, free entry to the SAFMA Thursday Night Folk Club in Hillbrow, and access to SAFMA activities.²⁵¹ The sponsorships that were obtained by Lindberg for SAFMA with brands such as Lion Beers, made the discounts possible for members.²⁵²

The Thursday Night Folk Club was called Downstairs, and it was in the basement at 86 Kotze Street in Hillbrow.²⁵³ Apart from the Troubadour, live music venues for folk music were limited.²⁵⁴ Downstairs was established to create more opportunities for live shows, and it was reserved only for folk music. Keith Blundell used the club to organise folk song workshops where anyone could pick up a guitar and try to sing.²⁵⁵ These workshops were a way for new folk musicians to start their careers and to encourage musicians to start writing their own original folk music.²⁵⁶ One rule was always followed: to perform at this club a musician could perform a song or two if the set included a new song every time.²⁵⁷ If the musician has sung the song before, they could not repeat it again.²⁵⁸ As such it followed the Troubadour's example and was set up in a very similar way. An audio recording of one of the club sessions in 1967 preserved in the Hidden Years Music Archive provides more information about how these workshops were set up and run.

In this session, Keith Blundell was joined by Brian Bebbington, a banjo player, as the facilitator.²⁵⁹ It is unclear whether the tape was cut after each performance to only record the music or whether the facilitators did not comment on the performances, but a variety of songs were performed. These include a musician performing "their favourite song sung by Sean Penn,

²⁵⁰ Hidden Years Music Archive, Documentation Centre for Music, Stellenbosch University. David Marks collection, Box nr. 357, Form. The South African Folk Music Association Membership application.

²⁵¹ Hidden Years Music Archive. David Marks collection, Box 120, Magazine. Ben Segal, "Chairman's report," *The Folksinger*, The Folksinger Vol. 1, no. 2, Winter 1968, 36.

²⁵² Des Lindberg, document sent via email to Marion Webber, September 24, 2021.

²⁵³ Hidden Years Music Archive, Documentation Centre for Music, Stellenbosch University. Keith Blundell collection, Scrapbook, Letter. SAFMA-Member, July 15, 1967, "South African Folk Music Association."

²⁵⁴ Hidden Years Music Archive. Keith Blundell collection, Scrapbook, Magazine entry. No author, "Living." *News Check*, August 4, 1967, 41.

²⁵⁵ Hidden Years Music Archive. Magazine entry, Keith Blundell collection, Scrapbook, Magazine entry. No author, "Living." *News Check*, August 4, 1967, 41.

²⁵⁶ Andersson. *Music in the mix*, 116.

²⁵⁷ Julie Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, May 24, 2021.

²⁵⁸ Julie Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, May 24, 2021.

²⁵⁹ Hidden Years Music Archive, Documentation Centre for Music, Stellenbosch University. David Marks collection, Audio recordings. *hymap-dm-reel-bebbington-blundell-1967-001*.

an Irish folk singer with whom he had worked with”.²⁶⁰ Another song shared was called “Engine”, a song written by Cosher Bailey.²⁶¹ Blundell performed a Burl Ives song called “The Wonderful Crocodile”, a song based on an old Irish air.²⁶² All of the songs performed in this session were traditional folk songs, and no original folk material was performed.

The rise of the Balladeers and national folk festivals

Just after the establishment of SAFMA, the Balladeers had their first performance on 2 July 1966.²⁶³ The performance was held at the Rand Women’s Club, and was organised by the Classical and Spanish Guitar Association of South Africa.²⁶⁴ This association invited the Balladeers and other performers to perform at their Club Night Saturday performance.²⁶⁵ Other artists who were invited to perform included Tessa Goldberg and Daniel Borboreki, who performed Classical music.²⁶⁶ The Spanish section organised a Flamenco performance by Constantino El Greco, who was flown in for the event from Spain.²⁶⁷

Shortly after this performance, the Balladeers performed at the Sandown Theatre in the show called the Balladeers in Concert.²⁶⁸ Other artists who performed with the band were Andy Dillon and Caroline Blundell, who performed as a solo artist.²⁶⁹ The *Rand Daily Mail* called this Matinee performance “humorous”, and the band the “biggest and best in folk”.²⁷⁰ These comments suggest that the folk group was making a name for themselves and that Blundell was good at teaching and training the musicians.

After this concert, the Balladeers were included in the line-up for the National Folksong Festival from 3 to 5 September 1966. The festival was held at the Troubadour in Doornfontein

²⁶⁰ Hidden Years Music Archive. David Marks collection, Audio recordings. hymap-dm-reel-bebbington-blundell-1967-001. The musician speaking and singing on the tape is unknown.

²⁶¹ Hidden Years Music Archive. David Marks collection, Audio recordings. hymap-dm-reel-bebbington-blundell-1967-001.

²⁶² “The Crocodile Song,” accessed January 20, 2022, <https://www.contemplator.com/sea/crocodile.html>.

²⁶³ *Rand Daily Mail*, July 2, 1966, Advertisement: “Rand Women’s Club,” 10.

²⁶⁴ *Rand Daily Mail*, July 2, 1966, Advertisement: “Rand Women’s Club,” 10.

²⁶⁵ *Rand Daily Mail*, July 2, 1966, Advertisement: “Rand Women’s Club,” 10.

²⁶⁶ *Rand Daily Mail*, July 2, 1966, Advertisement: “Rand Women’s Club,” 10.

²⁶⁷ *Rand Daily Mail*, July 2, 1966, Advertisement: “Rand Women’s Club,” 10.

²⁶⁸ *Rand Daily Mail*, July 23, 1966 Advertisement: “Rand Women’s Club,” 8; Hidden Years Music Archive. Keith Blundell collection, Miscellaneous, Written piece. Company Coming, 1966, 1.

²⁶⁹ Hidden Years Music Archive. Keith Blundell collection, Scrapbook, Programme. *Keith and the Balladeers in concert programme* (1966).

²⁷⁰ *Rand Daily Mail*, July 23, 1966, Advertisement: “Keith Blundell and the Balladeers,” 8; *Rand Daily Mail*, July 16, 1966, Advertisement: “Keith Blundell and the Balladeers,” 8.

and Mondeor.²⁷¹ Mondeor was a suburb in the south of Johannesburg. For the festival, several small stages were set up scattered around a field where singers performed during the festival.²⁷² The festival was sponsored by Lion Beers, a sponsorship that Des Lindberg organised.²⁷³ This was the first folksong festival the folk festival steering committee organised. The festival included various performances from folk musicians and workshops run by multiple artists.²⁷⁴ One of the workshops was a banjo workshop held by Brian Bebbington.²⁷⁵ Some of these workshops were also held at Dorkay House.

Dorkay House was an important venue for black musicians who used the space for rehearsals and events. Some musicians who frequented this venue included Dollar Brand (later Abdullah Ibrahim), Kippie Moeketsi, Miriam Makeba and Hugh Masekela.²⁷⁶ The folk festival used this space to hold workshops for black groups, including the Malombo Jazz Band and the Casaloma Brothers.²⁷⁷ From studying the program of this festival, these groups were not included in the line-up of musicians for the main festival. From using these separate venues, it would seem that the festival was organised according to the separate amenities acts of the apartheid government that prohibited the mixing of races.

Some of the performers at the festival included Des Lindberg, Ian Lawrence and Ritchie Morris, and Maureen England.²⁷⁸ This festival attracted large audiences and was quickly sold out.²⁷⁹ Reviews of the concert were rather critical, pointing out that the event had “too much melancholia, not enough verve, and [...] bleak décor”.²⁸⁰

²⁷¹ Hidden Years Music Archive, Documentation Centre for Music, Stellenbosch. Keith Blundell collection, Scrapbook, Programme. *National Folksong festival programme 1966* (1966); Miller, *The 60s folk scene in South Africa*, 60.

²⁷² Miller, *The 60s folk scene in South Africa*, 60.

²⁷³ Hidden Years Music Archive. Keith Blundell collection, Scrapbook, Programme. *National Folksong festival programme 1966* (1966); Miller, *The 60s folk scene in South Africa*, 60; Des Lindberg, document sent via email to Marion Webber, September 24, 2021.

²⁷⁴ Miller, *The 60s folk scene in South Africa*, 60.

²⁷⁵ Hidden Years Music Archive, Documentation Centre for Music, Stellenbosch University. Keith Blundell collection, Scrapbook, Programme. “Brian Bebbington,” *Folk song encore programme* (1966), 8.

²⁷⁶ Miller, *The 60s folk scene in South Africa*, 60.

²⁷⁷ Miller, *The 60s folk scene in South Africa*, 60. For more information of these groups, please consult the index on pages i and iv.

²⁷⁸ Miller, *The 60s folk scene in South Africa*, 60. For more information on these individuals, please consult the index on pages ii, iii and iv.

²⁷⁹ Miller, *The 60s folk scene in South Africa*, 60.

²⁸⁰ M. Correia, “Folk festival lacked verve,” *Rand Daily Mail*, September 8, 1966, 12.

After the festival, SAFMA immediately organised another series of concerts called Folk Song in Concert.²⁸¹ These concerts were held from 6 September, the day of Verwoerd's assassination, to 10 September 1966 at the Wits Great Hall.²⁸² The concerts showcased the same programme and musicians of the festival, and some of the artists who performed with Keith Blundell and his band were Des Lindberg and Jill Kirkland.²⁸³ These concerts were not just an event to see the performers of the National Folksong festival of 1966 again but also a fundraiser for SAFMA and an opportunity to raise awareness of the English folksong movement among the general public.²⁸⁴

***Dick King's Ride* and "Yahoo! Mountain Dew"**

The 10th of September 1966 ended the Folk Song in Concert event and coincided with the release of a new album by the Balladeers. *Dick King's Ride* (NLP 279) included 12 songs on the record, one of them being the title track.²⁸⁵ The cover of the album, as seen in Figure 16, is a picture of the Dick King memorial in Makhanda. This statue was unveiled in 1915 and serves to commemorate Dick King, an English trader and colonist in South Africa whose journey to Makhanda played a big part in the establishment of Natal as a British colony.²⁸⁶

"Dick King Ride" is a ballad written by Blundell that recounts the story of Dick King.

The Boers would come to Durban
 To play with ocean ports
 The British troops is fighting
 Inside of Huntsfoots fort
 The dearest hopefuls suckled
 For distant ways of storm
 We like to send a SOS before the flag went on

²⁸¹ *Rand Daily Mail*, September 9, 1966, Advertisement: "Folk song in concert," 8.

²⁸² Hidden Years Music Archive. David Marks collection, Box nr. 112, Programme. *National Folksong festival 1966: Folksongs in concert programme* (1966).

²⁸³ *Rand Daily Mail*, September 9, 1966, Advertisement: "Folk song in concert," 8.

²⁸⁴ Hidden Years Music Archive. David Marks collection, Box nr. 112, Programme. *National Folksong festival 1966: Folksongs in concert programme* (1966). See also Des Lindberg, document sent via email to Marion Webber, September 24, 2021.

²⁸⁵ M. Correia, "Records," *Rand Daily Mail*, September 10, 1966, 13.

²⁸⁶ S. Marschall, "Negotiating public memory: the Dick King memorial in Durban," *Southern African Humanities* 17, no. 1 (2005): 84.

Chorus

600 miles and 10 days
To save the Hardcrest force
That's how the king will ever greet me now
600 miles and 10 days with one single horse
To get the SOS to Grahamstown

He gets there after nightfall
He did it gracious male
The skyrit out of a stallion
He said I shall not fail
Through shark invested waters
He swam an end to hide
To watch the Burgers mischief
And then began the ride

Chorus

The land was wild and rugged
He had to trace the trail
But thinking did not fought her
He wrestled hell and dail
He made the epic journey
That was a lot of cruel
To get the news of Durban's whites to distant Grahamstown

Chorus

To get the SOS to Grahamstown!²⁸⁷

²⁸⁷ Lyrics transcribed by the author.

The lyrics recount Dick King, one of the 1820 British settlers' journey to Makhanda to summon relief and troops for the British outpost in Durban to repel the Voortrekkers.²⁸⁸ These settlers played an important role in the history of the White English-speaking community of South Africa, and English-speaking South Africans made sure to share with their community the stories of the settlers who arrived in the country (see Chapter 2).

The song, however, omitted a significant part of Dick King's journey, his companion, Ndongeni kaXoki. Ndongeni joined Dick King on his journey, but he had to turn around halfway through the journey because he rode the horse without a saddle which caused his legs to chafe.²⁸⁹ King's sister, Grace Campbell, said that Ndongeni "then walked or ran alongside the horse, holding on to the stirrup leathers of King's saddle" until he decided to turn around and go back to Durban.²⁹⁰ Ndongeni was not commemorated on King's memorial, reprinted on the cover of the album.²⁹¹ This decision to leave Ndongeni out of the memorial was made by the Committee who arranged for it to be made.²⁹² While the specific reasons for their decision are not documented, Marschall speculates that it might have had to do with the expenses of the statue.²⁹³ This omission was replicated in the song written by Keith Blundell.

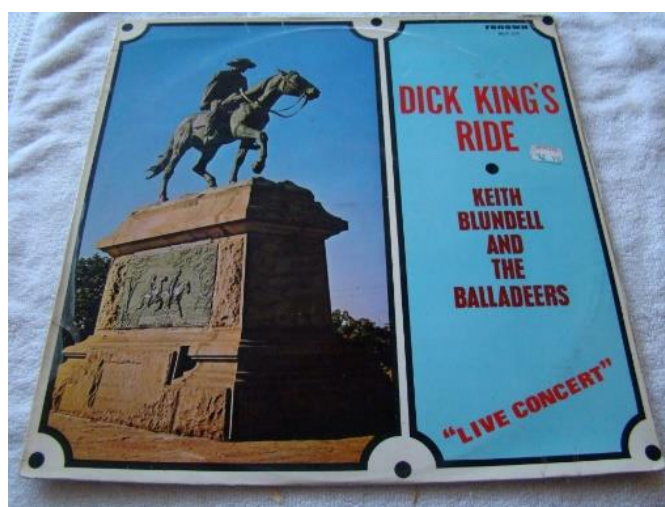


Figure 16: *Dick King's Ride* album cover, 1966.²⁹⁴

²⁸⁸ Marschall, "Negotiating public memory," 84.

²⁸⁹ Marschall, "Negotiating public memory," 84.

²⁹⁰ Marschall, "Negotiating public memory," 84.

²⁹¹ Marschall, "Negotiating public memory," 88.

²⁹² Marschall, "Negotiating public memory," 88.

²⁹³ Marschall, "Negotiating public memory," 88.

²⁹⁴ Marq Vas's Southern African Music Collectibles, "Keith Blundell and the Balladeers: Dick King's Ride," Facebook, accessed November 26, 2021, <https://www.facebook.com/251922131233/photos/a.10150489295686234/10150489306291234/>.

This album also includes covers of songs such as “Drill ya Tarriers”, a folk song written in 1888 and sung by Irish immigrant rail workers on jobs in Ireland, and “Rain, Rain”, based on a popular English nursery rhyme. This album includes, for the first-time, original songs that refer to local contexts and events. Apart from “Dick King’s Ride,” this includes the song “Tshotsholosa”. “Tshotsholosa”, a word created by mixing the Ndebele and Zulu languages, means “to push forward, endeavour, or strive” and is a traditional mining song originally sung by Ndebele miners that were commuting from Zimbabwe to Johannesburg’s mines.²⁹⁵ The song, discussing the train journey, has become well-known in South Africa and has been adapted to relate to the new South Africa post-apartheid.²⁹⁶ It is a celebratory tune, and audiences still sing it today in sports arenas where South Africa’s national sports teams play.²⁹⁷ The lyrics of the song is repeated multiple times:

Shosholoza (move forward)

Kulezo Ntaba (on those mountains,)

Stimela Siphume South Africa (the steam train to South Africa) (x2)

Wen’ Uyabaleka (you are running away)

Wen’ Uyabaleka

Kulezo Ntaba (on those mountains,)

Stimela Siphume South Africa (the steam train to South Africa) (x2)²⁹⁸

Singing “Tshotsholosa,” written in Zulu and Ndebele, in 1966, was not a-political as it referred to the migrant mine workers in South Africa. The song did not comply with the censorship legislation of separate development, including keeping languages and cultures apart. What is of interest is that Pete Seeger’s version of “Tshotsholosa”, recorded in 1963, was banned in South Africa, but Keith Blundell and the Balladeers’ version was not. Theunis Engelbrecht wrote in an article in *Die Beeld* newspaper that the SABC “was not always consistent in

²⁹⁵ See C. J. Thorpe, “Deconstructing “The South African Jazz Feel”: Roots, Rhythms and features of South African Jazz” (MA Thesis, Department of Music and Musicology at Rhodes University, 2018), 82.

²⁹⁶ S. Jensen, “Shosholoza: Political culture in South Africa between the Secular and the Occult,” *Journal of Southern African Studies* 38, no. 1 (2012): 92.

²⁹⁷ Jensen, “Shosholoza,” 92-93.

²⁹⁸ “Shosholoza,” Songs and Rhymes from South Africa, accessed November 28, 2021, <https://www.mamalisa.com/?t=es&p=4266>.

restricting the same types of songs or songs with a similar subject matter,” clearly illustrated in the case of “Tshotsholosa” and others that will be discussed below.²⁹⁹

More than a month later, on 27 October 1966, Keith Blundell released a song with Des Lindberg and Nick Taylor.³⁰⁰ The song was called “Yahoo! Mountain Dew.” The song was used for the advertisements of a new soft drink called Mountain Dew.³⁰¹ This song was described as a “Hillbilly and Folk song” by a reporter from the *Rand Daily Mail*. By listening to the record, one can hear a difference in music styles when comparing this record to Blundell’s other songs.³⁰² This record has a guitar playing in the background at a very fast tempo to which Blundell, Des and Nick sing. In Blundell’s other songs he recorded, he mostly has a slow-tempo guitar playing the melody with the focus on the lyrics and the singer’s voice.

At the time of the record’s release, the soft drink manufacturer was running a competition. The school who could collect the most bottle tops of the new soft drink Mountain Dew, would receive a donation of money from the soft drink manufacturer.³⁰³ Blundell, Des and Nick opted to sell the record for 20 cents and four bottle tops of the new soft drink.³⁰⁴ This was used to raise funds to buy a bus for the Forest Town School for Cerebral Palsied Children.³⁰⁵ This specific school was chosen for the fundraiser because, unlike other children, the pupils of this school could not collect enough bottle tops in the ordinary way to raise funds to afford a bus.³⁰⁶ With the help of the proceeds of the album as well as the donation of the bottle tops from the soft drink manufactures, they received enough money to buy a bus for the school.³⁰⁷ This social project also held commercial value for Blundell and Lindberg because their song, “Yahoo! Mountain Dew”, became well-known as a jingle for the new soft drink.³⁰⁸ Blundell recorded this album without the Balladeers and, according to Julie Blundell, the members of the singing

²⁹⁹ “SABC Record Censorship – Me and You and a Dog Named Boo,” Southern African Music Archive – Pictorial, Audio & Research Based History, accessed January 25, 2022, <https://www.facebook.com/profile/100045061847833/search/?q=Me%20and%20You%20and%20a%20Dog%20Named%20Boo>.

³⁰⁰ *Rand Daily Mail*, October 27, 1966, “What’s on”, 10.

³⁰¹ Julie Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, April 22, 2022.

³⁰² *Rand Daily Mail*, “What’s on.”

³⁰³ *Rand Daily Mail*, “What’s on.”

³⁰⁴ *Rand Daily Mail*, “What’s on.”

³⁰⁵ *Rand Daily Mail*, “What’s on.”

³⁰⁶ *Rand Daily Mail*, “What’s on.”

³⁰⁷ *Rand Daily Mail*, “What’s on

³⁰⁸ Julie Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, April 22, 2022

group did not mind as all of the members “did various other stuff, and it would not have been any kind of issue for the group”.³⁰⁹

In 1967, Blundell collaborated with Andy Dillon performing a series of concerts all over the country. Andy Dillon was a folk musician and guitarist born in Zimbabwe. He initially performed with Clem Tholet in Harare (formerly known as Salisbury).³¹⁰ He then came to Johannesburg to perform in the Troubadour, and it is there where he met Keith Blundell.³¹¹

Keith and Andy Bring the House Down

Because of the success of their collaborative concerts, Blundell and Andy decided to record an album called *Keith and Andy Bring down the house* (TRC 4000) in 1967.³¹² On the cover of the album is a picture of Blundell and Andy performing and singing together in a rundown house or ruin. The album included songs such as “Let Me Fly”, a short song about getting to the promised land, and “The Funeral Song”, a humorous song about a funeral director talking about the funeral that made him win the best funeral director award.³¹³

³⁰⁹ Julie Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, September 27, 2021.

³¹⁰ Hidden Years Music Archive. Programme, Keith Blundell collection, Miscellaneous, Programme. *Song and Country programme* (1970), 8. To learn more about Clem Tholet, please consult the index on page vii.

³¹¹ Hidden Years Music Archive. Keith Blundell collection, Miscellaneous, Programme. *Song and Country programme* (1970), 8.

³¹² Hidden Years Music Archive, Documentation Centre for Music, Stellenbosch University. Keith Blundell collection, Miscellaneous, CD booklet, Sound recordings. *Keith and Andy Bring down the house* (1967), cover page.

³¹³ Hidden Years Music Archive. Keith Blundell collection, Miscellaneous, CD booklet, Sound recordings. *Keith and Andy Bring down the house* (1967), p. 11.



Figure 17: *Keith and Andy Bring down the house* (TRC 4000) album cover, 1967.³¹⁴

It is a humorous album filled with up-beat songs. The album was well received, but two songs were censored, namely “Bronkhorstspuit” and “Ou Tante Koba”.³¹⁵ Both songs were traditional Afrikaans songs, rearranged by Mike Sears, an American singer-songwriter.³¹⁶ Sears stayed in South Africa in the late-1960s and is known for performing at the 1969 National Folk Festival, which will be discussed later in the chapter. The lyrics to the song “Bronkhorstspuit” are the following:

Everything's up to date down in Bronkhorstspuit
 We've got two coffee bars and they're open late
 A brand-new traffic light, and it works just great
 Cause we got the high traffic accident rates

Chorus

³¹⁴ Hidden Years Music Archive. Keith Blundell collection, Miscellaneous, CD booklet, Sound recordings. *Keith and Andy Bring down the house* (1967), cover page.

³¹⁵ Hidden Years Music Archive. Keith Blundell collection, Miscellaneous, CD booklet, Sound recordings. *Keith and Andy Bring down the house* (1967), 6.

³¹⁶ Hidden Years Music Archive. Keith Blundell collection, Miscellaneous, CD booklet, Sound recordings. *Keith and Andy Bring down the house* (1967), cover page.

We're moving ahead

Yeah (x3)

Our time isn't dead

No (x3)

We're up in the times

Yeah (x3)

Caught juvenile crimes

Living is really a thrill down in Bronkhorstspuit

We never pay our bills down in Bronkhorstspuit

We all read Fanny Hill down in Bronkhorstspuit

And we've even got the pill down in Bronkhorstspuit

Chorus

Our morals are pretty high down in Bronkhorstspuit

There's a church on every corner down in Bronkhorstspuit

Breaking immorality laws is something we all hate

Except on various special occasions down in Bronkhorstspuit

Chorus

We've all got very open minds at Bronkhorstspuit

Our girlfriends all wear minis when we're on a date

There are bikinis by the dozen down in Bronkhorstspuit

Ag man we're even swimming kaalgat down in Bronkhorstspuit

In fact this town is really a wow

All we need is people now

So come and live in Bronkhorstspuit

I don't mean maybe

Come live in Bronkhorstspuit

Yeah (x3)³¹⁷

The song references loose sexual behaviour, girls wearing miniskirts, and it ridicules the piousness of the church, referring to people breaking the Immorality Act and reading *Fanny Hill*, an erotic novel written by John Cleland.³¹⁸ This book was banned in multiple countries including London and Denmark in the 1960s, and the play was banned in South Africa in the 1980s.³¹⁹ It clearly was a controversial song for the time with political commentary that made fun of the apartheid government's laws. It is also a surprising song choice for Blundell, who projected an image of himself as not interested in politics.

The other song that was censored was "Ou Tante Koba". "Ou Tante Koba" is a well-known Afrikaans song, originally written by Josef Marais in 1939. Since its composition, the song has been adapted and performed by multiple songwriters, such as Laurika Rauch.³²⁰ Blundell and Dillon's adaptation was based on the original melody and chorus of the Marais song, including original verses written by Mike Sears.³²¹ Blundell and Andy sang the following lyrics:

My Tante Koba looks mighty cute
Walking down the street in her Chelsea boots
Bell bottom trousers and a Donovan hat
Carries her guitar and it's always flat

Chorus

It isn't my affair
It isn't your affair
Cause Tante Koba's troubles so in needed care (x2)

My Tante Koba is a varsity sweet
She likes to cause troubles at the protest meets

³¹⁷ Hidden Years Music Archive, Documentation Centre for Music, Stellenbosch University. Keith Blundell collection, Audio Recordings, CD Recording. *Keith and Andy Bring down the house* (1967). Lyrics transcribed by the author.

³¹⁸ *Rand Daily Mail*, August 24, 1963, "18th century novel 'not obscene'," 2.

³¹⁹ A. Grundlingh, "'Are we Afrikaners Getting too Rich?' Cornucopia and change in Afrikanerdom in the 1960s," *Journal of Historical Sociology* 21, no. 2 (2008): 153.

³²⁰ For more information regarding Laurika Rauch, please consult the index on page v.

³²¹ "Songs of the South African veld," accessed May 2, 2022, https://www.worldcat.org/title/songs-of-the-south-african-veld/oclc/566754&referer=brief_results.

And if she's ever bothered by a cop
She lays him out with a karate chop

Chorus

My Tante Koba is real way out
She likes yoghurt on a sauerkraut
She had the fight with her boyfriend, Willem
He couldn't stand the crazy Batman films

Chorus

My Tante Koba is a little beat
She plays her yo-yo with her feet
Some of the *ous* thinks it's a sin
But she's the Free State champion

Chorus

My Tante Koba is a meter maid
She likes gravel roads cause it doesn't fade
She says her skirts are far too short
Male drivers don't look where they are

Chorus

My Tante Koba went to church one day
She wore her uniform bright and gay
But when the reverend saw her knees
He says "Ag sies man, leave here please"

Chorus

Go Tante Koba!³²²

The song was presented with an upbeat rhythm, creating the atmosphere of a fun song telling the story of Tante Koba. However, under the surface of the lyrics, one could read various instances of subversion. In verse 2, Tante Koba causes trouble at protests, and says that she would “hit a policeman” if confronted. Various protests were held during the late 1960s, including marches at Wits University and the University of Cape Town. Verse 2 is not written subtly to hide the political meaning. It openly speaks about protests and supporting Tante Koba’s actions by saying at the end of the song, “Go Tante Koba!”.

More subtle is the clothing mentioned in the song. In verse 1, they sing about Tante Koba wearing “Chelsea Boots” and “Bellbottoms”. Chelsea boots, more commonly known today as Beatle Boots, and Bellbottoms, formed part of the hippie dress code that became important fashion elements for the youth of the counterculture.³²³ While the hippie style became more common in South Africa in 1968, Mike Sears who wrote the lyrics is from America, and he could have been referring to early proponents of the style in South Africa or America. Hippies were commonly associated with having long-hair and smoking dagga and older generations often vilified them by for being the opposite of what was considered as the “normal” appearance and lifestyle standards.³²⁴ In South Africa, the news of hippies around the world was shared in newspapers, and on 9 November 1967, a news article in the *Rand Daily Mail* said that “the conditions which existed among so-called hippie communities in certain overseas countries would never be allowed in South Africa”.³²⁵ Thus, the mention of hippie fashion worn by an Afrikaner woman could have added to the censorship committee’s list of complaints. Another piece of clothing that would have been considered inappropriate is mentioned in the song. In verse 5, they sing about Tante Koba whose “skirts are far too short.”

³²² Hidden Years Music Archive, Documentation Centre for Music, Stellenbosch. Keith Blundell collection, Audio Recordings, CD recording. *Keith and Andy Bring down the house* (1967). Lyrics transcribed by the author.

³²³ F. Bacon and S. Spencer, “Bourdin’s editorial and advertising photography: In 1954, Bourdin took his work to French Vogue, where he was given a fashion assignment on hats. It included a shot, which has become one of Bourdin’s early classes,” in *The Berg Companion to fashion*, ed. V. Steele (London: Bloomsbury Visual Arts Publishing, 2018), 93; V. Steele, “Anti-Fashion: The 1970s,” *Fashion Theory* 1, no. 3 (1997): 280.

³²⁴ *Rand Daily Mail*, November 7, 1967, “‘King of Hippies’ protests,” 19; S. Pruitt, “How the Vietnam War empowered the hippie movement,” History, accessed December 16, 2021, <https://www.history.com/news/vietnam-war-hippies-counter-culture>.

³²⁵ *Rand Daily Mail*, November 9, 1967, “No place for hippies here...,” 15.

Miniskirts were not considered appropriate for women, and Albert Grundlingh noted that these skirts were often portrayed as “assaulting the Afrikaner ideology”.³²⁶

The implication of censorship meant that albums and album covers had to be reprinted to remove the censored songs. While the two tracks were erased and reprinted on the vinyl record of *Keith and Andy Bring down the house*, the album cover was not reprinted, and the two tracks were still listed.³²⁷ Transatlantic record company did not bother to redo the sleeves of the censored albums when they re-pressed the album and instead just took a black marker and drew a line over the offensive titles.³²⁸ According to censorship practices discussed in Chapter 1, songs were censored for multiple reasons, including lyrics that spoke out against the government.³²⁹ David Marks wrote that the possible causes for the censorship of these songs could have been copyright infringements or that the lyrics offended “a particular sensitive ethnic group” of South Africans, referring to Afrikaners.³³⁰



Figure 18: *Keith and Andy Bring down the house* remastered album booklet done by David Marks, page 11, 1967.³³¹

³²⁶ Grundlingh, “Are we Afrikaners Getting too Rich?” 154.

³²⁷ Hidden Years Music Archive. Keith Blundell collection, Miscellaneous, CD booklet, Sound recordings. *Keith and Andy Bring down the house* (1967), 6.

³²⁸ Hidden Years Music Archive. Keith Blundell collection, Miscellaneous, CD booklet, Sound recordings. *Keith and Andy Bring down the house* (1967), 6.

³²⁹ J. Clegg and M. Drewett, “Why don’t you sing about the leaves and the dreams? Reflecting on music censorship in Apartheid South Africa,” in *Popular Music Censorship in Africa*, eds. M. Drewett and M. Cloonan (England: Ashgate Publishing Ltd, 2006), 141-150.

³³⁰ Hidden Years Music Archive. Keith Blundell collection, Miscellaneous, CD booklet, Sound recordings. *Keith and Andy Bring down the house* (1967), 7-8.

³³¹ Hidden Years Music Archive. Keith Blundell collection, Miscellaneous, CD booklet, Sound recordings. *Keith and Andy Bring down the house* (1967), 11.

“It Was a Very Good Year”

1967 started with Blundell performing with his family and other artists in The Family Folk Show. The concert was sponsored by the Lions Club of Mossel Bay.³³² Shortly after this performance, Blundell and the Balladeers did a folk concert called Folk Song Encore from 3 to 25 April 1967.³³³ It was held at the Selbourne School Hall in East London, and the concert was organised by the South African Folk Music Association (SAFMA).³³⁴ At this concert, Blundell and the Balladeers performed their arrangement of the song “It Was a Very Good Year.” This song was recorded by the Balladeers for the film *Wild Season* and released on their album with the same name.³³⁵ *Wild Season* is a film produced by Emil Nofal and Jans Rautenbach, and it starred Joe Stewardson, Marié du Toit, Peter Henkel and Vincent Cox.³³⁶ The film tells the story of the conflict between a father and his son, set against the backdrop of a fishing community along South Africa’s West Coast.³³⁷ The film caused a lot of controversy because bilingual, black actors were cast in the leading roles, and because of the way the film depicted Afrikaners.³³⁸ Keyan Tomaselli wrote in his book that the film “tears apart the deceit and prejudices of the wealthy urban Afrikaners”.³³⁹ The theme song performed by the Balladeers for the film, “It Was a Very Good Year”, was originally written by Ervin Drake and performed by Bob Shane and the Kingston Trio, and later also by Frank Sinatra.³⁴⁰ The lyrics of the song is the following:

When I was seventeen, it was a very good year.

It was a very good year for small-town girls and soft summer nights.

We'd hide from the light on the village green when I was seventeen.

³³² Hidden Years Music Archive Documentation Centre for Music, Stellenbosch University. Keith Blundell collection, Scrapbook, Programme. *The family folk show programme* (1967).

³³³ R. Daniel, “Clamour for more at folk concert,” *Rand Daily Mail*, April 24, 1967, 25.

³³⁴ Daniel, “Clamour for more.”; R. Daniel, “This is folk singing at its very best,” *Rand Daily Mail*, April 7, 1967, 10.

³³⁵ Daniel, “This is folk singing.”

³³⁶ M.P. Botha, “The cinema of Jans Rautenbach,” *Kinema: A Journal for film and audiovisual media*, (2015): 2. If you want to learn more about these individuals, please consult the index on pages i, ii, iii, iv, v and vii.

³³⁷ Botha, “The cinema of Jans Rautenbach,” 1.

³³⁸ K. Tomaselli, *The cinema of apartheid: Race and class in South African Film* (Great Britain: Routledge, 2016), 84.

³³⁹ Tomaselli, *The cinema of apartheid*, 84.

³⁴⁰ A. Bernstein, “Ervin Drake, songwriter of ‘It was a very good year’ dies at 95,” *Washington Post*, 15 January 2015, In: *Gale Academic OneFile*, accessed October 15, 2021, <https://go-gale-com.ez.sun.ac.za/ps/i.do?p=AONE&u=27uos&id=GALE|A397545266&v=2.1&it=r>.

When I was twenty-one, it was a very good year.
It was a very good year for city girls who lived up the stairs
With perfumed hair that came undone when I was twenty-one.

When I was thirty-five, it was a very good year.
It was a very good year for blue-blooded girls of independent means.
We'd ride in limousines.
Their chauffeurs would drive when I was thirty-five.

But now the days are short, I'm in the autumn of the year and now I think of my life as vintage
wine from fine old kegs.
From the brim to the dregs, it poured sweet and clear.
It was a very good year.³⁴¹

The rendition of this song by the Balladeers has the same lyrics as the original song, except for one verse that the Balladeers left out. Ervin Drake wrote a verse in the original that talked about his life when he was thirty-five, as seen in the lyrics above. This verse is not included in the song recorded for the movie.

Apart from "It Was a Very Good Year", the album also contains songs such as "Kissin's No Sin," an old Scottish folk song that was, according to the info on the back of the vinyl, an audience favourite. Also included is "Dance, Boatmen, Dance", a swinging Riverboat song that is mostly used for square dancing.³⁴² Included on the album is also two South African songs, "Bayeza" and "Mountains of Men".

³⁴¹ "'Wild Season' movie," accessed October 17, 2021, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KQK_jmWObd8.
Lyrics transcribed by the author.

³⁴² "Keith Blundell and the Balladeers: "It was a very good year" album back cover," accessed January 13, 2021, <https://www.discogs.com/release/14786418-Keith-Blundell-It-Was-A-Very-Good-Year>.

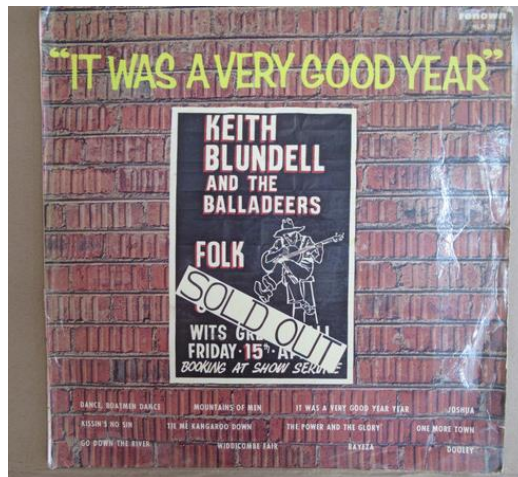


Figure 19: *It was a very good year* (NLP 290) album cover, 1967, depicting a poster of one of the concerts the group did at the Wits Great Hall.³⁴³

“Mountains of Men” is a contemporary song written by David Marks. Marks grew up in Johannesburg and went to school in Witbank.³⁴⁴ He started playing folk music in 1964 when he was introduced to the Troubadour, where Des Lindberg and Ian Lawrence were performing.³⁴⁵ It was not long after he visited the Troubadour for the first time that Marks started writing his own folk songs.³⁴⁶ Marks wrote “Mountains of Men” in 1963 while working in the mines.³⁴⁷ The song was recorded for the first time by Des Lindberg and Ian Lawrence in September 1966.³⁴⁸ Marks became an influential role-player in South African English Folk Music through his work as a singer-songwriter, the producer and director of the 3rd Ear Music Company, and as a sound engineer.³⁴⁹ He was involved with managing multiple live music venues and music projects throughout his career, and he has preserved, photographed and recorded most of the events in which he was involved.³⁵⁰

³⁴³ “Keith Blundell and the Balladeers.”

³⁴⁴ Andersson, *Music in the mix*, 79.

³⁴⁵ Andersson, *Music in the mix*, 79.

³⁴⁶ Andersson, *Music in the mix*, 79.

³⁴⁷ Andersson, *Music in the mix*, 79.

³⁴⁸ Andersson, *Music in the mix*, 79.

³⁴⁹ Lambrechts and Taylor, “They called me the ‘Ag Pleez Deddy’ Man,” 79.

³⁵⁰ Lambrechts and Taylor, “They called me the ‘Ag Pleez Deddy’ Man,” 79. Marks made all this material available through the Hidden Years Music Archive Project. See Chapter 1.

Mountains of Men

This land was barren, the lion's domain
Here he was king, over all he reigned
Then came our fathers to dig from the ground
They built us mountains to show what they found

Chorus

They stand in our country, we see them and then
We say it's just dust, but it's not... it's mountains of men.

They used to work here, the young and the old
Black men and white men to mine out the gold
Some made their fortunes, many just died
But they left us something to remember them by

Chorus

Many more riches were soon to be seen
Men slaved and died to build us a dream
Those men in the mines – they worked the earth's crust
These mountains are priceless all be they of dust.

Chorus ³⁵¹

In the second edition of *The Folksinger*, Marks wrote about the song, noting “this is a song of dedication to all the men who have or do work on the mines. This song was actually dedicated to my grandfather, who died underground.” He continued to point out that “although this song was specifically written about the gold mining industry in South Africa, it also applies to any country or community where there are mines.”³⁵² The song talks about the black migrant workers working in the mines in Johannesburg and surrounding areas. The workers earned a

³⁵¹ Andersson, *Music in the mix*, 82.

³⁵² Hidden Years Music Archive. David Marks collection, Box nr. 387, Magazines. David Marks, “Mountains of Men,” *The Folksinger* Vol 1, no. 2, 14.

low wage and worked in poor conditions, which included inadequate safety precautions that were harmful to black mineworkers' health.³⁵³ Some diseases that spread in the mines were scoliosis, tuberculosis, and HIV.³⁵⁴ This caused many mine workers to die while working, or shortly after their time of service. There are multiple versions of the song recorded over the years by artists such as Lady Black Mambazo, Des and Dawn Lindberg, David Marks and the Balladeers. The Balladeers recorded the song with guitar accompaniment and maracas keeping the tempo.³⁵⁵

***Keith Blundell Sings* and the first Folk Singing Competition**

In May 1967, Keith Blundell released his second album of the year called *Keith Blundell Sings* (NLP 289).³⁵⁶ This solo album includes several well-known folk songs arranged by Blundell, for example, "Country Boy".

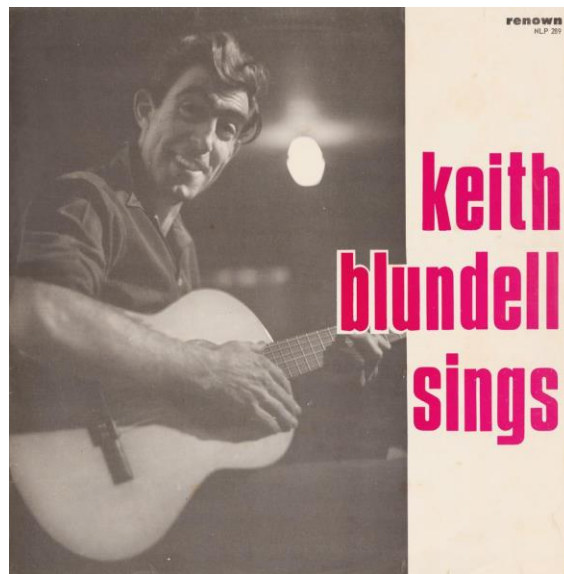


Figure 20: *Keith Blundell Sings* album cover, 1967³⁵⁷

³⁵³ P. Burger and P. Burger, "Migration and mine labour in South Africa," in *Mining and Community in South Africa: From small town to iron town*, eds. P. Burger, L. Marais and D. van Rooyen (New York: Routledge, 2019), 39-58.

³⁵⁴ Burger and Burger, "Migration and mine labour," 39-58.

³⁵⁵ Tertius Louw, audio sent via email to Marion Webber, May 4, 2022.

³⁵⁶ Tertius Louw, album cover sent via email to Marion Webber, January 21, 2022.

³⁵⁷ Tertius Louw, album cover sent via email to Marion Webber, January 21, 2022.

“Country Boy” is a folk song better known as “I’m Just a Country Boy”, and was written by Fred Hellerman and Marshall Barer.³⁵⁸ The song was first recorded by Harry Belafonte, an American singer and activist. Belafonte was the first artist to sell a million albums in one year.³⁵⁹ Belafonte performed with Miriam Makeba for six years, and he actively participated in the anti-apartheid struggle by establishing TransAfrica, the black political lobbying organization.³⁶⁰ Michael Eldridge wrote that Belafonte helped to invent the notion of “pop stardom,” and his name was visible everywhere, from nightclubs and concert halls to movie posters.³⁶¹ His performances and songs have won him an Emmy award (1959) and Grammy awards (1960, 1965 and 2000).³⁶² The song was then covered by Don Williams in the late 1970s. Williams is an award-winning American country singer who is well-known for his ballads like “We’re More Than Friends” and “Till the Rivers All Run Dry”.³⁶³ His music was popular in several countries, and he was one of the first major country musicians to tour South Africa in 1997.³⁶⁴

The lyrics of the song is the following:

I ain’t gonna marry in the fall
 Ain’t gonna marry in the spring
 ’Cause I’m in love with a pretty little girl
 Who wears a diamond ring

Chorus

And I’m just a country boy
 Money have I none
 But I’ve got silver in the stars
 Gold in the mornin’ sun
 Gold in the mornin’ sun

³⁵⁸ Tertius Louw, album cover sent via email to Marion Webber, January 21, 2022.

³⁵⁹ Tertius Louw, album cover sent via email to Marion Webber, January 21, 2022.

³⁶⁰ M.A. Novicki, “Harry Belafonte,” *Africa Report* 30, no. 5 (1985): 31.

³⁶¹ M. Eldridge, “Remains of the Day-O: A conversation with Harry Belafonte,” *Transition* 92, (2002): 110.

³⁶² Eldridge, “Remains of the Day-O,” 110.

³⁶³ “Country Star Don Williams, “The Gentle Giant”, dead at 78,” NBC News, accessed September 9, 2017, <https://www.nbcnews.com/pop-culture/music/country-star-don-williams-gentle-giant-dead-78-n799966>.

³⁶⁴ Hidden Years Music Archive Project, Documentation Centre for Music, Stellenbosch. David Marks Collection, 3rd Ear Records, Digital Sources, Fax Note. “Don Williams & Sponsors – Country Music Tours 1997/1998.” <http://hdl.handle.net/10019.2/17052>.

I never could afford a store-bought ring
With a sparkling diamond stone
All I could afford is a loving heart
The only one I own

Chorus

Never gonna kiss the ruby red lips
Of the prettiest girl in town
Never gonna ask her if she'd marry me
I know she'd turn me down

Chorus.³⁶⁵

Hellerman and Barer's song "I'm Just a Country Boy" is based on the saying, "money can buy you anything you want, but not everything you need", and with its direct lyrics, it talks about how diamond rings can give you satisfaction, but the feeling of love will "undeniably give you bliss".³⁶⁶ There are some similarities between Blundell's version and Harry Belafonte's version of the song, including the key and the lyrics. Blundell changed the tempo, making it a bit faster, and by adding a harmonica instead of using a violin (as in Belafonte's version), the song is more uplifting.

Keith Blundell's reputation as a leading musician in the folk music movement was growing, and he was invited to judge the first folk-singing competition for amateur musicians from 10 to 12 July 1967.³⁶⁷ The competition ran for three days and was held at the Greenside Hall in Johannesburg.³⁶⁸ For the first and second day of the competition, Blundell was joined by Ian Lawrence and Ritchie Morris as co-judges.³⁶⁹

³⁶⁵ "Don Williams – I'm just a country boy lyrics," accessed June 26, 2022, <http://www.songlyrics.com/don-williams/i-m-just-a-country-boy-lyrics/>.

³⁶⁶ "'I'm just a country boy': Money can buy anything but not everything," Country Thang Daily, accessed January 24, 2022, <https://www.countrythangdaily.com/im-just-country-boy/>.

³⁶⁷ *Rand Daily Mail*, July 10, 1967, "Folk for amateurs," 6.

³⁶⁸ *Rand Daily Mail*, "Folk for amateurs."

³⁶⁹ *Rand Daily Mail*, "Folk for amateurs."

For the last evening of the competition, on 12 July 1967, Blundell was joined by his wife, Pamela Blundell and Louis Meyer to judge the finalists and to choose the winners.³⁷⁰ The competitors were predominantly male performers. However, some female artists took part, including Jane Fraser.³⁷¹ The competitors were mostly solo performers with a couple of duos, trios and groups, such as the Fellows, who also took part in the competition.³⁷² The judges were each given a scoring sheet to adjudicate. Contestants were given a score out of six in the following categories: Voice, Instrumentation, Presentation, Diction, Interpretation, Musicality, Appearance, Versatility, and Plus factor.³⁷³ The first prize was R100, equal to R8 700 today.³⁷⁴ The second prize was R60, or R5 220 today and the third prize was R40, equal to R3 480 today.³⁷⁵ Apart from the prize money, the winners were rewarded with a recording contract.³⁷⁶

Folk festivals and the folk scene in South Africa

Soon after the competition, the Lions International Folk Festival took place.³⁷⁷ This festival was held at the Selbourne Hall in Johannesburg from 3 to 5 September 1967.³⁷⁸ Keith Blundell performed with his band, the Balladeers, and other performers included the Three Ravens and the Legend Trio.³⁷⁹ Commenting on the festival, Evelyn Levison, a journalist for the newspaper *Sunday Express*, wrote in a newspaper article that “judging from the Folk Festival presented by the Lions at the Selbourne Hall, Johannesburg, our local folk movement is going through the awkward stage”.³⁸⁰ This awkward stage, according to Levison, was because folk music seemed to have lost its engaging ingenuousness and “fresh natural charm,” that had been replaced by “adolescent brashness”.³⁸¹

³⁷⁰ Hidden Years Music Archive, Documentation Centre for Music, Stellenbosch University. Keith Blundell collection, Scrapbook, Programme. Folk Finalists.

³⁷¹ Hidden Years Music Archive. Keith Blundell collection, Scrapbook, Programme. Folk Finalists. For more information on Jane Fraser, please consult the index on page ii.

³⁷² Hidden Years Music Archive. Keith Blundell collection, Scrapbook, Programme. Folk Finalists. For more information regarding The Fellows, please consult the index on page vii.

³⁷³ Hidden Years Music Archive. Keith Blundell collection, Scrapbook, Programme. Folk Finalists.

³⁷⁴ Hidden Years Music Archive. Keith Blundell collection, Scrapbook, Programme. Folk Finalists.

³⁷⁵ Hidden Years Music Archive. Keith Blundell collection, Scrapbook, Programme. Folk Finalists.

³⁷⁶ Hidden Years Music Archive, Documentation Centre for Music, Stellenbosch University. Programme, Keith Blundell collection, Scrapbook, Programme. “Folk Competition form.”

³⁷⁷ *Rand Daily Mail*, August 1, 1967, 8.

³⁷⁸ *Rand Daily Mail*, August 1, 1967, 8.

³⁷⁹ *Rand Daily Mail*, August 1, 1967, 8.

³⁸⁰ Hidden Years Music Archive, Documentation Centre for Music, Stellenbosch University. Keith Blundell collection, Scrapbook, Article. Evelyn Levison, “The folk songs need no patter,” *Sunday Express* (1967).

³⁸¹ Hidden Years Music Archive. Keith Blundell collection, Scrapbook, Article. Evelyn Levison, “The folk songs need no patter,” *Sunday Express* (1967).

September 1967 was also the month when the South African Folk Music Association published the first edition of *The Folksinger* magazine.³⁸² In this magazine, there were multiple articles, including an article about the Troubadour, a section for current news about folk singers or groups, and an article about “the folk-rock kick”.³⁸³ One of these opinion pieces was written by Blundell, entitled “Reflections”.³⁸⁴ In this article, Blundell talked about the start of the Troubadour in 1964, and how the folk music movement in South Africa had grown over the four years since its opening. Blundell reflected on the early concerts at the Troubadour, where people “used to come in and actually listen to folk music – they really lapped it up”.³⁸⁵ Since then, he noted, “the scene has changed a lot” and that performing and putting on shows was not as easy as it was in the beginning. According to him, audiences were becoming more discerning and tired of the now familiar songs. He further noted that as more musicians started to play folk music, getting a spot to perform was getting tougher.³⁸⁶ The comments from Blundell about the changing scene relate to Levinson’s statement that points out the absence of the “natural charm” from previous years and how the raw atmosphere of folk music started changing.

After the Lions festival, the 3rd National Folk Festival took place from 16 to 22 October 1967 on the Troubadour premises in Johannesburg.³⁸⁷ At this event, Blundell performed with Barbara Thompson and Andy Dillon.³⁸⁸ Part of the organising committee was Irene Frangs, Des Lindberg and Keith Blundell, all members of the SAFMA steering committee.³⁸⁹ SAFMA decided to build a makeshift folk theatre behind the Troubadour to accommodate a bigger

³⁸² Hidden Years Music Archive. David Marks collection, Scrapbook 1, Magazines. *The Folksinger*, Vol. 1, no. 1, September 1967, cover page.

³⁸³ Hidden Years Music Archive. David Marks collection, Scrapbook 1, Magazines. *The Folksinger*, Vol. 1, no. 1, September 1967, cover page, 1.

³⁸⁴ Hidden Years Music Archive. David Marks collection, Scrapbook 1, Magazines. Keith Blundell, “Reflection,” *The Folksinger*, Vol. 1, Nr. 1, September 1967, 4.

³⁸⁵ Hidden Years Music Archive. David Marks collection, Scrapbook 1, Magazines. Keith Blundell, “Reflection,” *The Folksinger*, Vol. 1, no. 1, September 1967, 4.

³⁸⁶ Hidden Years Music Archive. David Marks collection, Scrapbook 1, Magazines. Keith Blundell, “Reflection,” *The Folksinger*, Vol. 1, no. 1, September 1967, 4.

³⁸⁷ Hidden Years Music Archive, Documentation Centre for Music, Stellenbosch University. David Marks collection, Box nr. 274, Letter. SAFMA-D. Marks, August 28, 1967, “3rd national Folk Festival.”; Hidden Years Music Archive. David Marks collection, Box nr. 112, Resume. Ben Segal, “The South African Folk Music Association – a resumé.”

³⁸⁸ Hidden Years Music Archive, Documentation Centre for Music, Stellenbosch University. David Marks collection, Box nr. 16, Programme. ‘67 Folk Festival’ programme (1967). For more information on Barbara Thompson, please consult the index on page vii.

³⁸⁹ Hidden Years Music Archive, Documentation Centre for Music, Stellenbosch University. David Marks and 3rd Ear Records Collection, Digital sources, Newspaper article. “Folk finds a home,” *Rand Daily Mail*, 10/12/1967, <http://hdl.handle.net/10019.2/17306>.

audience. They planned to use the impermanence of the seats and other aspects of the makeshift theatre to create more space.³⁹⁰ Evelyn Levison commented on the makeshift theatre that it “has the informal, impermanent charm of a circus tent. Erected in record time in a hall adjoining a well-known coffee bar, scaffolding tiers rising almost to the roof, hold audiences as eager to be entertained as any aficionados of the big top.”³⁹¹ Levison stated that the festival with the theatre gave an atmosphere of “warmth and enthusiasm”, but the atmosphere was only achieved on the first night of the festival.³⁹²



Figure 21: Barbara Thompson (left) and Keith Blundell (right) performing at the festival, 1967.³⁹³

In the program notes, Des Lindberg, the Director of the festival, wrote a piece that spoke about the local folk music scene in South Africa.³⁹⁴ In the article he wrote that,

³⁹⁰ Hidden Years Music Archive. David Marks and 3rd Ear Records Collection, Digital sources, Newspaper article. “Folk finds a home,” *Rand Daily Mail*, 10/12/1967, <http://hdl.handle.net/10019.2/17306>.

³⁹¹ Hidden Years Music Archive. David Marks and 3rd Ear Records Collection, Digital sources, Newspaper article. “Folk finds a home,” *Rand Daily Mail*, 10/12/1967, <http://hdl.handle.net/10019.2/17306>.

³⁹² Hidden Years Music Archive. David Marks and 3rd Ear Records Collection, Digital sources, Newspaper article. “Folk finds a home,” *Rand Daily Mail*, 10/12/1967, <http://hdl.handle.net/10019.2/17306>.

³⁹³ Hidden Years Music Archive. David Marks and 3rd Ear Records Collection, Digital sources, Newspaper article. “Folk finds a home,” *Rand Daily Mail*, 10/12/1967, <http://hdl.handle.net/10019.2/17306>.

³⁹⁴ Hidden Years Music Archive, Documentation Centre for Music, Stellenbosch University. David Marks collection, Box nr. 16, Programme. Des Lindberg, “Des Lindberg, this year's director talk about the folk scene and the festival,” 67' *Folk Festival programme* (1967), 2.

In the good old days when the folk revival was something new to this country, it was a lot easier. Firstly, stock folk material had not yet been worked to the faded, frayed old hat unfit to be worn if you want to hold your job down. Mountain songs from America and passionate or dour songs from the British Isles were new and compelling to urban listeners. Secondly, guitar sales in South Africa were not yet spectacular. The queues for coffee bar jobs were short and quickly absorbed, and there were plenty of songs to go around.³⁹⁵

Similar to Blundell's opinion piece, Lindberg noted that the scene had changed for folk music in South Africa today.³⁹⁶ He pointed out that "some of the people heard the songs too often, and made room for a new folk public, whose taste was more for humour than for history. The new enthusiasts created a demand for the witty, ad-libbing, satirical and swinging entertainers with guitars that many of us are today!"³⁹⁷ Lindberg pointed out that no one needed to fret because South African folk musicians were adaptable and "love being professional entertainers," and "to make people happy, whether it is by making them laugh, or cry".³⁹⁸

According to Lindberg, the 3rd National Folk Festival offered "the very best folk concert South Africa can present."³⁹⁹ However, Lindberg was aware of the challenges facing folk musicians, writing that every folksinger performing in a coffee bar had a big challenge, namely how to entertain the audience.⁴⁰⁰ In order to pre-empt this, performers were given dry runs before the festival and Lindberg wrote that their shows were shaped by the producer, Richard Daneel, and himself through harsh criticism to help performers get to the points they really wanted to

³⁹⁵ Hidden Years Music Archive. David Marks collection, Box nr. 16, Programme. Des Lindberg, "Des Lindberg, this year's director talks about the folk scene and the festival," 67' *Folk Festival programme* (1967), 2.

³⁹⁶ Hidden Years Music Archive. David Marks collection, Box nr. 16, Programme. Des Lindberg, "Des Lindberg, this year's director talks about the folk scene and the festival," 67' *Folk Festival programme* (1967), 2.

³⁹⁷ Hidden Years Music Archive. David Marks collection, Box nr. 16, Programme. Des Lindberg, "Des Lindberg, this year's director talks about the folk scene and the festival," 67' *Folk Festival programme* (1967), 3.

³⁹⁸ Hidden Years Music Archive. David Marks collection, Box nr. 16, Programme. Des Lindberg, "Des Lindberg, this year's director talks about the folk scene and the festival," 67' *Folk Festival programme* (1967), 3.

³⁹⁹ Hidden Years Music Archive. David Marks collection, Box nr. 16, Programme. Des Lindberg, "Des Lindberg, this year's director talks about the folk scene and the festival," 67' *Folk Festival programme* (1967), 3.

⁴⁰⁰ Hidden Years Music Archive. David Marks collection, Box nr. 16, Programme. Des Lindberg, "Des Lindberg, this year's director talks about the folk scene and the festival," 67' *Folk Festival programme* (1967), 2.

convey during their performances.⁴⁰¹ Lindberg further noted that this was necessary to get rid of “endless patter, the old trusted introduction to songs, the folksinger’s deliberate, self-conscious ineptitude of presentation.”⁴⁰² Whether this was a successful strategy is debatable. According to Mel Green, the rehearsals “were miserable, with Mr Daneel proving to be completely unequipped to understand the nature of folk music and its free-flowing nature”.⁴⁰³ Green wrote that Daneel yelled at the performers and made everyone feel uncomfortable during the rehearsals.⁴⁰⁴ In addition, many performers felt that Daneel was making a spectacle of their shows by insisting that they “dress up for the occasion,” with some performers having to wear peasant shirts and skirts, and make-up.⁴⁰⁵ What is clear from these rehearsals is that the organisers and producers had a very specific idea of what they wanted and tried to shape folk music into what they thought audiences were looking for.

In the second edition of *The Folksinger* magazine, released the following year, Pamela Blundell wrote a review about this festival. In a soft worded critique she acknowledged that “many guises of folksong are all needed to make a balanced program,” further noting that she hoped that some changes would be made to the list of performers for the next festival.⁴⁰⁶ She stated that she thought folk musicians “became a bit stiff-necked” in their approach to performances, and there were only a few performers who could sing purist songs and not do it a disservice.⁴⁰⁷ According to her, “each and every top-line pop-folk, contemporary folk, C & W (Country and Western), traditional British or European, or any other form of folk music, no matter how attenuated, must realise he is only a part of the whole scene”.⁴⁰⁸ While this festival did have

⁴⁰¹ Hidden Years Music Archive. David Marks collection, Box nr. 16, Programme. Des Lindberg, “Des Lindberg, this year’s director talks about the folk scene and the festival,” 67’ *Folk Festival programme* (1967), 3.

⁴⁰² Hidden Years Music Archive. David Marks collection, Box nr. 16, Programme. Des Lindberg, “Des Lindberg, this year’s director talks about the folk scene and the festival,” 67’ *Folk Festival programme* (1967), 3.

⁴⁰³ Hidden Years Music Archive. David Marks collection, Box nr. 16, Programme. Des Lindberg, “Des Lindberg, this year’s director talks about the folk scene and the festival,” 67’ *Folk Festival programme* (1967), 2.

⁴⁰⁴ Hidden Years Music Archive. David Marks collection, Box nr. 16, Programme. Des Lindberg, “Des Lindberg, this year’s director talks about the folk scene and the festival,” 67’ *Folk Festival programme* (1967), 2.

⁴⁰⁵ Miller, *The 60s folk scene in South Africa*, 62.

⁴⁰⁶ Hidden Years Music Archive, Documentation Centre for Music, Stellenbosch. David Marks collection, Box nr. 387, Magazine. Pamela Blundell, “Folksong festival 1967,” *The Folksinger* Vol. 1, no.2, Winter 1968, 8.

⁴⁰⁷ Hidden Years Music Archive. David Marks collection, Box nr. 387, Magazine. Pamela Blundell, “Folksong festival 1967,” *The Folksinger* Vol. 1, no. 2, Winter 1968, 8.

⁴⁰⁸ Hidden Years Music Archive. David Marks collection, Box nr. 387, Magazine. Pamela Blundell, “Folksong festival 1967,” *The Folksinger* Vol. 1, no. 2, Winter 1968, 8.

the same excitement as the first folk festival that took place in 1964,⁴⁰⁹ and while “the Folk Theatre has the charm of originality, the right feeling of informality,” she would still prefer the Troubadour for folk performances and festivals.⁴¹⁰ Pamela Blundell also mentioned her favourite performances at the festival, including Julie Laxton’s guitar workshop and the performances from Brian Bebbington, Barbara Thompson and the performances of Keith Blundell and Andy Dillon.⁴¹¹

From the above section, it is becoming clear that the folk music scene in South Africa was beginning to change after the first folk festival, held in 1964. Audiences were growing tired of the well-known traditional and historical folk songs and wanted new satirical and humorous songs. Pamela encouraged this transition of folk songs by stating that all forms of folk music should be performed to create a balanced program for everyone to enjoy. While festival producers, such as Des Lindberg, tried to bring musicians up to speed and coach them in performance strategies, musicians found that it caricatured them and removed the spontaneity from their shows. Increasingly, new and younger folk musicians were entering the scene performing satirical and humorous songs as well as original folk songs.

SAFMA in 1968 and *The Younger Generation*

In 1968 SAFMA, under the leadership of Leon Rabinowitz, decided to create a Johannesburg branch of the association because of the amount of time and support the community in Johannesburg was showing to folk music.⁴¹² Some of the members that were part of the branch were Gordon Silver (chairman), Robert Butler, Val le Roux, Peter le Roux, John Silver, Clive Glover and Ben Segal.⁴¹³ SAFMA also sent out its first newsletter to members throughout the country on the 1st of May 1968.⁴¹⁴

⁴⁰⁹ Hidden Years Music Archive. David Marks collection, Box nr. 387, Magazine. Pamela Blundell, “Folksong festival 1967,” *The Folksinger* Vol. 1, no. 2, Winter 1968, 7.

⁴¹⁰ Hidden Years Music Archive. David Marks collection, Box nr. 387, Magazine. Pamela Blundell, “Folksong festival 1967,” *The Folksinger* Vol. 1, no. 2, Winter 1968, 8.

⁴¹¹ Hidden Years Music Archive. David Marks collection, Box nr. 387, Magazine. Pamela Blundell, “Folksong festival 1967,” *The Folksinger* Vol. 1, no. 2, Winter 1968, 8.

⁴¹² Hidden Years Music Archive, Documentation Centre for Music, Stellenbosch University. David Marks collection, Box nr. 374, Letter. SAFMA-members, 1970, “Dear member.”

⁴¹³ Hidden Years Music Archive. David Marks collection, Box nr. 374, Letter. SAFMA-members, 1970, “Dear member.” If you want to learn more about these individuals, please consult the index on pages i, iii, vi.

⁴¹⁴ Hidden Years Music Archive, Documentation Centre for Music, Stellenbosch University. David Marks collection, Box nr. 305, Newsletter. Newsletter no. 1, May 1, 1968, 1.

The newsletter discussed the events for the upcoming year, including the possibility of renting a space where all of the activities of the association could take place.⁴¹⁵ It also spoke about SAFMA's forthcoming release of the second issue of their magazine, *The Folksinger*, with articles about the folk musicians of South Africa and information about a new study group.⁴¹⁶ The study group was set up for members to learn about folk music by watching music films.⁴¹⁷ These sessions were going to be held at the Wits University Social Science building.⁴¹⁸ Forthcoming concerts were also discussed in the newsletter, including the concert SAFMA was planning to host on 25 July 1968 at the Selbourne Hall where specifically traditional folk music and composed South African music would be played.⁴¹⁹

The newsletter further announced the founding of the Natal Folk Music Association (NAFMA), the Natal branch of SAFMA, on 16 May 1968.⁴²⁰ The Natal branch was formed in Verlein 'Ginger' Seipp's apartment in Durban on 17 March 1968, and some of the members of the committee included David Marks, Jimmy Whittle and Gary Bryden.⁴²¹ According to the minutes of this meeting, no one was elected in any specific position, and the formation of the association "just happened" while those present were busy discussing hosting a folk festival in Durban.⁴²² This festival was planned for mid-July 1968.⁴²³

⁴¹⁵ Hidden Years Music Archive. David Marks collection, Box nr. 305, Newsletter. Newsletter no. 1, May 1, 1968, 1.

⁴¹⁶ Hidden Years Music Archive. David Marks collection, Box nr. 305, Newsletter. Newsletter no. 1, May 1, 1968, 1.

⁴¹⁷ Hidden Years Music Archive. David Marks collection, Box nr. 305, Newsletter. Newsletter no. 1, May 1, 1968, 1.

⁴¹⁸ Hidden Years Music Archive. David Marks collection, Box nr. 305, Newsletter. Newsletter no. 1, May 1, 1968, 1.

⁴¹⁹ Hidden Years Music Archive. David Marks collection, Box nr. 305, Newsletter. Newsletter no. 1, May 1, 1968, 1.

⁴²⁰ Hidden Years Music Archive, Documentation Centre for Music, Stellenbosch University. David Marks collection, Scrapbook, Newspaper clipping. No publication, no date, "Folk Folk Folk."

⁴²¹ Hidden Years Music Archive. Verlein 'Ginger' Seipp, Interviewed by Prof. Lizabé Lambrechts, March 15, 2017. For more information on Jimmy Whittle and Gary Bryden, please consult the index on page i and vii.

⁴²² Hidden Years Music Archive, Documentation Centre for Music, Stellenbosch University. David Marks collection, Box nr. 305, The South African Folk Music Association (Natal), "Minutes of the first meeting held at Mr. 'Ginger' Seipp's house, Durban," (1968)

⁴²³ Hidden Years Music Archive, Documentation Centre for Music, Stellenbosch University. David Marks collection, Box nr. 305, Newsletter, Newsletter no. 1, May 1, 1968, 2.

For Blundell, this year included recording an album with his young children, Andy Dillon and Peter and Susie Sklair.⁴²⁴ The album was called *The Younger Generation* (TRL 002), and was produced by Manley van Niekerk Record Pressings.⁴²⁵

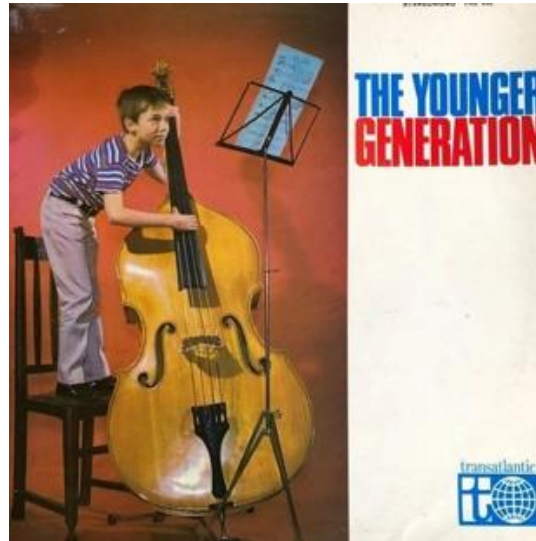


Figure 22: *The Younger Generation* (TRL 002) album cover, 1968.⁴²⁶

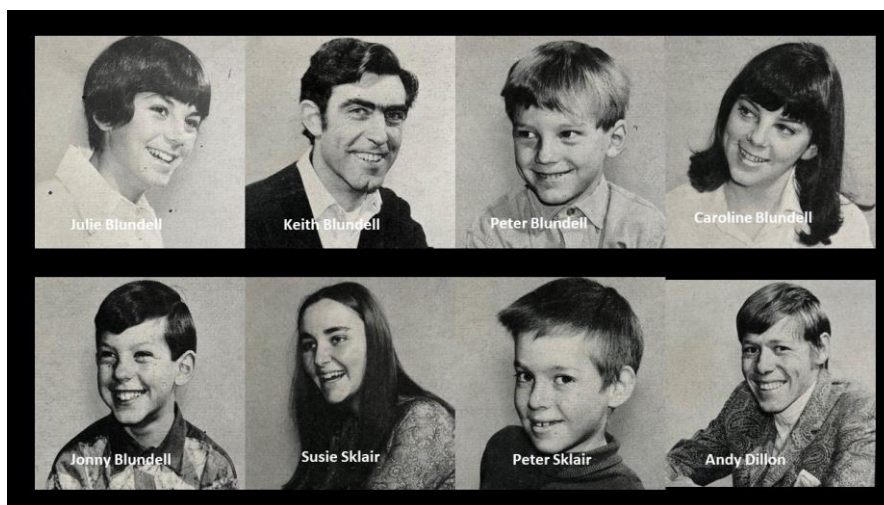


Figure 23: Julie Blundell, Keith Blundell, Peter Blundell, Caroline Blundell, Jonny Blundell, Susie Sklair, Peter Sklair, Andy Dillon who performed on the album *The Younger Generation*, 1968.⁴²⁷

⁴²⁴ To learn more about Peter and Susie Sklair, please consult the index on page vi.

⁴²⁵ Hidden Years Music Archive. David Marks collection, Box nr. 77, Programme. *1968 Folk Festival programme* (1968). 1.

⁴²⁶ Marq Vas's Southern African Music Collectibles, "The younger generation' album cover," Facebook, October 12, 2018, <https://www.facebook.com/251922131233/photos/a.439658636233/10156210693471234/>.

⁴²⁷ Marq Vas, October 12, 2018, "The younger generation' album cover,".

The album included songs such as “Feeling Groovy”, a folk song by Paul Simon and Art Garfunkel, and “The Young Ones” a song by Cliff Richard, a British musician.⁴²⁸ One of the tracks on the album, “It’s Not Time” was censored by the SABC. The lyrics of the song were:

I’d like to tell you that it’s fine but it’s not time now
I can’t seem to get a word and advice anyhow
Though the words are flyin’ fast it just don’t mean a thing
In a little while I could tell you everything

But we’ve taken sights in anger and we can’t break it down
Now we’re fightin’ just to bring the other down
And if you think to stop it now
Then the next time you’ll know how

I’d like to break it to you gently where we’re going wrong
If the rock begins a-rollin’ we just tag along
If at first we pick the loved things that we both lack
Then before we think to stop we’re into hurtin’ back

Then an avalanche of answers must be found too fast
Hasty may just when we should build the last
Love what we lack like what we share
Correction comes with time to spare

But we’ve taken sights in anger and we can’t break it down
Now we’re fightin’ just to bring the other down
And if you think to stop it now
Then the next time you’ll know how

⁴²⁸ “The 59th Street Bridge song (Feeling Groovy),” accessed January 31, 2022, <https://www.lyrics.com/lyric/7120628/Simon+%26+Garfunkel/The+59th+Street+Bridge+Song+%28Feelin%27+Groovy%29>; “The younger generation – The young ones,” accessed January 31, 2022, <https://www.facebook.com/profile/100063546069505/search/?q=the%20younger%20generation>.

I'd like to tell you that it's fine but it's not time now
 I can't seem to get a word and advice anyhow
 Though the words are flyin' fast it just don't mean a thing
 In a little while I could tell you everything.⁴²⁹

The lyrics of the song relate the story of a couple trying to fix their relationship. "It's Not Time" is a song originally performed by a band called the Loving Spoonful, an American rock band that performed folk-rock music in the 1960s.⁴³⁰ The song on the album was performed by Julie (14 years old) and Caroline Blundell (16 years old) with Susie Sklair.⁴³¹ The song was censored by the SABC; the reasons for this are unclear.

Just Us and the folk music scene in 1968

After recording *The Younger Generation*, Blundell encouraged his daughters, Julie and Caroline Blundell, to form a group with Susie Sklair.⁴³² The band was called Just Us, and it was formed in June 1968.⁴³³ Caroline and Susie were already good friends, and the three of them were the youngest members of the Balladeers.⁴³⁴ They sang songs arranged by women, especially traditional spirituals and songs of the band The Mamas and The Papas.⁴³⁵ Some of the songs included "California Dreaming," "San Francisco Bay", an American Blues folk song recorded by Jesse Fuller, and "12 Gates to the City," a folk song inspired by the book of the bible called "Revelation".⁴³⁶ Julie, Caroline and Susie were in control of the song choices and the performances. Blundell provided some moral support for the band during their

⁴²⁹ "It's not time now – The Lovin' Spoonful," accessed June 26, 2022, <https://www.lyrics.com/lyric/6266716/The+Lovin%27+Spoonful/It%27s+Not+Time+Now>.

⁴³⁰ "The Lovin' Spoonful," accessed January 31, 2022, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/The-Lovin-Spoonful> (Accessed 31 January 2022).

⁴³¹ Tertius Louw, audio sent via email to Marion Webber, January 25, 2022.

⁴³² Hidden Years Music Archive. David Marks collection, Box nr. 387, Magazine. "Just Us," *The Folksinger* Vol. 1, no. 2, Winter 1968, 6.

⁴³³ Hidden Years Music Archive. David Marks collection, Box nr. 387, Magazine. "Just Us," *The Folksinger* Vol. 1, no. 2, Winter 1968, 6.

⁴³⁴ Caroline Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, April 22, 2022.

⁴³⁵ Caroline Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, April 22, 2022.

⁴³⁶ Julie Blundell, email to Marion Webber, January 26, 2022; "San Francisco Bay Blues," Word and music and stories, accessed January 31, 2022, <https://wordsmusicandstories.wordpress.com/2019/03/03/san-francisco-bay-blues/>; "Twelve Gates to the City," accessed January 31, 2022, <https://www.cinchreview.com/twelve-gates-to-the-city/10682/>.

performances, and he coached them a bit to prepare for shows.⁴³⁷ According to Julie Blundell, the group “generously allowed” Blundell to sometimes play the double bass with them.⁴³⁸

After supporting his children in forming the group Just Us, Keith Blundell performed at Selbourne Hall at the singer-song-writing concert held by SAFMA on 5 July 1968.⁴³⁹ He performed at this concert with Andy Dillon. Other performers included Des Lindberg, Dawn Silver, Ian Lawrence and Ritchie Morris, Leon Rabinowitz, David Marks and Pieter le Roux.⁴⁴⁰ The purpose of this concert was for folk singers to perform their original songs and to release a long-playing record that featured some of the younger singers and composers who performed at the concert.⁴⁴¹ Raeford Daniel, a journalist for the *Rand Daily Mail*, remarked that the concert and the songs were “sharply individualistic with flashes of originality”.⁴⁴² For Daniel, the songs succeed in reflecting and capturing the essence of the South African folk music scene.⁴⁴³

After this performance, Blundell did various other performances leading up to the annual National Folk Festival held from 31 October to 7 November 1968.⁴⁴⁴ The festival took place at the Sandown Arts Theatre, and Blundell again performed with Andy Dillon.⁴⁴⁵ This festival focused on new talent and original, locally composed songs.⁴⁴⁶ In the program for the festival, Leon Rabinowitz, the chairman of SAFMA at the time, wrote a short piece about folk music. He wrote that

Folk music, I am pleased to say, has survived the traumas which have beset the world during 1968, and has in fact, perhaps in its own small way, contributed to making said world a better

⁴³⁷ Hidden Years Music Archive. David Marks collection, Box nr. 387, Magazine. “Just Us,” *The Folksinger* Vol. 1, no. 2, Winter 1968, 6.

⁴³⁸ Julie Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, April 23, 2022.

⁴³⁹ R. Daniel, “Concert to promote folk artists,” *Rand Daily Mail*, June 25, 1968, 12.

⁴⁴⁰ Daniel, “Concert to promote.”

⁴⁴¹ Daniel, “Concert to promote.”

⁴⁴² Daniel, “Concert to promote.”

⁴⁴³ Daniel, “Concert to promote.”

⁴⁴⁴ Hidden Years Music Archive. David Marks collection, Box nr. 77, Programme. *1968 Folk Festival programme* (1968).

⁴⁴⁵ Hidden Years Music Archive. David Marks collection, Box nr. 77, Programme. *1968 Folk Festival programme* (1968).

⁴⁴⁶ Hidden Years Music Archive. David Marks collection, Scrapbooks, Newspaper article, No publication, no date, “Festive date in Sandown.”

place. This I humbly submit, by virtue of the fact that we have many new friends, performed charitably and communicated with the different members of our community.⁴⁴⁷

This reflection by the chair of SAFMA may point to the fact that folk music managed to survive its “awkward stage” as Evelyn Levison remarked,⁴⁴⁸ and has matured into a genre and performance style that played a meaningful role in the South African folk music community.

Keith Blundell as SAFMA’s chairperson

SAFMA held its Annual General Meeting (AGM) every year at the National Folk Festival. During the 1968 AGM, Keith Blundell was elected to serve as the chairperson of the association for 1969.⁴⁴⁹ As the chairperson of SAFMA, Blundell was responsible for organising and producing the following National Folk Festival, called Folk Fest ‘69.

The festival was held from 25 September to 5 October 1969 at the new German school in Parktown.⁴⁵⁰ In previous years, the Sandown Arts Theatre was used, but the German school was more accessible this year, and according to Blundell acoustically better for the musicians to perform at.⁴⁵¹ Blundell initiated a number of big changes for this festival.⁴⁵² One of these changes was to not only host the festival in Johannesburg but also take it to Pretoria.⁴⁵³ This was the first time the folk festival was held in two different locations. Furthermore, Blundell decided to focus on the younger generation and expose them to folk music. He organised special matinees for younger children on the two Saturdays of the festival, and he also made block bookings and discounts of 25% available to pupils and their accompanying parents.⁴⁵⁴ According to Val le Roux, much effort was put into entertaining children at the festival because “folk music has always been an integral part of every country’s heritage, and to SAFMA, it is

⁴⁴⁷ Hidden Years Music Archive. David Marks collection, Box nr. 77, Programme. *1968 Folk Festival programme* (1968).

⁴⁴⁸ Hidden Years Music Archive. Keith Blundell collection, Scrapbook, Article. Evelyn Levison, “The folk songs need no patter,” *Sunday Express* (1967).

⁴⁴⁹ Hidden Years Music Archive. David Marks collection, Box nr. 112, Resume. Ben Segal, “The South African Folk Music Association – a resumé.”

⁴⁵⁰ R. Daniel, “Folk festival is in gear,” *Rand Daily Mail*, September 24, 1969, 7.

⁴⁵¹ Daniel, “Folk festival is in gear.”

⁴⁵² Hidden Years Music Archive. David Marks collection, Box nr. 112, Resume. Ben Segal, “The South African Folk Music Association – a resumé.”

⁴⁵³ Hidden Years Music Archive. David Marks collection, Box nr. 112, Resume. Ben Segal, “The South African Folk Music Association – a resumé.”

⁴⁵⁴ Hidden Years Music Archive. David Marks collection, Box nr. 374, Letter. V. le Roux-Principal, September 5, 1969, “South African Folk Music Association.”

important that we should offer our up-and-coming generation this glimpse of folk music, to be presented in its various categories”.⁴⁵⁵ Blundell also planned to include some African music at the festival.⁴⁵⁶ In an article in the *Rand Daily Mail*, Blundell mentioned that he would be performing two African songs that he learned from Andrew Tracy.⁴⁵⁷ The first one being a song called “Shalo Zwe” which was part of the production *Wait a Minim!*, and the other song was a tribal song from Uganda that was collected by the Tracy family.⁴⁵⁸ However, singing two African songs hardly equates to including African music at the festival, especially if one considers that groups such as Malombo and the Casaloma brothers – well-known in folk music circles, were not included in the programme.

In the program for Folk Fest ‘69, several short essays are included, amongst them a piece written by Blundell entitled “S.A.F.M.A: Chairman’s folk festival message”.⁴⁵⁹ In his essay, he reflects on folk music in South Africa, noting that,

Seven years ago, there were a few people who, with guitar and voice led a Folk Song revival here in much the same way as had taken place in the U.S.A. and Britain some years earlier. It became a popular trend, and it was considered “with it” to be a follower of Folk Song. Today, some of the early followers of “Folk” have become bored and do not often come to listen. Instead they say that “Folk” is “Dead”! What they may not realise is that a popular trend of listening has I believe become a more important trend – that of DOING. There are in fact hundreds of young, and not so young people, all over the country, who are trying to make music for their own pleasure and not necessarily as a means of entertaining the public. People are writing songs as well, and because of this I believe that we are in the process, a gradual only just visible process, of creating our own Folk Song tradition.⁴⁶⁰

Contrary to those mentioned by Blundell in the essay who declared that “folk music is dead,” Blundell seemed optimistic by the growth of folk music as a performance practice in South

⁴⁵⁵ Hidden Years Music Archive. David Marks collection, Box nr. 374, Letter. V. le Roux-Principal, September 5, 1969, “South African Folk Music Association.”

⁴⁵⁶ Daniel, “Folk festival is in gear.”

⁴⁵⁷ Daniel, “Folk festival is in gear.”

⁴⁵⁸ Daniel, “Folk festival is in gear.”

⁴⁵⁹ Hidden Years Music Archive, Documentation Centre for Music, Stellenbosch University. David Marks and 3rd Ear Records Collection, Digital sources, Programme. *Folk Fest ’69 programme* (1969), 3, <http://hdl.handle.net/10019.2/17922>.

⁴⁶⁰ Hidden Years Music Archive. David Marks and 3rd Ear Records Collection, Digital sources, Programme. *Folk Fest ’69 programme* (1969), 3, <http://hdl.handle.net/10019.2/17922>.

Africa.⁴⁶¹ Blundell concluded his article by pointing out that old and new songs were programmed at the festival and that “one day some of these songs and hundreds of others, will, [...] be part of our own Folk Song Tradition”.⁴⁶²

Keith’s departure from SAFMA

A number of things led up to Keith Blundell’s departure from SAFMA. However, the catalyst for his decision took place during a meeting at his house on 4 November 1969 during a discussion about the 1969 Folk Festival.

The Folk Fest ‘69 festival was advertised by Don Hughes in Johannesburg and Pretoria. In a SAFMA meeting at the Blundell home after the festival, the advertisement of the festival was discussed. Present was Blundell and Pamela Blundell, Ben Segal, Peter and Val le Roux.⁴⁶³ Ben Segal pointed out that Don Hughes’s advertisement of the festival used the words “Folk fest’ 69” and “brought back by popular demand” for the advertisement. He noted that “Don Hughes’ adverts have been misleading in that they could only have referred to SAFMA’s 1969 Festival.”⁴⁶⁴ This, according to Segal, could point to “possible infringement of established copyright” and “failure to contact or consult the Committee.”⁴⁶⁵

Blundell pointed out that “Hughes was beginning to see folksingers more as entertainers and that his motives were not damaging to SAFMA. The people who could not afford the previous event at the German Theatre had a chance to come and see the festival.”⁴⁶⁶ He also said that Don Hughes had given him a list of the singers he had heard and thought was good enough to include in a show.⁴⁶⁷ Ben Segal, in turn, noted that there must be a principle regarding the

⁴⁶¹ Hidden Years Music Archive. David Marks and 3rd Ear Records Collection, Digital sources, Programme. *Folk Fest ’69 programme* (1969), 3, <http://hdl.handle.net/10019.2/17922>.

⁴⁶² Hidden Years Music Archive. David Marks and 3rd Ear Records Collection, Digital sources, Programme. *Folk Fest ’69 programme* (1969), 3, <http://hdl.handle.net/10019.2/17922>.

⁴⁶³ Hidden Years Music Archive, Documentation Centre for Music, Stellenbosch University. David Marks collection, Box nr. 478, Minutes of meeting. South African Folk Music Association, “SAFMA meeting held 4.11.69.”

⁴⁶⁴ Hidden Years Music Archive. David Marks collection, Box nr. 478, Minutes of meeting. South African Folk Music Association, “SAFMA meeting held 4.11.69.”

⁴⁶⁵ Hidden Years Music Archive. David Marks collection, Box nr. 478 Minutes of meeting. South African Folk Music Association, “SAFMA meeting held 4.11.69.”

⁴⁶⁶ Hidden Years Music Archive. David Marks collection, Box nr. 478, Minutes of meeting. South African Folk Music Association, “SAFMA meeting held 4.11.69.”

⁴⁶⁷ Hidden Years Music Archive. David Marks collection, Box nr. 478, Minutes of meeting. South African Folk Music Association, “SAFMA meeting held 4.11.69.”

use of SAFMA's products and productions.⁴⁶⁸ Segal intended to send a letter in this regard to Hughes. The members at the meeting agreed to send the letter, except for Blundell who demanded to be disassociated from the letter.⁴⁶⁹

Shortly after this meeting, on 27 November 1969, Keith and Pamela Blundell resigned from the South African Folk Music Association as chairperson and organising secretary, respectively.⁴⁷⁰ They announced it to the association at a SAFMA meeting held at Peter Le Roux's residence.⁴⁷¹ Ben Segal and the association sent a letter of acknowledgement to the Blundell's after their resignation.⁴⁷² According to the minutes of this meeting, his resignation was not a surprise, as Blundell mentioned in a previous meeting on 16 March 1969 that he was thinking of resigning.⁴⁷³ In his resignation, Blundell is minuted as saying that his resignation "might serve to benefit the organisation and its members as he could devote more time to dealing with and promoting worthwhile artists and music material".⁴⁷⁴ In spite of his seemingly good intentions, minutes of a SAFMA meeting held early in 1970 noted that since Blundell left the association, he became weary of being associated with SAFMA.⁴⁷⁵

After leaving the association, Keith and Pamela Blundell performed in a show called *Once Upon a Time*, directed by Fiona Frazer.⁴⁷⁶ This show was staged from 15 to 17 December 1969, and they were joined by Andy Dillon and George Jackson.⁴⁷⁷ The show was aimed at children as part of Christmas entertainment, and the performers told Christmas stories and sang songs.⁴⁷⁸

⁴⁶⁸ Hidden Years Music Archive. David Marks collection, Box nr. 478, Minutes of meeting. South African Folk Music Association, "SAFMA meeting held 4.11.69."

⁴⁶⁹ Hidden Years Music Archive. David Marks collection, Box nr. 478, Minutes of meeting. South African Folk Music Association, "SAFMA meeting held 4.11.69."

⁴⁷⁰ Hidden Years Music Archive, Documentation Centre for Music, Stellenbosch University. David Marks collection, Box nr. 478, Minutes of meeting. SAFMA Meeting held 27th November 1969 at Le Roux residence.

⁴⁷¹ Hidden Years Music Archive. David Marks collection, Box nr. 478, Minutes of meeting. SAFMA Meeting held 27th November 1969 at Le Roux residence

⁴⁷² Hidden Years Music Archive. David Marks collection, Box nr. 478, Minutes of meeting. SAFMA Meeting held 27th November 1969 at Le Roux residence.

⁴⁷³ Hidden Years Music Archive, Documentation Centre for Music, Stellenbosch University. David Marks collection, Box nr. 374, Minutes of meeting. "Meeting of The South African Folk Music Association." March 16. 1969.

⁴⁷⁴ Hidden Years Music Archive. David Marks collection, Box nr. 374, Minutes of meeting. "Meeting of The South African Folk Music Association." March 16. 1969.

⁴⁷⁵ Hidden Years Music Archive, Documentation Centre for Music, Stellenbosch University. David Marks collection, Box nr. 304, Minutes of meeting. SAFMA, "2nd meeting 27th January 1970."

⁴⁷⁶ R. Daniel, "Diverting show for children," *Rand Daily Mail*, December 17, 1969, 14.

⁴⁷⁷ Daniel, "Diverting show."

⁴⁷⁸ R. Daniel, "Fiona's Christmas fare for kiddies," *Rand Daily Mail*, 15 December 15, 1969, 18.

Blundell's career as a folk singer grew significantly during the second half of the 1960s, with him releasing more records and setting up new collaborations. This growth in his career coincided with the growing split between the two streams in SAFMA with the musicians singing protest songs such as Des Lindberg, on the one hand, and the more conservative musicians, including Keith Blundell mostly performing traditional folk songs, on the other. While many shows and the National Folk Festivals included performances of musicians representing both streams, Blundell's split from SAFMA could point to more pronounced differences in its leadership structures. The censorship of music in South Africa was starting to get stricter. This meant that musicians, looking for record deals and radio airplay, were encouraged to avoid singing about politics or to use self-censoring to make sure their music would be heard. However, Blundell's music and song choices, which were mostly a-political, were also censored. While Blundell's departure from SAFMA was a big move that could have influenced his career as a folk musician, the 1970s offered new opportunities for Keith Blundell as a performer.

Chapter 5: The artistic chameleon, 1970-1979



Figure 24: A picture of Keith Blundell from the Song and Country program, circa 1970.¹

The 1970s in South Africa was a period of increased political resistance, labour unrest, and the rise of the Black Consciousness Movement, marked by the Soweto uprising.² On 16 June 1976, black schoolchildren protested in Soweto against the educational authorities' insistence on using Afrikaans as a teaching medium.³ This protest escalated nationally after the police shot and killed a thirteen-year-old South African student, Hector Pieteron, during the uprising.⁴ Multiple protests occurred afterwards, and by February 1977, as many as 575 people had been killed.⁵ The government's reaction culminated with the banning of the South African Student Organisation (SASO) in 1977, and the arrest and death in detention of its leader Steve Biko.⁶

¹ Hidden Years Music Archive, Documentation Centre for Music, Stellenbosch University (hereafter Hidden Years). Programme, Keith Blundell collection, Miscellaneous, Programme. *Song and Country programme* (1970), 4.

² T. Lodge, *Black politics in South Africa since 1945* (United States of America: Longman Publishing group, 1983), 321; S. Dubow: *Apartheid, 1948-1994* (United Kingdom: Oxford University Press, 2014), 160.

³ Lodge, *Black politics in South Africa*, 328.

⁴ Thompson. *A History of South Africa*, 212.

⁵ Thompson. *A History of South Africa*, 213.

⁶ Thompson. *A History of South Africa*, 213.

In 1978, the National Party (NP) won the majority of votes in the annual election, and P.W. Botha became the prime minister of the country.⁷ In 1974, the Publications Act was instituted as a replacement for the Publications and Entertainment Act implemented in 1963. The 1963 Act was replaced because of a number of decisions made by the control board throughout the years that were reversed by the Supreme Court for the reason that it was “out of touch” with contemporary standards.⁸ The Publications Act led to a Directorate of Publications being established.⁹ The directorate had the power to ban material, including books, music and films.¹⁰ This decade also saw the introduction of television for the first time to South African audiences in 1976. The introduction of television offered many new opportunities for performers in South Africa, especially for Keith Blundell.

Without access to diaries or personal notes, it is difficult to tell precisely how the political events impacted Blundell’s life. What does become increasingly clear is that the apartheid legislation impacted his career with increasing numbers of his songs censored. This chapter will discuss Blundell’s unfolding career as a performer, radio host, television show presenter, actor and producer. This chapter will also discuss the South African Folk Music Association during the 1970s.

SAFMA in the 1970s

Initially, the Johannesburg branch of SAFMA was doing well, and a new committee was chosen in 1970, including Robert Butler as chairman, Ester Chimes, a student at Wits University, Gordon Silver, Caroline Blundell, David Marks, Ben Segal and Clive Glover.¹¹ Unfortunately, this branch of the association did not last long as it was decided on 29 April 1970 to combine the Johannesburg branch with the National Association. This decision was made because SAFMA was already more focused on the Johannesburg scene, and David Marks wrote that administrative work should be kept to a minimum as “there’s not a hell-of-a-lot of

⁷ Thompson. *A History of South Africa*, xxii.

⁸ N. Haysom and G. Marcus, “Undesirability and Criminal Liability under the Publications Act 42 of 1974,” *South African Journal on Human Rights* 1, no. 1 (1985): 32.

⁹ A. Schumann, “The Beat that Beat Apartheid: The Role of Music in the Resistance against Apartheid in South Africa,” *Stichproben* 8, no. 14 (2008): 19.

¹⁰ Schumann, “The Beat that Beat Apartheid,” 19.

¹¹ Hidden Years Music Archive. David Marks collection, Box nr. 304, Minutes of meeting. SAFMA, “2nd meeting 27th January 1970”; Hidden Years Music Archive. David Marks collection, Box nr. 50, Programme. “Credits,” *'67 Folk Festival' programme* (1967).

enthusiasm when it comes to posting and compiling newsletters.”¹² This focus, and a lack of enough members for both committees was the deciding factor.¹³

SAFMA held four annual National Folk Festivals from 1970 to 1973 and again in 1975.¹⁴ Keith Blundell did not participate in the first three festivals, probably due to his Song and Country tour, but he returned to the National Folk Festival in 1973 and 1975 with his family. The 1970 National Folk Festival was held from 20 to 26 July 1970 at the Sandown Civic Theatre in Johannesburg. SAFMA also organised a pre-festival concert on 11 July at the Jewish Guild Hall in Durban to raise public awareness of the festival.¹⁵

The 1971 National folk festival was held at the Sandown Civic Centre from 24 September to 3 October 1971.¹⁶ The 1972 National folk festival was held on a farm in Rivonia from 7 to 17 December. This festival was a first for SAFMA as it provided music performances and other activities.¹⁷ It included workshops, music discussions, arts and crafts stalls, as well as poetry readings.¹⁸ According to an article by Jim Kidson called “A story to tell – a song to sing”, this festival was “South Africa’s greatest Woodstock experiment”.¹⁹ The Woodstock Music and Arts Fair held in America in 1969 is widely considered a pivotal moment in counterculture and popular music.²⁰ It is a far stretch to compare the SAFMA Folk Festival to Woodstock. Whereas the Woodstock music festival in America drew crowds of more than 400 000 spectators, the SAFMA festival was not well attended, and, as a result, was not successful

¹² Hidden Years Music Archive, Documentation Centre for Music, Stellenbosch University. David Marks collection, Box nr. 120, Letter. David Marks- NAFMA, July 29, 1970, “Your letter dated 20 July 1971.”

¹³ Hidden Years Music Archive. David Marks collection, Box nr. 120, Letter. David Marks- NAFMA, July 29, 1970, “Your letter dated 20 July 1971.”

¹⁴ Hidden Years Music Archive, Documentation Centre for Music, Stellenbosch University. David Marks collection, Box nr. 108, Programme. *Country comes to town programme* (1973).

¹⁵ Hidden Years Music Archive, Documentation Centre for Music, Stellenbosch University. David Marks collection, Box nr. 186, Letter. D. Marks-SAFMA members, June 5, 1970, “National Folk Song Festival.”

¹⁶ Hidden Years Music Archive, Documentation Centre for Music, Stellenbosch University. David Marks collection, Scrapbook 2, Newspaper clipping. “National Folk Song Festival 1971.”

¹⁷ Hidden Years Music Archive, Documentation Centre for Music, Stellenbosch University. David Marks collection, Box nr. 120, Letter. D. Marks-D. Lew, November 22, 1972. “8th annual National Folk Festival at The Farm, Rivonia, December 7th Thru’ 17.”

¹⁸ Hidden Years Music Archive. David Marks collection, Box nr. 120, Letter. D. Marks-D. Lew, November 22, 1972. “8th annual National Folk Festival at The Farm, Rivonia, December 7th Thru’ 17.”

¹⁹ Hidden Years Music Archive, Documentation Centre for Music, Stellenbosch University. David Marks collection, Scrapbook 2, Newspaper clipping. “A story to tell-a song to sing.”

²⁰ J. E. Perone: *Woodstock: An Encyclopaedia of the music and art fair* (United States of America: Greenwood Press, 2005), xi.

financially.²¹ In addition, no great influence or turn was inspired by this event, and in all, it seemed low-key.

SAFMA continued to grow and, in 1972, decided to change *The Folksinger* into a new music magazine called *Notes and Music*.²² The first issue was a special issue about the National Folksong Festival of 1972 and included the line-up of the festival as well as an article written by Peter le Roux about the previous eight years in South African folk music.²³ He specifically mentioned Keith Blundell, Des Lindberg and Ben Segal, but then pointed out that there were other folk musicians not mentioned that were part of the movement.²⁴ He stressed the fact that the folk concerts and its success depended on the folk music community and “on close co-operation between singers, committee and itinerant workers, all dedicated to folk music in some way or other”.²⁵

While SAFMA continued to stage concerts and events, membership started to dwindle in 1974.²⁶ Complaints were also lodged against SAFMA that the association was only focussed on the folk scene in Johannesburg and not on the folk scene of the whole country.²⁷ Henry Leemans, chairperson of Gqeberha’s (formerly Port Elizabeth) Four Winds Folk Club, for example, noted that

Many of us in Port Elizabeth feel (and feel strongly folks) that SAFMA is a rather dead organisation. SAFMA should surely rather be the organisation in South Africa that controls,

²¹ Hidden Years Music Archive, Documentation Centre for Music, Stellenbosch University. David Marks collection, Box nr. 304, Newsletter. SAFMA, “Newsletter and other...” March 1973, 2.

²² Hidden Years Music Archive, Documentation Centre for Music, Stellenbosch University. David Marks collection, Scrapbook 2, Magazine. *Notes and Music*, no. 1 (1972), cover page.

²³ Hidden Years Music Archive. Magazine, David Marks collection, Scrapbook 2, Magazine. *Notes and Music*, no. 1 (1972), cover page.

²⁴ Hidden Years Music Archive. David Marks collection, Scrapbook 2, Magazine. “The past eight years or so...,” *Notes and Music*, no. 1 (1972), 8, 9.

²⁵ Hidden Years Music Archive. David Marks collection, Scrapbook 2, Magazine. “The past eight years or so...,” *Notes and Music*, no. 1 (1972), 8, 9.

²⁶ Hidden Years Music Archive, Documentation Centre for Music, Stellenbosch University. David Marks collection, Box nr. 253, Newspaper. “Directors of SAFMA accused of profiteering: Ceiling,” *Daily Bulb* (December 1974), 1.

²⁷ Hidden Years Music Archive. David Marks collection, Box nr. 253, Newspaper. “Directors of SAFMA accused of profiteering: Ceiling,” *Daily Bulb* (December 1974), 1; Hidden Years Music Archive. David Marks collection, Box nr. 253, Newspaper. “Directors of SAFMA accused of profiteering: Expanded,” *Daily Bulb* (December 1974), 2.

assists and promotes folk music in the *whole* of this country, but at the moment it is an almost non-existent folk club in Johannesburg.²⁸

Leemans continued to call SAFMA “obsolete” and “stagnant” and accused its leadership of trying to keep something alive to “line their pockets at the expense of the folk music scene in this country”.²⁹ David Marks, the then chairperson of SAFMA, replied to these accusations in the *Daily Bulb* newsletter, a satirical newsletter distributed by Marks reporting on the music scene in South Africa, SAFMA and the 3rd Ear Music Company. In a very sarcastic tone, Marks wrote:

SAFMA has been found guilty of national neglect [...] accused by the picnic brigade of failing to supply the bus! May ‘I’ on behalf of the SAFMA add a few ants as well point out [...] SAFMA has been surviving for ten years. If the ‘newer’ and rightly ambitious affiliated country committee patriots of The Four Winds Folk Club, Port Elizabeth, NAFMA and ‘The Folk Circle’ in Durban are unaware of SAFMA’s achievements in certain fields (against unbelievable commercial odds – another story) then I don’t think they have the right to blame SAFMA for my personal bungling and their past apathy.³⁰

Marks continued to point out that despite multiple concerts, festivals, singer-songwriter projects and the setting up of live music venues, a lack of commercial publicity and “star-spangled public imagery” meant that SAFMA’s achievements were not noticed by the public.³¹

Various factors might have led to SAFMA’s dwindling membership numbers, including the closing of the Troubadour. The venue was closed and changed into a restaurant-cum-playhouse venue, Ye Olde Chastity Belt, on 30 July 1971.³² The new theatrical venue served dinner as well as a theatrical presentation for entertainment.³³ To fill the void left by the closing of the

²⁸ Hidden Years Music Archive. David Marks collection, Box nr. 253, Newspaper. “Directors of SAFMA accused of profiteering: Ceiling,” *Daily Bulb* (December 1974), 1.

²⁹ Hidden Years Music Archive. David Marks collection, Box nr. 253, Newspaper. “Directors of SAFMA accused of profiteering: Ceiling,” *Daily Bulb* (December 1974), 1-2.

³⁰ Hidden Years Music Archive. David Marks collection, Box nr. 253, Newspaper. “Directors of SAFMA accused of profiteering: Expanded,” *Daily Bulb* (December 1974), 2.

³¹ Hidden Years Music Archive. David Marks collection, Box nr. 253, Newspaper. “Directors of SAFMA accused of profiteering: Expanded,” *Daily Bulb* (December 1974), 2.

³² M. Venables, “Show on a shoestring,” *Rand Daily Mail*, July 14, 1971, 12.

³³ Venables, “Show on a shoestring.”

Troubadour, a new live music venue, the New Troubadour, was opened at the Oxford Hotel on Oxford Road, Johannesburg on 16 April 1974.³⁴

The New Troubadour consisted of two bars, namely The Blue Fox Theatre, where live performances were held, and the second bar, which was more for “light-talkers, good listeners and easy drinkers”.³⁵ The bar closed a few months later, on 14 August 1974, due to a disagreement between the hotel and the club’s management.³⁶ This closure came at a time when, according to the journalist Jim Kidson “folk music in South Africa is riding the crest of the wave.” He further points out that “new premises for the ‘Troub’ are a priority so that momentum is not lost”.³⁷ The Troubadour found a new home on 30 January 1975 when the club moved to the basement of Mangles Restaurant at 38 De Beers Street in Braamfontein and the basement served as a Folk Theatre on Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday and Saturday evenings.³⁸

With the growing lack of confidence in the Johannesburg team to steer SAFMA, a decision was made in 1975 to move the headquarters of SAFMA to Durban. According to the festival programme of the Natal Association of Folk Music called Folk 75, this decision was influenced by the lack of interest and motivation in Johannesburg to continue the association.³⁹

According to Peter Kitchen, the chairman of SAFMA at the time, Durban had “sufficient interest and motivation to revive, rejuvenate and restyle SAFMA to the point where it is, once more, the headquarters of South African Folk.”⁴⁰ He added that “the advent of television will most certainly help in this respect, and the co-ordinating and amalgamating of all the clubs in SA, both black and white with a central headquarters in Durban will give you a united folk world once and for all.”⁴¹ With the move to Natal, SAFMA incorporated the Natal Folk Music

³⁴ *Rand Daily Mail*, April 16, 1974, 12.

³⁵ Hidden Years Music Archive, Documentation Centre for Music, Stellenbosch University. David Marks collection, Box nr. 304, Newsletter, SAFMA, “Special attention,” April 1, 1974.

³⁶ J. Kidson, “Folk seeks a new home,” *Rand Daily Mail*, August 14, 1974, 14.

³⁷ Kidson, “Folk seeks a new home.”

³⁸ *Rand Daily Mail*, January 30, 1975, “Folk finds a home,” 10.

³⁹ Hidden Years Music Archive, Documentation Centre for Music, Stellenbosch University. David Marks collection, Box nr. 77, Programme. Peter Kitchen, “SAFMA moves to Durban,” *Folk '75 programme (1975)*, 2.

⁴⁰ Hidden Years Music Archive. David Marks collection, Box nr. 77, Programme. Peter Kitchen, “SAFMA moves to Durban,” *Folk '75 programme (1975)*, 2.

⁴¹ Hidden Years Music Archive. David Marks collection, Box nr. 77, Programme. Peter Kitchen, “SAFMA moves to Durban,” *Folk '75 programme (1975)*, 2.

Association, managed by David Marks and Verlein Seipp at the time, and the association continued to organise folk festivals and concerts in Kwazulu-Natal for the rest of the decade.⁴²

Song and Country

In 1970, Blundell decided to sell his sports shop, Gullivers, to pursue a full-time career as a folk musician. One of the first performances planned by Blundell was a country-wide tour with his family. The Blundell children were taken out of school, and the whole family went on a tour across South Africa and Zimbabwe for a year.⁴³ The children all have different recollections of the tour, but they all concur that their father loved making music with the family. Des and Dawn Lindberg organised the initial few months of the tour, and the rest was organised by Keith and Pamela Blundell.⁴⁴ According to Julie Blundell, the planning of the tour was mostly done via the Round Table Society and through the contacts that Des and Dawn Lindberg built up during their nationwide folk tour called “Folk on Trek” in 1966.⁴⁵

The Round Table Society was a non-political society founded in 1927 in England. The South African branch was formed in 1948 in East London, South Africa.⁴⁶ The purpose of the society was to bring change in the country by hosting welfare projects and organising fundraisers for charitable causes.⁴⁷ Blundell and his wife, Pamela, were never official Round Table Society members, but Blundell did produce and perform several musicals for the society.⁴⁸ These performances were sold as cabaret fundraising evenings where funds were raised for various charities.⁴⁹ During the tour, fundraisers were also organised through the Blundell family for the Round Table Society.

All the children, Julie, Jonny and Teper, joined the tour except for Caroline, the eldest. Sixteen at the time, Caroline chose to stay behind with her boyfriend.⁵⁰ Caroline remembers that

⁴² Hidden Years Music Archive. David Marks collection, Box nr. 77, Programme. Peter Kitchen, “SAFMA moves to Durban,” *Folk '75 programme* (1975), 2.

⁴³ Rhodesia is presently known as Zimbabwe.

⁴⁴ Julie Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, May 24, 2021.

⁴⁵ Julie Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, November 18, 2021.

⁴⁶ D. Garrett, “Things you should know about Round Table: Learn more about the Round Table non-profit organisation,” *Pretoria Rekord*, July 4, 2018.

⁴⁷ “What is Round Table?,” accessed October 31, 2021, <https://roundtable.co.za/about-round-table/>.

⁴⁸ Caroline Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, April 22, 2022.

⁴⁹ Julie Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, April 22, 2022.

⁵⁰ Caroline Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, May 24, 2021; Blundell, “The Legacy: Where I come from.”

Blundell was not happy about her decision at first, but after having a conversation with his wife, he was supportive of Caroline's decision.⁵¹ To fill up Caroline's place in the tour, Blundell asked Andy Dillon to join the tour. Dillon accepted the offer and was paid for his participation.⁵² Also joining the tour was Garth Hattingh.⁵³ He worked both as a tutor for Jonny and Teper (12 and 10 years old at the time) and as the stage manager.⁵⁴

To finance the tour, the Blundells used the money Keith made from selling his shop, Gullivers, and they also sold some of Pamela's gold shares. In addition, they rented their house to a musician from England, Sheila Taylor.⁵⁵ The family bought one 18-foot-long caravan and, with Andy Dillon and Garth Hattingh, left their home in Johannesburg for the open road in January 1970.⁵⁶



Figure 25: Song and Country tour group, 1970. Top row: Jonny and Teper Blundell. Bottom row: Andy Dillon, Julie Blundell, Keith Blundell, and Pam Blundell.⁵⁷

⁵¹ Caroline Blundell, email to Marion Webber, July 1, 2022.

⁵² Julie Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, May 24, 2021.

⁵³ According to Julie, Garth worked at the Drakensberg Boys Choir after the family returned from their tour. (Julie Blundell, email to Marion Webber, 31 January 2022).

⁵⁴ Julie Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, May 24, 2021.

⁵⁵ Julie Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, May 24, 2021.

⁵⁶ Teper Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, May 24, 2021; Julie Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, November 18, 2021.

⁵⁷ Hidden Years Music Archive. Keith Blundell collection, Videos. Mi's 80th birthday slideshow.



Figure 26: The 18-foot caravan used to travel around South Africa and Zimbabwe.⁵⁸

The tour started in Benoni, Johannesburg, before moving to Mbombela (formerly known as Nelspruit), White River, a town located in the Mpumalanga province, and the rest of the country.⁵⁹ The tour was advertised by putting up posters in the towns where they performed, and by the branding on the caravan.⁶⁰ The family performed in the Free State province, the KwaZulu-Natal province, and in parts of the Cape province of South Africa.⁶¹ However, they did not perform in Cape Town.⁶² According to Julie, Cape Town “was a step too far and maybe we didn’t have easy contacts there ... also possibly it was not Dad’s favourite place on earth because of the wind”.⁶³

One of the tour’s concerts was held at the Aula Theatre in Parktown, Johannesburg, on 14 November 1970. The Aula Theatre was located at the new German school in the area.⁶⁴ This show was held for people who could not afford the regular admission prices, and tickets were

⁵⁸ Hidden Years Music Archive. Keith Blundell collection Miscellaneous, Photograph.

⁵⁹ Julie Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, May 24, 2021.

⁶⁰ Julie Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, November 18, 2021.

⁶¹ Julie Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, May 24, 2021.

⁶² Julie Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, May 24, 2021.

⁶³ Julie Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, November 18, 2021.

⁶⁴ Hidden Years Music Archive, Documentation Centre for Music, Stellenbosch University. David Marks collection, Box nr. 186, Newsletter. “Hey, look! Another newsletter.” 1970.

sold at the door for R1 per person.⁶⁵ For this specific concert, Blundell and the family were joined by Andrew Tracey and the Balladeers, who performed with the family and on their own.⁶⁶

The shows on the tour were held in whatever venue was available, mostly in town halls, school halls and church halls.⁶⁷ During most of the shows, the whole family performed and the children were also responsible for setting everything up before the show.⁶⁸ Pamela, while performing with the family, also cooked and cleaned for everyone on the tour.⁶⁹ Julie remembers that her mom was “game to pack up and go anywhere – a real gypsy at heart”.⁷⁰ Jonny Blundell recalls his mother being the strength of the family keeping the domestic front running while on the road.⁷¹ She was helped by Julie, who later took over cleaning the caravan the children stayed in.⁷²

Initially, the family stayed in one caravan, but it soon became too cramped, and a second caravan for the children to sleep in was added to the tour.⁷³ Garth stayed in the Kombi that pulled the caravans.⁷⁴ For the largest part of the tour, the family stayed in campsites with their caravans, but in some of the smaller towns where no such facilities were available, they camped wherever they could find a spot.⁷⁵ Garth sometimes performed with the family, joining them in gumboot dances.⁷⁶ The shows were well attended, especially in the smaller towns.⁷⁷ During the tour, the family had some free time between concerts, during which they would relax or visit nearby sites. Julie Blundell particularly remembers one such visit to Kenton-on-Sea, a coastal town in the Cape province.⁷⁸

⁶⁵ Hidden Years Music Archive. David Marks collection, Box nr. 186, Newsletter. SAFMA, “Hey, look! Another newsletter.” 1970.

⁶⁶ Hidden Years Music Archive. Keith Blundell collection, Miscellaneous, Programme. *Song and Country programme* (1970), 7.

⁶⁷ Julie Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, November 18, 2021.

⁶⁸ Julie Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, May 24, 2021.

⁶⁹ Julie Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, May 24, 2021.

⁷⁰ Julie Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, November 18, 2021.

⁷¹ Jonny Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, May 24, 2021.

⁷² Jonny Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, May 24, 2021.

⁷³ Teper Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, May 24, 2021.

⁷⁴ Julie Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, May 24, 2021.

⁷⁵ Julie Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, May 24, 2021.

⁷⁶ Teper Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, May 24, 2021.

⁷⁷ Teper Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, May 24, 2021.

⁷⁸ Julie Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, May 24, 2021.

During these periods, the children could experience their father off the stage. While they all remember him as a friendly man who always made an effort with his family, Caroline pointed out that Blundell “was also a moody person and could slip into very dark places.”⁷⁹ Julie similarly recalls her father on occasions having “very black moods”.⁸⁰ According to Caroline, “his moods were pretty extreme, but he was never violent. He could be very passive-aggressive and dark sometimes, and I remember hearing him apologise to my mother, saying he didn’t know why he behaved like that.”⁸¹ Caroline thinks that Blundell kept himself happy by staying occupied and organising shows.⁸² When the family was not on tour, Caroline said that her father busied himself with “getting people together at our house to make music, and by being very physically active with sport, including tennis, badminton and squash.”⁸³ These characteristics described by his eldest children, combined with his drive and motivation to stay active to “keep himself happy”, could point to Keith Blundell having suffered from depression.

In October 1971, the tour crossed the border into Zimbabwe, where they visited the Victoria Falls and went on a game drive to see some wild animals.⁸⁴ They returned to South Africa at the end of October, and Blundell travelled to Johannesburg to fetch Caroline so she could join the family tour. By that time, Caroline and her boyfriend had split up, and she was keen to join the tour.⁸⁵ After fetching Caroline, the family put on a couple of shows until the end of November 1971, with their last show in Honeydew, a town in Roodepoort near Johannesburg.⁸⁶

After more than a year on the road, the Song and Country tour ended in 1971. Soon after, they released the album *Song and Country* (STO 736), with Andy Dillon recording some of the songs they performed while on tour. Some of these songs included on the album are “Dirty Old Town,” a folk song written by Ewan MacColl, “Gypsy,” a Gordon Lightfoot song, “Ayama,” and “Gumboot dance”.⁸⁷

⁷⁹ Caroline Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, May 24, 2021.

⁸⁰ Julie Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, May 24, 2021.

⁸¹ Caroline Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, November 18, 2021.

⁸² Caroline Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, May 24, 2021.

⁸³ Caroline Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, May 24, 2021.

⁸⁴ Julie Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, May 24, 2021.

⁸⁵ Blundell, “The Legacy: Where I come from.”

⁸⁶ Julie Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, November 18, 2021.

⁸⁷ “‘Song and Country’ album back cover,” accessed November 22, 2021, <https://www.discogs.com/release/17244820-Keith-Blundell-Family-Andy-Dillon-Song-n-Country/image/SW1hZ2U6NTM5NTQ0Mjg=>.



Figure 27: *Song 'n Country* (STO 736) album cover, 1971.⁸⁸

“Ayama” is originally from the show, *Wait a Minim!*, discussed in Chapter 3.⁸⁹ Andrew Tracey learned this song from a Nigerian record by Roy Chicago. Ayama is a phonetic way of saying “I am a” and the version Tracey learned had only one verse.⁹⁰ For *Wait a Minim!*, Tracey added a second and third verse to the song and decided also to include SeSotho words.⁹¹ The lyrics of the song, as adapted by Tracy, is the following:

Ayama stranger, ayama stranger
 I don't know where I come from, Mama.
 Ayama stranger, I don't know where I come from
 I don't know where I'm going to, Mama

We see you a stranger, we see you a stranger
 Tell us where you come from, stranger.
 We see you a stranger, tell us where you come from
 Tell us where you're going to, stranger

We see you a stranger, we see you a stranger

⁸⁸ “‘Song and Country’ album cover.”

⁸⁹ “‘Song and Country’ album cover.”

⁹⁰ J. Harris, “Ayama, *Wait a Minim!*: Act 1,” accessed November 26, 2021, <http://judyharris.net/minim1.htm>.

⁹¹ Harris, “Ayama.”

I don't know Mama, I don't know Mama
 Tell us where you come from, stranger,
 I don't know where I come from Mama.
 No, I don't know Mama
 Gakitsi mokihlahang teng.

We see you stranger, tell us where you come from,
 No, I don't know, Mama
 Tell us where you're going to, stranger
 I don't know where I'm going to, Mama.⁹²

Ayama was performed by Andrew Tracey and Paul Tracey, dressed in khaki shorts and a hat with a leopard skin band and a safari jacket.⁹³ In the show, *Wait a Minim!* the song followed Jeremy Taylor's performance of the song "Piece of Ground," which he composed. This song, later recorded and performed by Miriam Makeba, explains "the history of the relationship between South Africans and their land, and the white man who displaced black South Africans".⁹⁴ Blundell performing this song shows that, like most other South African folk musicians, *Wait a Minim!* had a lasting influence on him and his music.⁹⁵

One of the other tracks on the album, "Gumboot dance," is described on the back of the album cover as a Witwatersrand Goldmine dance based on traditional Baca and Zulu step dances and town music.⁹⁶ During the performance of the song, the family did a gumboot dance, taught to them by Andrew Tracey.⁹⁷ According to D.E. Charlson, these gumboot dances were performed by black mine workers in the Johannesburg areas who danced as entertainment and relaxation.⁹⁸ The dances were mostly done at amateur gatherings or performances the mine

⁹² Harris, "Ayama."

⁹³ Harris, "Ayama."

⁹⁴ Harris, "Ayama;" M. Ramirez. "Miriam Makeba: A narrative of displacement in the homeland," *Platform magazine*, accessed July 5, 2022, <https://www.platformmagazine.me/stories/miriam-makeba-displacement-in-the-homelands#:~:text=Miriam%20Makeba's%20song%2C%20%E2%80%9CA%20Piece.he%20displaced%20Black%20South%20Africans.>

⁹⁵ "The Keith Blundell Family & Andy Dillon - I Am A Stranger (Ayama)," accessed August 19, 2022, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HQDZ5k5tqLo&ab_channel=SouthernAfricanMusicArchive.

⁹⁶ "'Song and Country' album back cover."

⁹⁷ Hidden Years Music Archive. Keith Blundell collection, Miscellaneous, Programme. *Song and Country programme* (1970), 5.

⁹⁸ D.E. Charlson, "Framing black labour: On Archives and Mine dancing in South African Gold Mines, 1950-1970," *TDR/The Drama Review* 64, no. 3 (2020): 80.

workers did in their living quarters or compounds.⁹⁹ David Coplan describes Gumboot dancing as a dance style that consists of rhythm effects that occur when rubber Wellington Boots are slapped and pounded in performances. This sound is accompanied by a rhythmic guitar.¹⁰⁰ Coplan further notes that “some performers claim that the dance was used as a signalling or message code underground, where the slapping of gumboots would echo long distances through the tunnels.”¹⁰¹ He also stated that this dance soon became a feature of urban African entertainment.¹⁰²

In the apartheid years, mining officials and the government began exercising control over these dances of mine workers in the compounds.¹⁰³ Thus, during the first decades of the apartheid period, the mine dances became more than just entertainment.¹⁰⁴ According to D.E. Charlson, “the dances started to serve as a way to manage black mine workers, and it served as a tool to promote the false narrative that mine owners treat[ed] their workers humanely”.¹⁰⁵

Andrew Tracey also wrote a piece about Gumboot dancing in the programme notes for *Song and Country*. He noted that this form of dance would be well-known,

to anybody who has been to one of the Sunday dances held on the Reef mines. [...] It is said to have originated early this century in Durban and the Eastern Cape ports when the stevedores were first issued with gumboots. They found that in these even the simple act of walking gave a good sound and a new dance developed. While entirely original to South Africa, it belongs distinctly to the family of other boot-dances of the world, of the Cossacks, for instance, the Austrians and the Spanish – each highly rhythmic in its own national ways. Ours should definitely be acknowledged as a national dance, not just as a gimmick for pop records.¹⁰⁶

The fact that Blundell and his family performed these songs, which could have been censored for mixing languages and cultures, shows his interest in broadening the style of music he

⁹⁹ Charlson, “Framing black labour,” 80.

¹⁰⁰ Coplan, *In Township Tonight*, 99.

¹⁰¹ Coplan, *In Township Tonight*, 99.

¹⁰² Coplan, *In Township Tonight*, 99.

¹⁰³ Charlson, “Framing black labour,” 80.

¹⁰⁴ Charlson, “Framing black labour,” 80.

¹⁰⁵ Charlson, “Framing black labour,” 80.

¹⁰⁶ Hidden Years Music Archive. Programme, Keith Blundell collection, Miscellaneous, Programme. *Song and Country programme* (1970), 5.

performed. Even though these songs could have been censored, they once again slipped the attention of the censorship committees.

After returning home, Blundell and his family were offered an opportunity to work on the Peltours cruise ships as entertainers in December 1971.¹⁰⁷ They were offered this opportunity through the Don Hughes organisation, a theatrical booking agency.¹⁰⁸ The cruise ships sailed from Durban to Mauritius and Seychelles.¹⁰⁹ The ship also stopped at Mozambique and sometimes at Beira.¹¹⁰ There were three 2-week cruises in each season.¹¹¹ The whole family joined to provide entertainment for their first cruise ship contract.¹¹² They did multiple shows during the day around the ship and a single cabaret performance that lasted for 30 minutes at night.¹¹³ These performances included songs the family performed on their recent tour around South Africa and included South African folk songs and folk songs from the United States and the United Kingdom.¹¹⁴ During these performances, the family also performed gumboot dances.¹¹⁵

During their first season, Blundell, and his family's only role on the cruise ship were those of entertainers. Blundell's role soon expanded, and for the second season he worked as the entertainment manager. This role included organising Bingo and other games guests could play on the deck and scheduling music entertainment. In his third season, Blundell was the Cruise Director.¹¹⁶ As Cruise Director, he had to deal with complaints coming from the customers on the ship.¹¹⁷ During his third cruise, in January 1972, Blundell was offered a post on a cruise ship to the Far East, but he turned it down because it would have been too disruptive for his family.¹¹⁸

The Blundell family returned to Johannesburg in January 1972 and recorded a new single entitled "Thanda/Chuzi Mama". "Thanda" is a play on the Latin verb "to love" and trying to

¹⁰⁷ Julie Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, May 24, 2021.

¹⁰⁸ Julie and Jonny Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, November 18, 2021.

¹⁰⁹ Teper Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, May 24, 2021.

¹¹⁰ Teper Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, May 24, 2021.

¹¹¹ Teper Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, May 24, 2021.

¹¹² Julie Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, May 24, 2021.

¹¹³ Julie Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, May 24, 2021.

¹¹⁴ Julie Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, May 24, 2021.

¹¹⁵ Julie Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, May 24, 2021.

¹¹⁶ Julie Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, May 24, 2021.

¹¹⁷ Julie Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, January 26, 2022.

¹¹⁸ Teper Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, May 24, 2021.

figure out all the conjugations of this verb in Zulu. According to Julie Blundell, the song was not written by Blundell, but it was taught to him.¹¹⁹ She suggested that it was from Andrew Tracey, but it is uncertain. The lyrics include the following.

Do you remember when you were at school
Having to conjugate Latin verbs
The only one I can remember is 'to love'
Which went 'Amo amas amat'
'Amo my lady amat aminc amanc minipas amas my lady moo'

Yes, well that conjugating Latin verbs
Let's try it in Zulu

Thanda love, Thandela lover
Tandisa caused to love, Thandana, love one another
Thandeka, be lovable, Thandua be loved x2

Chorus

Ba doe doe doe doe wa
Doe doe wa
Doe wa x2

Phishla eats, Phishlela eat for
Phishliza caused to eat, Phishlana eat one another
Phishleka be eatable Phishlua be ate x2

Chorus

Kabuza kiss, Kabulela kiss for
Kabuliza caused to kiss, Kabulalana kiss one another
Kabuleka to be kissable Kabulwa be kissed x2

Chorus

¹¹⁹ Julie Blundell, email sent to Marion Webber, August 20, 2022.

Thanda love, Thandela lover
 Tandisa caused to love, Thandana, love one another
 Thandeka, be lovable, Thandua be loved x2

Chorus¹²⁰

“Thanda” was performed by Keith and Julie Blundell again in 1975 when they went to Durban to perform at the Folk ‘75 festival, which will be discussed later in the Chapter.¹²¹

The other song on the album is “Chuzi Mama”, commonly known as “Chuzi Mama Gwabi Gwabi,” and also part of the line-up for the show *Wait a Minim!*. Originally, it was two songs that were combined – a Marabi dance song and a Kwela song.¹²² The Marabi genre is a style that originated in the black city ghettos of South Africa and is, according to Christopher Ballantine, much like the blues genre of America because it was based on a cyclic harmonic pattern. Ballantine argues that Marabi jazz is as seminal to South African popular music as the blues genre was to America,¹²³ describing this genre as made up of “hot, highly rhythmic, repetitive, single-themed dance tunes”.¹²⁴ Kwela is a marabi-derived genre of pennywhistle music initially played by children performing creative imitations of jazz singers and groups.¹²⁵ The words “Chuzi Mama” mean “excuse me, Mama”, and “Gwabi Gwabi” is a game.¹²⁶ During the game, one person holds buns, bananas or sweets behind their back and the other person guesses which of his hands is holding what object.¹²⁷ The song lyrics are as follows:

Oo-oo-oo-oo

Sono sami, sono sinye (My sin, one sin,)

Sesono semali (is the sin of my money

Ah, well, I went down town on a Saturday night

To meet my boy on the market square

¹²⁰ Tertius Louw, audio sent via email to Marion Webber, February 3, 2022. Lyrics transcribed by author.

¹²¹ Hidden Years Music Archive, Documentation Centre for Music, Stellenbosch University. David Marks Collection, Audio recordings. “Folk ’75,” [hymap-dm-reel-rosebum-denton-blundell-1975-001](https://www.hiddenyears.com/recordings/hymap-dm-reel-rosebum-denton-blundell-1975-001).

¹²² J. Harris, ‘Chuzi Mama Gwabi Gwabi’, *Wait a Minim!*: Act 2, accessed February 10, 2022, <http://users.bestweb.net/~foosie/minim2.htm>.

¹²³ C. Ballantine, “A brief history of South African Popular Music,” *Popular Music* 8, no. 3 (1989): 307.

¹²⁴ Ballantine, “A brief history,” 307.

¹²⁵ Ballantine, “A brief history,” 307.

¹²⁶ Ballantine, “A brief history,” 307.

¹²⁷ Ballantine, “A brief history,” 307.

He was dressed in a khaki shirt
For the ragtime melody.

Ho, chuzi mama, chuzi mama,
Chuzi mama, chuzi mama
When I die my money will go
For the ragtime melody.

Gwabi gwabi kuzwa ngile ntomb vami (Choose, chose, here's my girlfriend)
Uhlale ku jubeg sure I love her (She lives in Johannesburg, sure I love her) (x2)
Ngizokutengel amabanzi (I will buy you buns)

(Ang kathali) (I don't care)
(Ang la sono) (I'm not a sinner)¹²⁸

When one compares the version of the song recorded for *Wait a Minim!* and the version recorded by the Blundell family, the version of the Balladeers has a more upbeat rhythm because of the drum and repeating guitar strumming in the background. The *Wait a Minim!* version has no drums but rather a flute playing in the background. Recording "Chuzi Mama" and "Thanda" once again might have risked censorship because of mixing languages and cultures in a song, however, they were not censored.

In 1972, Blundell started performing locally again. *Wake up! or It was a Helluva Funeral*, a humorous show mixing songs and acting sketches, was held at the Baron von Richthofen room at the Kelvin Grove Club from 15 March to 29 July 1972.¹²⁹ The Kelvin Grove Club is in Newlands, Cape Town.¹³⁰ Keith Blundell wrote this performance with his daughter, Julie Blundell, Maureen McAllister, and Barbara Thompson.¹³¹ In the show, Barbara Thompson and Maureen McAllister performed songs such as *Mo's Lament*, and did acting sketches together, such as *Die-in*.¹³² Blundell performed with his daughter Julie Blundell.¹³³ He and Julie performed "Tanda" and also a song with Barbara Thompson called "The Dying Duck," wherein

¹²⁸ Harris, "Chuzi Mama Gwabi Gwabi."

¹²⁹ M. Venables, "Wit, melody and zest," *Rand Daily Mail*, March 24, 1972, 19.

¹³⁰ "Contact us," accessed October 5, 2021, <https://www.kelvingrove.co.za/contact-us/>.

¹³¹ Venables, "Wit, melody and zest."

¹³² Venables, "Wit, melody and zest."

¹³³ Venables, "Wit, melody and zest."

she heckled like a duck throughout the song.¹³⁴ The show's cast was not fixed, and for a few nights, Caroline Blundell and Andy Dillon also joined the cast.¹³⁵ The performances received good reviews. Bill Brewer, a journalist for the *Rand Daily Mail*, wrote that "this is the sunniest supper show in town," and he "recommend it unconditionally."¹³⁶ Marilyn Jenkins from *The Star* stated that the show was a "pleasing potpourri of laughter."¹³⁷ The show was extended by two extra nights and closed on 29 July 1972.¹³⁸

After closing this show, Blundell started performing more regularly with his duo-partner Andy Dillon again.¹³⁹ One of these shows was on 15 September 1972 at the Klerksdorp Civic centre, organised by the Klerksdorp Round Table society, and again on the 13th of November 1972 at South Africa's first International Valuations Conference,¹⁴⁰ at the Jan Smuts Holiday Inn.¹⁴¹ Blundell and Andy were booked to provide relaxation during the luncheon.¹⁴²

Blundell and Dillon also performed together at the 9th National Folk Festival called "Country Comes to Town".¹⁴³ The title refers to it previously being staged on a farm in the open air before it was moved to the city. In the programme's chairman report, David Marks wrote that "we've had to run back to the city just to sing louder than the traffic and higher than the street. Next year we hope to be back where we really think it all belongs. In the meantime, the Country's Come to Town." This festival was held from 13 to 22 September 1973 at the Blue Fox Theatre.¹⁴⁴ It showcased folk musicians performing original songs. However, these songs received biting criticism from Peter Feldman, a journalist for *The Star* newspaper. In a review of the concert, he wrote that "there is a distinct lack of social bite in most of the material".¹⁴⁵ While, he pointed out, one or two songs had "deep sincerity to them", he noted that "a disappointing portion of the numbers suffered from the sort of dreamy sentiments that

¹³⁴ Venables, "Wit, melody and zest."

¹³⁵ *Rand Daily Mail*, May 9, 1972, Advertisement: "Wake Up! Or it was a helluva funeral," 12.

¹³⁶ *Rand Daily Mail*, April 28, 1972, Advertisement: "Wake Up! Or it was a helluva funeral," 17.

¹³⁷ *Rand Daily Mail*, April 4, 1972, Advertisement: "Wake Up! Or it was a helluva funeral," 13.

¹³⁸ *Rand Daily Mail*, July 27, 1972, Advertisement: "Wake Up! Or it was a helluva funeral," 11.

¹³⁹ A. Richards, "Mayor 'ashamed' of town," *Rand Daily Mail*, September 15, 1972, 4.

¹⁴⁰ The Valuations Conference brings together appraisers, academics and regulators to discuss important topics and the latest trends in valuation.

¹⁴¹ Richards, "Mayor 'ashamed'."; *Rand Daily Mail*, November 4, 1972, "The merriest meeting," 10.

¹⁴² *Rand Daily Mail*, "The merriest meeting," 10.

¹⁴³ Hidden Years Music Archive, Documentation Centre for Music, Stellenbosch University. David Marks collection, Box nr. 108, Programme. *Country comes to town programme* (1973), cover page.

¹⁴⁴ J. Kidson, "Folk festival back in town," *Rand Daily Mail*, September 11, 1973, 10.

¹⁴⁵ Hidden Years Music Archive, Documentation Centre for Music, Stellenbosch University. David Marks collection, Scrapbook 2, Newspaper article. Peter Feldman, "Fun at folk festival," *The Star*, September 14, 1973.

abounded in the more commercial regions of music”.¹⁴⁶ Feldman specifically pointed out that Colin Shamley and Paul Clingman’s commercial songs were “desperately in need of a transformation”, and that Syd Kitchen should “learn the technique of relaxing on stage”.¹⁴⁷

This review is contrasted by the wishes expressed by David Marks, the chairman of SAFMA at the time, in the festival’s booklet. He wrote that the “music of today has broken down all geographical and political barriers. It all happened when the ‘folk’ of today started singing about the things they know or would like to know.”¹⁴⁸ Marks’ statement does link with the sentiments of SAFMA. The sentiments of SAFMA were, according to Syd Kitchen, to be an organisation that promotes public interest in folk music in the country, as well as to preserve and teach folk music.¹⁴⁹ However, if one is to take Feldman’s review seriously, these sentiments are not seen by the public at concerts and raises doubts to the influence that SAFMA had to contribute to the bigger folk community.

In 1974, Blundell, Julie, Caroline and Jonny performed with Andrew Tracey’s Steel band and the concert was recorded by David Marks. Blundell sang “Seasons in the sun,” written by Jacques Brel, which tells the story of a man who is dying from a broken heart, and he also performed “Hier’s ek weer,” an Afrikaans folk song.¹⁵⁰ On the recording, one can hear Blundell translating the lyrics to English for the audience members who did not understand Afrikaans.¹⁵¹

On 22 February 1975, Keith and his daughter, Julie, performed at the Free Peoples concert at the University of the Witwatersrand.¹⁵² The Free Peoples Concerts were organised by David Marks under the auspices of SAFMA with the Student Representative Council of Wits.¹⁵³ The concert was open for all races and genders and some of the country’s top white and black folk

¹⁴⁶ Hidden Years Music Archive. David Marks collection, Scrapbook 2, Newspaper article. Peter Feldman, “Fun at folk festival,” in *The Star*, September 14, 1973.

¹⁴⁷ Hidden Years Music Archive. David Marks collection, Scrapbook 2, Newspaper article. Peter Feldman, “Fun at folk festival,” in *The Star*, September 14, 1973.

¹⁴⁸ Hidden Years Music Archive, Documentation Centre for Music, Stellenbosch University. David Marks collection, Box nr. 365, Programme. “An open(ed) letter,” *Country comes to town programme* (1973).

¹⁴⁹ Kitchen, “Where have all the flowers gone,” 52.

¹⁵⁰ “Seasons in the sun,” accessed February 15, 2022, <https://www.songfacts.com/facts/terry-jacks/seasons-in-the-sun>.

¹⁵¹ Hidden Years Music Archive, Documentation Centre for Music, Stellenbosch University. David Marks Collection, Audio recordings. hymap-dm-reel-jones-steel-band-blundell-1974-001.

¹⁵² Hidden Years Music Archive, Documentation Centre for Music, Stellenbosch University. David Marks collection, Box nr. 50, Advertisement. “Free People’s Concert.” (1975).

¹⁵³ Andersson, *Music in the mix*, 81.

artists performed at these concerts.¹⁵⁴ In line with SAFMA's mission, the concerts served as a platform where "unexposed, inexperienced musicians" could perform for a big audience.¹⁵⁵ During his performance, Blundell and Caroline sang "The Cowboy and the Lady," an English folk song about an encounter between a soldier and a lady.¹⁵⁶ They also performed a song by John Oakley-Smith about a crypto maniac called "Enid Gladstone".¹⁵⁷ They ended their set with a song called "Stealin' Stealin'," a song recorded by the Memphis Jug Band, an American music group from the 1920s.¹⁵⁸

Later that year, Blundell performed at the folk festival called Folk '75, which was held at the Baumann Hall in Durban by the Natal Folk Music Association.¹⁵⁹ Here he performed a song by Jeremy Taylor called "The Red Velvet Cover Steering Wheel Driver," describing the older drivers that were common in the late-1960s.¹⁶⁰ Some of the aspects of these drivers described in the song include the drivers wearing trilby hats, smoking pipes, and covering their steering wheels with red velvet.¹⁶¹ He performed "Enid Gladstone" again and ended his set with Julie coming on the stage to sing "Thanda" with him.¹⁶² When listening to the audio of the show, one can hear it was well received by the audience.¹⁶³

¹⁵⁴ Andersson, *Music in the mix*, 81; Hidden Years Music Archive, Documentation Centre for Music, Stellenbosch University. David Marks collection, Box nr. 303, Letter. D. Marks-G. Roos, March 4, 1972, "Free people's concert - Sunday 12th March at the Wits University from 12 pm to 9 pm."

¹⁵⁵ Hidden Years Music Archive. David Marks collection, Box nr. 303, Letter. D. Marks-G. Roos, March 4, 1972, "Free people's concert - Sunday 12th March at the Wits University from 12 pm to 9 pm."

¹⁵⁶ "One morning in May," Folkslingers, accessed February 19, 2022, <http://folkslingers.com/one-morning-in-may/>.

¹⁵⁷ Hidden Years Music Archive, Documentation Centre for Music, Stellenbosch University. David Marks Collection, Audio recordings. "Free People's Concert 1975." A crypto maniac, also known as a kleptomaniac, is a person who has a persistent drive to steal, usually with little thought for need or reward. See A. Stevenson and M. Waite (eds.), *Concise Oxford English Dictionary: Luxury edition* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 786.

¹⁵⁸ Hidden Years Music Archive, Documentation Centre for Music, Stellenbosch University. David Marks Collection, Audio recordings. "Free People's Concert 1975."

¹⁵⁹ Hidden Years Music Archive. David Marks collection, Box nr. 77, Programme. Peter Kitchen, "SAFMA moves to Durban," *Folk '75 programme* (1975), 2.

¹⁶⁰ "Red Velvet Steering Wheel Covered Driver (Jeremy Taylor - 1968) HMV 2001," accessed August 21, 2022, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4S5f-eT8Y-Y&ab_channel=ThePortableGramophoneEmporium.

¹⁶¹ Hidden Years Music Archive, Documentation Centre for Music, Stellenbosch University. David Marks Collection, Audio recordings. "Folk '75' performance," hymap-dm-reel-rosebum-denton-blundell-1975-001.

¹⁶² Hidden Years Music Archive. David Marks Collection, Audio recordings. "Folk '75' performance," hymap-dm-reel-rosebum-denton-blundell-1975-001.

¹⁶³ Hidden Years Music Archive. David Marks Collection, Audio recordings. "Folk '75' performance," hymap-dm-reel-rosebum-denton-blundell-1975-001.

By the turn of the decade, the Blundell family decided to record an album called *Blundells 1979*.¹⁶⁴ There is no indication whether this album was recorded for public consumption or only for the family's personal use. As with most of their other recordings, this album included a song from *Wait a Minim!* called "Table Bay," a mixed English and Afrikaans language song about the wind that blows in Table Bay, a bay overlooked by Cape Town.¹⁶⁵

Besides his career as a musician and entertainer on cruise ships, Blundell also explored other performance avenues, including acting, producing, and hosting radio and television shows. The following sections will explore these roles in more detail.

Keith Blundell as an actor

Apart from Blundell's earlier acting roles on stage, explored in the previous chapters, he was cast in *What the Butler Saw* in 1974. The show opened on the 1st of June 1974 at the President Theatre on the western side of Church Square in Pretoria.¹⁶⁶ According to Michael Venables, the play is a "zany" black comedy set in a private psychiatric clinic. The production was directed by Aubrey Berg. He was a young Capetonian who became well-known for the show *You're a Good Man Charlie Brown*, based on the comic strip *Peanuts*, created by Charles Schultz.¹⁶⁷

What the Butler Saw was written by the young, controversial British playwright Joe Orton.¹⁶⁸ Venables describes Orton's style as something that will "take any subject that occurred and parody, mock and ridicule it to its height of original and fertile sense of humour in the form of plays and films".¹⁶⁹ Some of Orton's well-known works, such as *Loot* and *Entertaining Mr*

¹⁶⁴ Hidden Years Music Archive, Documentation Centre for Music, Stellenbosch University. Keith Blundell Collection, Audio recordings, Album. "Blundell 1979" (1979).

¹⁶⁵ J. Harris, "Table Bay, *Wait a Minim!*: Act 2", accessed April 26, 2022, <http://users.bestweb.net/~foosie/minim2.htm>.

¹⁶⁶ *Rand Daily Mail*, May 22, 1974, Advertisement: "What the butler saw," 12; *Rand Daily Mail*, May 30, 1974, Advertisement: "What the butler saw," 11; "President Theatre," *Encyclopaedia of South African Theatre, Film, Media and Performance (ESAT)*, accessed December 5, 2021, https://esat.sun.ac.za/index.php/President_Theatre.

¹⁶⁷ C.M. Schultz and C. Gesner, "You're a good man Charlie Brown," Fawcett, 1985; M. Venables, "New company to stage Orton comedy," *Rand Daily Mail*, May 2, 1974, 12; "You're a good man Charlie Brown," *Encyclopaedia of South African Theatre, Film, Media and Performance (ESAT)*, accessed December 5, 2021, https://esat.sun.ac.za/index.php/You%27re_a_Good_Man_Charlie_Brown.

¹⁶⁸ *Rand Daily Mail*, May 22, 1974, Advertisement: "What the butler saw," 12; M. Venables, "New company to stage Orton comedy," *Rand Daily Mail*, May 2, 1974, 7.

¹⁶⁹ M. Venables, "Nothing sacred," *Rand Daily Mail*, June 5, 1974, 11.

Sloan, were all banned in South Africa as films.¹⁷⁰ It is uncertain for what specific reason these works were banned, but it could be related to the explicitly sexual content of the films as well as positive mentions of homosexuality.¹⁷¹ *What the Butler Saw* was first produced in London in 1969, and the South African play was produced by the Don Hughes Production.¹⁷² In *What the Butler Saw*, Blundell played the role of Dr Prentice.¹⁷³ Starring with him were two fellow musicians, Andy Dillon and Mel Miller.¹⁷⁴

What the Butler Saw was Blundell's first act in a professional play without singing, and he was terrified.¹⁷⁵ The proceeds of the first show were donated to the Bantu¹⁷⁶ Animal Welfare Society, which worked with animals in the black townships.¹⁷⁷ The play was well received. Phillipa Breytenbach, a journalist, reported that the adult comedy was received with great enthusiasm and the acting was a delight to the eye and ear.¹⁷⁸ Emory Lewis, a journalist from *Eve*, said that the show was "Funny, witty and a wild spoof of sex."¹⁷⁹ Other critics stated that the show is a "racy, racing farce that is not suggestive. It's explicit! And outrageous funny."¹⁸⁰ The show ran from 1 to 8 June 1974.¹⁸¹ This was Blundell's last acting performance in his career.

Blundell as a producer

In the 1970s, Blundell also started to produce festivals and performances. The South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC) had an Adventure festival from 3 to 8 June 1974 at the Johannesburg Town Hall, and Blundell organised the third programme, a folk music concert, held on the 5th of June 1974.¹⁸² His appointment to organise the festival raises some questions. Whereas Blundell could be described as somewhat conservative, a number of his songs were

¹⁷⁰ Venables, "New company," 11.

¹⁷¹ Venables, "New company," 11.

¹⁷² Venables, "New company," 11.

¹⁷³ Venables, "New company," 11.

¹⁷⁴ Venables, "New company;" *Rand Daily Mail*, May 22, 1974, 12.

¹⁷⁵ Hidden Years Music Archive, Documentation Centre for Music, Stellenbosch University. Keith Blundell collection, Photo album, Newspaper article. Peter Feldman, "Like daughter like father," *The Star*, May 29, 1974.

¹⁷⁶ The term "Bantu" can be referred to as languages spoken by indigenous ethnic groups in Africa, or to an ethnic group/individual speaking a Bantu language. The term was also used as a derogatory term in the Apartheid era. See Stevenson and Waite, *Concise Oxford English Dictionary*, 105.

¹⁷⁷ I. Reid, "There's more than milk about Bella," *Rand Daily Mail*, May 31, 1974, 5.

¹⁷⁸ *Rand Daily Mail*, June 7, 1974, Advertisement: "What the butler saw," 18.

¹⁷⁹ *Rand Daily Mail*, May 22, 1974, Advertisement: "What the butler saw," 12.

¹⁸⁰ *Rand Daily Mail*, May 30, 1974, Advertisement: "What the butler saw," 11.

¹⁸¹ *Rand Daily Mail*, June 8, 1974, Advertisement: "What the butler saw," 4.

¹⁸² R. Daniel, "Excitement of a folk renaissance," *Rand Daily Mail*, June 7, 1974, 5.

censored, and folk music was seen by many as a communist threat, as leftist, as counterculture and hippie culture. Nonetheless, Blundell was invited to put on a folk show for the state-owned South African Broadcasting Corporation.

The Adventure festival was a mixed-media music festival wherein visual art impressions on big mobile screens were combined with music.¹⁸³ Blundell did not perform in the festival because it was happening simultaneously with *What the Butler Saw*.¹⁸⁴ According to Raeford Daniel from the *Rand Daily Mail*, the folk music show attempted to show the revitalised mood of the folk scene in South Africa.¹⁸⁵ The revitalisation was surely needed as there was no folk festival in 1974, and the complaints against SAFMA were piling up. Joe Sack, a journalist from the *Rand Daily Mail*, also mentioned that the folk music concert was included in the programme specifically to provide entertainment for “young people”.¹⁸⁶

The SABC did this show in association with the Johannesburg City Council to provide a platform for the diverse strata of musical expression prevalent in South Africa.¹⁸⁷ However, given the political climate at the time, the “diverse strata” they referred to would have still been relatively limited in scope. According to Feldman, Blundell compiled a programme to make everyone happy by having a variety of folk artists perform a variety of folk music.¹⁸⁸ The event was light, and the artists tried to inject a “folky” atmosphere into the arena.¹⁸⁹ According to Daniel, some audience members mourned the absence of “top names of the scene”.¹⁹⁰ The musicians selected by Blundell included Brian Finch, Colin and Muff Shapiro, Ray Perkel, John Oakley-Smith, Julie Blundell, Caroline Blundell and her husband John van Nierop,¹⁹¹ and Andrew Tracey’s Steel band.¹⁹² Apart from the musicians singing in English and Afrikaans and the performances differing somewhat in style, no diversity in terms of race was presented.

¹⁸³ J. Sack, “Light Music in week-long festival,” *Rand Daily Mail*, May 22, 1974, 12.

¹⁸⁴ R. Daniel, “A folk renaissance,” *Rand Daily Mail*, June 6, 1964, 12.

¹⁸⁵ Daniel. “Excitement.”; *Rand Daily Mail*, June 5, 1974, 10.

¹⁸⁶ Sack. “Light Music.”

¹⁸⁷ Hidden Years Music Archive, Documentation Centre for Music, Stellenbosch University. Keith Blundell collection, Photo album, Newspaper article. Peter Feldman, “Festival folk is fun music.” No publication, no date.

¹⁸⁸ Hidden Years Music Archive. Keith Blundell collection, Photo album, Newspaper article. Peter Feldman, “Festival folk is fun music.” No publication, no date.

¹⁸⁹ Hidden Years Music Archive. Keith Blundell collection, Photo album, Newspaper article. Peter Feldman, “Festival folk is fun music.” No publication, no date.

¹⁹⁰ Daniel, “A folk renaissance.”

¹⁹¹ Caroline and John van Nierop started dating in 1972 and married in mid-1973. For more information on John van Nierop and Ray Perkle, please consult the index on page v and vii.

¹⁹² Daniel, “A folk renaissance.”

Additionally, none of the musicians, such as Des Lindberg or Ian and Richie, known for their outspoken lyrics against the apartheid government, was invited to perform.

In 1977, Blundell and 28 other members of the Round Table Society of the Sandown branch decided to produce a Broadway musical show.¹⁹³ The show was called *This is Our Show* and included folk music and songs dating back to the turn of the century in London and recent Beatles compositions.¹⁹⁴ The show ran from 3 to 12 November 1977, and was held at Sandown Hall.¹⁹⁵ The show was held as a fundraiser, and all the proceeds were donated to Child Welfare.¹⁹⁶

Clearly, Blundell organised the festival for the SABC and the Broadway musical show for the Round Table Society. The distinction could be seen between the kind of shows produced by David Marks and others in SAFMA – who focused on new and original compositions reflecting the realities of South Africa, and the more conservative stream, focusing more on entertainment and preferring traditional folk songs.

Blundell as a television show presenter

As previously noted, television was introduced to the South African public in 1976 by the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC).¹⁹⁷ The SABC wanted to create new South African shows, and in January 1976, Blundell was approached by Ronnie Wilson, head of SABC-TV and SABC light entertainment, to host a live folk television show.¹⁹⁸ He was offered the live show on the condition that the whole Blundell family would be involved.¹⁹⁹ At this time, Julie and Caroline had just started their own band called Knuckles in Cape Town with Caroline's husband, John van Nierop and three other singers.²⁰⁰ Julie and Caroline did not want to leave Cape Town, so Blundell had to fly to Cape Town to audition the band to be the backing band

¹⁹³ J. Michell, "A warming triple treat," *Rand Daily Mail*, November 5, 1977, 6. A Broadway musical is described as any performance that incorporates music into the story of the play. In: "Broadway," accessed January 20, 2022, <https://www.britannica.com/art/Western-theatre/Broadway>.

¹⁹⁴ Michell, "A warming triple treat."

¹⁹⁵ *Rand Daily Mail*, October 13, 1977, "Around lekker lovelies," 13.

¹⁹⁶ *Rand Daily Mail*, "Around lekker lovelies."

¹⁹⁷ Thompson, *A History of South Africa*, 198.

¹⁹⁸ C. Stainer, "Keith and Kin take over from George," *Rand Daily Mail*, May 6, 1976, 3.

¹⁹⁹ Julie Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, May 24, 2021.

²⁰⁰ Julie Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, May 24, 2021.

for the television show.²⁰¹ Knuckles was subsequently offered the contract, and the whole band, including Julie and Caroline, moved to Johannesburg for the duration of the show.²⁰² The band stayed in the Blundell family home for three months during the filming of the show.²⁰³ Teper Blundell remembers that their home was never quiet during those three months because people were constantly visiting or playing music in the house.²⁰⁴ The three months were filled with rehearsals and filming the show, with two live shows being recorded every two weeks.²⁰⁵

The show was called *Keith and Kin*, and it premiered on the SABC on 6 May 1976.²⁰⁶ Each episode was 25 minutes long, with Blundell as the host, Knuckles as the backup band, and a new guest every week.²⁰⁷ Knuckles received two songs from the guest artists for each episode, and the band had to learn the songs to back the artists during their performance on the show.²⁰⁸ Other than the music of the guest stars, the Blundell family's songs made up most of the show.²⁰⁹ Unfortunately, no archive recordings of the show exist at the SABC. The show was one of the first on South African television, and aired for 13 weeks.²¹⁰ Some of the guests included Mel Miller, Irene Frangs, and Annabel Linder.²¹¹ The guest stars were mainly chosen because of their relationship with Blundell as a friends or working colleagues.²¹² The show ended after 13 weeks, with the last episode airing on 29 July 1976 with the Tracey brothers as guests.²¹³ The show greatly impacted on the family's popularity, and according to Caroline, Blundell did a lot of radio work after the show.²¹⁴

²⁰¹ Julie Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, May 24, 2021.

²⁰² Julie Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, May 24, 2021.

²⁰³ Teper Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, May 24, 2021.

²⁰⁴ Teper Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, May 24, 2021.

²⁰⁵ Julie Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, May 24, 2021.

²⁰⁶ Stainer, "Keith and Kin."

²⁰⁷ Stainer, "Keith and Kin."

²⁰⁸ Julie Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, May 24, 2021.

²⁰⁹ Teper Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, May 24, 2021.

²¹⁰ Jonny Webber, document sent via email to Marion Webber, May 24, 2021.

²¹¹ Stainer, "Keith and Kin." For more information on Annabel Linder, please consult the index, page iv.

²¹² Stainer, "Keith and Kin."

²¹³ S. Duval, "Traceys for Keith's 'Kin'," *Rand Daily Mail*, June 18, 1976, 17. Unfortunately, there are no recordings of the show in the SABC archive or the family's possession, so only the information from the family and a few articles published in the *Rand Daily Mail* were used to gather this information.

²¹⁴ Caroline Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, April 22, 2022.

Keith Blundell as a radio host

In 1971, Blundell presented a radio show called “Song and Country”. It aired every Thursday night on the English radio channel of the SABC.²¹⁵ He featured many singer-songwriters and folk musicians in the shows, including David Marks.²¹⁶ Marks received a letter from R.W. Charles, a music organiser, about participating in Song and Country.²¹⁷ In this letter, Charles wrote that if Marks wanted to be part of the show, he had to do the following: “You are requested to prepare three or four songs, which can be informally introduced by you. Emphasis should be placed on as much South African English material as possible.”²¹⁸ The guests were paid for each song that was accepted for broadcasting.²¹⁹ Blundell described the music on the show as “folk music from around the world, sung by South African musicians”.²²⁰ According to the advertisements in the *Rand Daily Mail*, this show continued until 1977. The SABC archive only had one recording of the show, and the recording is of a show in 1974. In this, we can hear the jingle for the radio show with the following lyrics:

Song and Country

Country and song

We present songs of the world

Sung by singers in South Africa

Country and song

Every man since time began

has always had a song to sing

Rich man, poor man

Oi it's Heather

Seven past and Keith²²¹

²¹⁵ *Rand Daily Mail*, May 7, 1977, 4.

²¹⁶ Jonny Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, May 24, 2021.

²¹⁷ Jonny Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, May 24, 2021.

²¹⁸ Jonny Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, May 24, 2021.

²¹⁹ Jonny Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, May 24, 2021.

²²⁰ The South African Broadcasting Network Archive (SABC Archive), audio recording of Song and Country radio show 1974, SONG AND COUNTRY Keith Blundell 19740726.

²²¹ SABC Archive, audio recording of Song and Country radio show 1974, SONG AND COUNTRY Keith Blundell 19740726.

In this episode aired on 26 July 1974, Blundell played folk songs of singers such as Kate Jones singing “Michael from Mountains”, written by Joni Mitchell, Brian Finch, who sang “Farmers Son,” and Jannie Hofmeyer, who sang “Man, Black’s the Season”.²²² “Uncle John’s Band” performing the song “Road to Tallis Land”, written by Ray Perkle, a member of the band, was also played, as well as music by Brian Bebbington.²²³ Bebbington’s song was a traditional folk song, which, according to Blundell, was “something you do not hear anymore these days”.²²⁴ Bebbington played an autoharp and he played the song “Blue-Eyed Boston Boy”, a song about the American Civil War.²²⁵ Blundell also sang a song on his program called “Job’s Worth,” written by Jeremy Taylor.²²⁶ He describes the song as a satirical song, and goes on to explain that satire is a strong component in the general folk scene.²²⁷ After his performance of Jeremy Taylor’s song, Blundell said that he enjoyed Taylor’s songs “because although he tends to satirise all sorts of things, the satire is never too sharp-edged. It’s always gentle, and I think it’s pertinent to the point, and it is a good thing that folk music does tend to satirize things. People should learn, I believe, to laugh at themselves a bit”.²²⁸

Blundell enjoyed hosting the radio show and decided in 1973 to build his own home studio.²²⁹ He built the studio with Adrian Okker, a close friend of his.²³⁰ The recording studio consisted of two separate rooms with a system with red and green lights for when they were busy with a recording.²³¹ The recording system included two reel-to-reel machines, a 2-track Revox tape machine and a 4-track Teac machine.²³² In this studio, Blundell recorded multiple folk singers, and he started recording pieces for the radio show “Melody Market” airing on the SABC.²³³

²²² SABC Archive, audio recording of Song and Country radio show 1974, SONG AND COUNTRY Keith Blundell 19740726.

²²³ SABC Archive, audio recording of Song and Country radio show 1974, SONG AND COUNTRY Keith Blundell 19740726.

²²⁴ SABC Archive, audio recording of Song and Country radio show 1974, SONG AND COUNTRY Keith Blundell 19740726.

²²⁵ SABC Archive, audio recording of Song and Country radio show 1974, SONG AND COUNTRY Keith Blundell 19740726.; An autoharp is a stringed musical instrument that is popular to accompany folk music and country music. In: ‘Autoharp’, <https://www.britannica.com/art/autoharp> (Accessed 14 August 2022).

²²⁶ SABC Archive, audio recording of Song and Country radio show 1974, SONG AND COUNTRY Keith Blundell 19740726.

²²⁷ SABC Archive, audio recording of Song and Country radio show 1974, SONG AND COUNTRY Keith Blundell 19740726.

²²⁸ SABC Archive, audio recording of Song and Country radio show 1974, SONG AND COUNTRY Keith Blundell 19740726.

²²⁹ Jonny Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, November 18, 2021.

²³⁰ Jonny Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, November 18, 2021.

²³¹ Jonny Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, November 18, 2021.

²³² Jonny Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, November 18, 2021.

²³³ Jonny Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, November 18, 2021; Julie Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, November 18, 2021.

“Melody Market” started airing in 1974 on the SABC English radio station, and Blundell joined the radio show in 1977.²³⁴ He was offered this opportunity through Ronnie Wilson, the same person that gave him and his family the opportunity to do the television show *Keith and Kin*.²³⁵ Blundell hosted the radio show with five other hosts and the interviews were recorded in his home studio.²³⁶ Julie recalls her mother, Pamela, helping Blundell choose material for the show from his home music collection.²³⁷ The songs chosen were from different genres, including classical, folk, and show music.²³⁸ Blundell continued hosting the radio show until a motorcycle accident left him paralysed in 1989 (see Chapter 6).²³⁹

Apart from “Song and Country”, Blundell was also involved in writing the music for a radio show called “Deadline Thursday Night”, a topical radio programme with weekly news broadcasts.²⁴⁰ This show started airing on 21 October 1965 on Springbok radio, and the theme tune of the radio show was a Calypso song.²⁴¹ A Calypso song is defined as “a type of folk song primarily from Trinidad though sung elsewhere in the southern and eastern Caribbean islands.”²⁴² The subjects of Calypso songs are mostly local or topical events reflecting on social or political matters.²⁴³

For the theme song, Blundell was assigned to write new verses each week to touch on some of the week’s topical subjects.²⁴⁴ He would then record the song for the week so it was ready to be played on the radio show.²⁴⁵ Unfortunately, the SABC archive did not have any recordings or documents of this show, nor did Blundell’s family archive.

The 1970s was an eventful decade for Blundell’s career as an English folk singer, actor, producer, and radio- and television host. He, with his family, toured the country, played on

²³⁴ Hidden Years Music Archive. Keith Blundell collection, Keith Blundell 1927-2002 file, Project. Career, 4.

²³⁵ Julie Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, September 27, 2021.

²³⁶ Hidden Years Music Archive. Keith Blundell collection, Keith Blundell 1927-2002 file, Project. Career, 4.

²³⁷ Julie Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, September 27, 2021.

²³⁸ Julie Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, September 27, 2021.

²³⁹ Julie Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, September 27, 2021.

²⁴⁰ Jonny Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, September 27, 2021.

²⁴¹ Jonny Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, September 27, 2021; *Rand Daily Mail*, October 21, 1965, 16.

²⁴² “Calypso,” accessed November 23, 2021, <https://www.britannica.com/art/calypso-music>.

²⁴³ “Calypso.”

²⁴⁴ Jonny Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, September 27, 2021.

²⁴⁵ Jonny Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, September 27, 2021.

cruise ships and experienced the advent of television. All his experiences in the entertainment industry gave him and his family a high public profile not just in the English Folk Music scene but also on the broader entertainment industry.

Chapter 6: The barn dances and the last years of Keith Blundell's life (1980-2002)



Figure 28: Keith Blundell on his motorcycle, circa 1980.¹

Introduction

Keith Blundell made a name for himself as a folk singer in the 1960s and 1970s, but in the 1980s, he was forced to change career paths after a life-changing accident that left him paralysed from the waist down. In this chapter, Blundell's career as a country singer, the motorcycle accident and the last years of his life will be discussed.

In 1983, the United Democratic Front (UDF) was formed. The UDF was a coalition of anti-apartheid organisations.² The coalition was known for coordinating anti-apartheid actions for

¹ Hidden Years Music Archive. Keith Blundell collection, Miscellaneous. Blue file, 24.

² Thompson, *A History of South Africa*, xxii.

church groups, trade unions, women's groups, youth leagues and community organisations.³ The UDF was one of the largest movements in opposition to the apartheid system.⁴ The 1980s also saw increasing resistance to the apartheid government from white constituents. In 1984, the End Conscription Campaign was launched to fight against compulsory military conscription for young white men.⁵ The majority of the members that formed part of the campaign were White English-speaking South Africans.⁶ 1989 brought the start of the Voëlvry movement, an Afrikaans anti-apartheid rock music movement that toured South African campuses.⁷ In 1989, P.W. Botha was replaced by F.W. de Klerk after Botha suffered a mild stroke.⁸ F.W. de Klerk took the place of P.W. Botha as the leader of the National Party and later as president of the country.⁹ This leadership change in the National Party brought a positive change to South Africa as on 2 February 1990, De Klerk declared the unbanning of the ANC and the PAC and the removal of the restrictions on domestic organisations, including the UDF and the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU).¹⁰ A few days later, on 11 February, he also announced the freeing of political prisoners, including Nelson Mandela, after 27 years in jail.¹¹ Nelson Mandela's release led to many other positive changes in the country. On 1 April 1993, a Multiparty Forum was formed, called the Convention for a Democratic South Africa (CODESA),¹² that included all the major political parties of the country except for the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) and the SACP.¹³ Their absence from the forum was because of their opposition to the process of peaceful change in the country.¹⁴ The forum met on 3 June 1993 in Kempton Park, and they agreed on a date for the next election.¹⁵

³ R.B. Beck, *The History of South Africa* (Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 2000), 170.

⁴ R. Ross, *A concise history of South Africa: Second edition* (South Africa: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 181.

⁵ Morris, *Apartheid: An illustrated history*, 136, 87.

⁶ A. Grundlingh. "'Rocking the boat' in South Africa? Voëlvry music and Afrikaans Anti-Apartheid Social Protest in the 1980s," *The International Journal of African Historical studies* 37, no. 3 (2004): 489.

⁷ Grundlingh. "Rocking the boat," 485.

⁸ Beck, *The History of South Africa*, 180.

⁹ Thompson, *A History of South Africa*, xxiii.

¹⁰ N.L. Clark and W.H. Worger, *South Africa: The rise and fall of Apartheid* (Great Britain: Routledge, 2016), 111.

¹¹ Thompson, *A History of South Africa*, 247.

¹² Worden, *The making of modern South Africa*, 147.

¹³ Thompson, *A History of South Africa*, 255.

¹⁴ Thompson, *A History of South Africa*, 255.

¹⁵ Thompson, *A History of South Africa*, 256; Thompson, *A History of South Africa*, 151.

The first democratic election was held on 27 April 1994, and the ANC became the ruling party with Nelson Mandela as the new president of South Africa.¹⁶ Nelson Mandela retired in 1999 and was succeeded by Thabo Mbeki as the new president of South Africa.

Throughout the political unrest in South Africa, Keith Blundell's career continued, and his music and performances were seemingly not impacted by what was happening in the country. The reason for not being impacted is uncertain; however, it could be related to the relative disconnect that white South Africans had with global politics during the time.

Folk music performances in the 1980s

A big career move for Blundell was to form the band the Square Set in 1979.¹⁷ The band consisted of Blundell, lead guitar and lead vocals, David Williams playing the mandolin, guitar and backing vocals, Louis Meyer playing the banjo and backing vocals, John Rice playing the double bass and Leandra Speedie backing vocals.¹⁸ Other members who were also part of the band were Trevor Muller, John van Nierop and Roger Bashew.¹⁹ The group was created to perform at barn dances. A barn dance is “an informal dance in which people do traditional dancing in rows and circles, changing partners regularly”.²⁰ The band did barn dances every weekend for the majority of the 1980s.²¹

While Blundell, with his new group the Square Set, focused on country music and barn dances, he still performed folk music with fellow folk musicians, for example, in a concert with Des and Dawn Lindberg at the Arena Bistro Theatre in Rosebank on 16 November 1980.²² Another concert Blundell did was held on 29 November 1980 at the Black Sash fete in Oaklands.²³

In 1982, Blundell also performed with his daughter, Julie. Their performance was recorded by David Marks. It is uncertain if this recording was meant for an album release or was just a live

¹⁶ Clark and Worger, *South Africa: The rise and fall of Apartheid*, 119.

¹⁷ T. Jasiukowicz, “Take yo’ partners, folk!” *Rand Daily Mail*, July 2, 1982, 6.

¹⁸ Jasiukowicz, “Take yo’ partners, folk!” For more information on these band members, please consult the index on pages ii, iv, vi and viii.

¹⁹ Julie Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, November 18, 2021. For more information on the band members, please consult the index, pages i and iv.

²⁰ “Barn dance,” accessed April 26, 2022, <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/barn-dance>.

²¹ Jasiukowicz, “Take yo’ partners, folk!”

²² *Rand Daily Mail*, November 15, 1980, “I’m getting my act together & taking it on the road,” 7.

²³ *Rand Daily Mail*, November 29, 1980, “Black Sash fete today,” 4.

recording of the evening, something Marks regularly did. However, the recording includes songs sung by Blundell and Julie individually and as a duo. Some songs include “Country Boy,” discussed in Chapter 4 and “Table Bay,” which Blundell recorded with the family on their *Blundell 1979* album, discussed in Chapter 5. Blundell and his daughter, Julie, also sang a cover of the song “Born on Christmas Day,” and the album includes an instrumental number performed only with a guitar and violin.

The decline of folk music

In the early 1980s, folk music’s popularity started to dwindle. Caroline Blundell ascribes this to the change in politics and the fashion and tastes of the White English-speaking community.²⁴ She pointed out:

Mostly, I think because the White English-speaking population is really very tiny, and as politics changed, so the music that was played on the radio changed. Folk music was no longer fashionable, and it’s also not a part of our culture. Here, it’s not like in other places where it[s] their actual roots, in their blood going back hundreds of years and passed on.²⁵

Despite the efforts of SAFMA to establish a local English folk song tradition, Caroline Blundell points out that it was impossible to create a strong enough folk tradition in less than two decades. It would have been hard to compete against the variety of music genres that became popular during this time, such as rock, punk, bubble-gum pop, and reggae.²⁶ These music genres became increasingly popular amongst South African youth, and folk music audiences dwindled.²⁷

Syd Kitchen also studied the dwindling of folk music in his MA Thesis, where he postulates that the shift in the popularity of folk music already began in the late-1960s when the lyrical content and the style of music became more diverse, and the technical execution of musicians’ ideas started to change.²⁸ He further argues that in the late 1970s, the folk associations,

²⁴ Caroline Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, May 24, 2021.

²⁵ Caroline Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, May 24, 2021.

²⁶ D.B. Coplan, “God Rock Africa: Thoughts on politics in popular black performance in South Africa,” *African Studies* 64, no. 1 (2005): 13.

²⁷ Julie and Teper Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, April 22, 2022.

²⁸ Kitchen, “Where have all the flowers gone,” 36.

including SAFMA and NAFMA, closed their doors, and new music influences, such as punk music, was introduced, leading to the decline in the popularity of folk music in South Africa.²⁹

During this period, Blundell increasingly started to focus on his work as a country singer.

The start of Keith Blundell's barn dance career

In the 1980s, Blundell's career took a turn when he was asked to teach a couple of barn dances at a party.³⁰ Blundell and Pamela had experience in Scottish dancing, and Julie remembers her parents practising the dance style in their lounge from time to time.³¹ During these practice sessions, Blundell would do "a sword dance jumping over two swords lying on the floor."³²

The barn dances proved popular, and Blundell started a business called Blundell Barn Dance.³³ The business grew with every dance he held, and Blundell learned more about the music style and dances.³⁴ He enjoyed "facilitating the evenings, getting people to dance together and making sure they had fun."³⁵ As mentioned earlier in this chapter, as the business started to grow, Blundell formed the Square Set band to perform live at the dances.³⁶

The members of the band included Louis Meyer, David Williams, Trevor Muller, Roger Bashew, John van Nierop, Leandra Fennesey, and Blundell's children.³⁷ Julie and Jonny Blundell were part of the band full-time, and Caroline Blundell played briefly in the band until she decided to start her own barn dance business in Cape Town in 1986.³⁸ Jonny recalls that playing in the band was boring and repetitive, but the audiences had a fantastic time dancing.³⁹ The barn dances were held every weekend all over the East and West Rand of Johannesburg.⁴⁰ It was attended by many organisations as a team-building event, including the Round Table

²⁹ Kitchen, "Where have all the flowers gone," 40.

³⁰ Julie Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, May 24, 2021.

³¹ Julie Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, November 18, 2021.

³² Julie Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, November 18, 2021.

³³ Julie Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, November 18, 2021.

³⁴ Julie Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, November 18, 2021.

³⁵ Julie Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, May 24, 2021.

³⁶ Jonny Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, May 24, 2021.

³⁷ Jonny Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, May 24, 2021.

³⁸ Julie Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, May 24, 2021; "About Caroline," accessed September 20, 2021, <https://www.barndance.co.za/about-me>.

³⁹ Jonny Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, May 24, 2021.

⁴⁰ Jonny Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, May 24, 2021.

Society, and many of these organisations also used the barn dances as fundraisers.⁴¹ Other groups who attended the barn dances were schools, private parties, corporates and church groups.⁴²

Blundell and his band, Square Set, mostly performed at the barn dances, but sometimes, they did performances that were not part of the regular dance performances. For example, on 10 December 1982, Blundell did an event with his band at the Parkhurst Recreation Centre.⁴³ The proceeds of this event went towards the Year of the Aged.⁴⁴ Blundell also did barn dance performances on his own, such as in 1984, he performed at the Progressive Federal Party's barn dance.⁴⁵ The Progressive Federal Party (PFP) was a political party officially formed in 1977 after merging the progressive and reform parties. The party was seen as the "major opposition party" against the National Party.⁴⁶ The chairman of the party was Frederick van Zyl Slabbert, and the party got most of its support from White English-speaking South Africans.⁴⁷ For this dance, Blundell organised dancers to be part of the event.⁴⁸

In 1986, Blundell invited his family to perform with him in a concert called the Blundell Family in Concert, at a soiree held by Des and Dawn Lindberg.⁴⁹ This was the first time that the family performed together after many years.⁵⁰ Caroline came from Cape Town, where she managed her own barn dance business,⁵¹ Jonny came from America, and Julie joined after getting married and becoming a mother.⁵² The family performed multiple songs together, including folk favourites like "Country Boy," "The Water is Wide", and other songs including Johnny

⁴¹ Julie Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, November 18, 2021.

⁴² Julie Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, November 18, 2021.

⁴³ *Rand Daily Mail*, December 2, 1982, "A-hootin' and a-hollerin," 6.

⁴⁴ *Rand Daily Mail*, "A-hootin' and a-hollerin."

⁴⁵ *Rand Daily Mail*, March 9, 1984, "Have a ball, raise funds at the PFP barn dance," 3.

⁴⁶ B. Hackland, "The Economic and Political context of the growth of the Progressive Federal Party in South Africa, 1959-1978," *Journal of Southern African Studies* 7, no. 1 (1980): 6.

⁴⁷ Hackland, "The Economic and Political context," 12; D. Shandler, "Structural crisis and liberalism: a history of the Progressive Federal Party, 1981-1989" (MA Thesis, University of Cape Town, 1991), 85.

⁴⁸ *Rand Daily Mail*, "Have a ball, raise funds at the PFP barn dance."

⁴⁹ Hidden Years Music Archive, Documentation Centre for Music, Stellenbosch University. Keith Blundell collection, Miscellaneous, Newspaper article. "The talented Blundells," published in *The Citizen*, October 15, 1986.

⁵⁰ Hidden Years Music Archive. Keith Blundell collection, Miscellaneous, Newspaper article. "The talented Blundells," published in *The Citizen*, October 15, 1986.

⁵¹ Hidden Years Music Archive. Keith Blundell collection, Miscellaneous, Newspaper article. "The talented Blundells," published in *The Citizen*, October 15, 1986.

⁵² Hidden Years Music Archive. Keith Blundell collection, Miscellaneous, Newspaper article. "The talented Blundells," published in *The Citizen*, October 15, 1986.

Clegg's "African Sky Blue".⁵³ Blundell and the children sang the songs and Pamela joined some of the songs by playing the piano.⁵⁴

Keith Blundell's radio career in the 1980s

During this time, Blundell also continued hosting radio shows. He worked as the host of the radio show "South African Startime". On this show, musicians and stars from South Africa were interviewed about their careers. It was recorded in the SABC studios for the English radio channel.⁵⁵ On one of two recordings available of this series in the SABC Archive that aired on 4 March 1985, Blundell interviewed Sam Sklair on his music career, his family and musical education.⁵⁶ Sam's daughter, Susie, sang with Caroline and Julie Blundell in the band Just Us.⁵⁷ The radio show ran for the whole year. Another episode of the show with Kim Kallie was aired on 9 December 1985. In this interview Blundell and Kim talked about how she became a musician. Kim recounted how her mum wanted her to do a secretary course or do teachers' training to fall back on if the music industry was not working for her, but Kim never did any of those courses. Blundell replied to that: "It goes to show that parents offer one thing, but they don't necessarily know exactly what is the best for their child."⁵⁸

Hobbies and activities

When Blundell was not doing barn dances or interviewing artists on "South African Startime", he was doing other activities such as riding motorcycles and playing tennis. Blundell bought his first motorcycle in his 20s after Jonny returned from his National Service in 1977 with his friends. All of Jonny's friends rode motorcycles which inspired Blundell to purchase one of his own again.⁵⁹ Later, Jonny and Teper also bought their own motorcycles, and they started to go

⁵³ Hidden Years Music Archive. Keith Blundell collection, Miscellaneous, Newspaper article. "The talented Blundells," published in *The Citizen*, October 15, 1986.

⁵⁴ Hidden Years Music Archive. Keith Blundell collection, Miscellaneous, Newspaper article. "The talented Blundells," published in *The Citizen*, October 15, 1986.

⁵⁵ The South African Broadcasting Network Archive (SABC Archive), audio recording of South African Spotlight, SOUTH AFRICAN SPOTLIGHT Keith Blundell Sam Sinclair 19850304.

⁵⁶ SABC Archive, audio recording of South African Spotlight, SOUTH AFRICAN SPOTLIGHT Keith Blundell Sam Sinclair 19850304.

⁵⁷ SABC Archive, audio recording of South African Spotlight, SOUTH AFRICAN SPOTLIGHT Keith Blundell Sam Sinclair 19850304.

⁵⁸ SABC Archive, audio recording of South African Spotlight, SOUTH AFRICAN SPOTLIGHT Keith Blundell Sam Sinclair 19850304.

⁵⁹ Teper Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, May 24, 2021.

on breakfast runs and trips together as a family.⁶⁰ According to Teper, motorcycles became a big part of life for the Blundell family.⁶¹ Another activity the family did together was going to the Kruger Park.⁶² Blundell bought a share in a Nature reserve located in the Kruger National Park, and the family would visit the reserve regularly.⁶³

The life-changing accident

On 9 February 1989, Blundell returned home in light rain on his motorcycle after playing tennis with Mike McGovern.⁶⁴ As he pulled up at a traffic light, a light delivery van behind him lost control while slowing down and hit him from behind.⁶⁵ This hit crushed his spinal cord, and he was paralysed from the neck down.⁶⁶ He was in the Intensive Care Unit (ICU) for two weeks.⁶⁷ After being in the ICU, he was sent to Edenvale Hospital for five months.⁶⁸ He could not move for the first couple of months, and had to lie flat on his back in the hospital. After this period, he slowly started sitting in a wheelchair, learning how to move around in it.⁶⁹ During this time, Pamela was with him every day for support and also to learn how to adjust to a new life looking after Blundell.⁷⁰ The accident and recovering period was very traumatic for Blundell and his family, but according to Julie Blundell, they worked hard to keep positive.⁷¹

⁶⁰ Teper Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, May 24, 2021.

⁶¹ Teper Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, May 24, 2021.

⁶² Jonny Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, May 24, 2021.

⁶³ Jonny Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, May 24, 2021.

⁶⁴ Hidden Years Music Archive. Keith Blundell collection, Keith Blundell 1927-2002 file, Project. Introduction, 3; Teper Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, May 24, 2021. For more information on Mike McGovern, please consult the index on page iv.

⁶⁵ Hidden Years Music Archive. Keith Blundell collection, Keith Blundell 1927-2002 file, Project. Introduction, 3.

⁶⁶ Hidden Years Music Archive. Keith Blundell collection, Keith Blundell 1927-2002 file, Project. Introduction, 3.

⁶⁷ Teper Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, May 24, 2021.

⁶⁸ Julie Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, May 24, 2021.

⁶⁹ Julie Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, May 24, 2021.

⁷⁰ Julie Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, May 24, 2021.

⁷¹ Julie Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, May 24, 2021.



Figure 29: Keith Blundell (left) and his wife, Pamela Blundell, (right) after Blundell's accident, circa 1989.⁷²

After the accident, Des and Dawn Lindberg organised a benefit concert for Blundell with some of his other friends. This concert was held at the Wits University Great Hall on 29 July 1989.⁷³ The benefit concert was called *Folk and Friends*, and the purpose was to show appreciation for his outstanding achievements, musical talents and determination, as well as to raise money for him to buy a new Nissan motorcar with special controls so that he could drive himself around.⁷⁴ The money raised with the concert was also used to help provide various structural alterations to the Blundell home.⁷⁵ Some of the performers at the concert were Blundell himself, Jonny, Julie and Caroline Blundell, Brian Bebbington, Des and Dawn Lindberg, Jeremy Taylor, Jill Kirkland, David Marks and Andy Dillon.⁷⁶ Des and Dawn opened the event with a song called "Ramblin' Boy," and were followed by David Marks, who performed his original song "Master Jack".⁷⁷

⁷² Hidden Years Music Archive. Keith Blundell collection, Videos. Mi's 80th birthday slideshow.

⁷³ Hidden Years Music Archive, Documentation Centre for Music, Stellenbosch University. Programme, David Marks collection, Box nr. 313, Programme. "*Folk and friends*": *Benefit concert for Keith Blundell* (1989), cover page.

⁷⁴ Hidden Years Music Archive. Keith Blundell collection, Keith Blundell 1927-2002 file, Project. Introduction, 4.

⁷⁵ Hidden Years Music Archive. David Marks collection, Box nr. 313, Programme. "Keith Blundell biography," *'Folk and friends: 'Benefit concert for Keith Blundell* (1989).

⁷⁶ Hidden Years Music Archive. Programme, David Marks collection, Box nr. 313, Programme. "Folk and friends," *'Folk and friends: 'Benefit concert for Keith Blundell programme* (1989).

⁷⁷ Hidden Years Music Archive. David Marks collection, Box nr. 313, Programme. "Folk and friends," *'Folk and friends: 'Benefit concert for Keith Blundell programme* (1989).

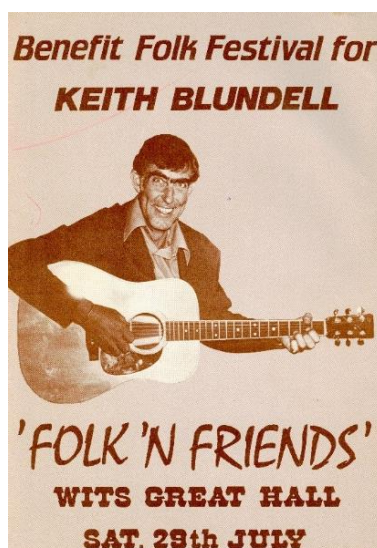


Figure 30: Folk and Friends programme, 1989.⁷⁸

Keith Blundell’s return to barn dancing and “retirement”

Blundell gradually regained his strength and started performing again at his barn dances.⁷⁹ The comeback was not easy for him, so his son Teper and his wife decided to get involved in the barn dance business to assist him.⁸⁰ Teper assisted Blundell by providing “muscle” for some of the dances.⁸¹ Blundell played the drum machine that kept the beat and called the dances, while Julie played guitar in the band with John van Nierop and Jonathan Klaas.⁸² Blundell also tried to play the guitar; however, it worsened his pain, making it too difficult for him to play perform.⁸³ Julie remembers that

... Although he really wanted to keep working, it became increasingly difficult. Also, because his paralysis affected his diaphragm muscles, it interfered with his breath control for singing – this was very tough for him. And it was very hard for him to hold a guitar as he couldn’t sit upright and balance unless he had one arm resting on the arm of his wheelchair. It didn’t stop him trying but it was extremely frustrating for him.⁸⁴

⁷⁸ Hidden Years Music Archive. David Marks collection, Box nr. 313, Programme. *'Folk and friends: 'Benefit concert for Keith Blundell* (1989), cover page.

⁷⁹ Teper Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, May 24, 2021.

⁸⁰ Teper Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, May 24, 2021.

⁸¹ Teper Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, May 24, 2021.

⁸² Julie Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, January 26, 2022.

⁸³ Julie Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, May 24, 2021.

⁸⁴ Julie Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, May 24, 2021.



Figure 31: Julie Blundell (left) and Keith Blundell (right) performing at a barn dance after his accident, circa 1989.⁸⁵

As Blundell wanted to keep going with the barn dances, Julie and Jonny Blundell decided to record all the barn dance music onto cassettes so Blundell could use the cassettes when doing the barn dances.⁸⁶ Blundell was increasingly experiencing pain and started hosting fewer barn dances. At the end of 1989, Julie decided to buy her father's barn dance business and continued to run the business under the same name, Blundell Barn Dance Band.⁸⁷ With the musical numbers already recorded on cassettes, Julie decided to do the barn dance performance with just the tapes and no live band to accompany her.⁸⁸ This made the shows more affordable to run.⁸⁹ She ran the barn dance up until the end of 1998, when she and her family moved from Johannesburg to Cape Town.⁹⁰

⁸⁵ Julie Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, 26 January 2022.

⁸⁶ Julie Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, May 24, 2021.

⁸⁷ Julie Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, May 24, 2021.

⁸⁸ Julie Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, May 24, 2021.

⁸⁹ Julie Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, May 24, 2021.

⁹⁰ Julie Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, May 24, 2021.



Figure 32: Pamela and Keith Blundell in Cape Town, circa 1994.⁹¹

The last years of Keith Blundell's life

When Blundell was not doing the barn dances, he was at home with his wife, Pamela. They stayed in Johannesburg until 1999 and then decided to move to Cape Town.⁹² The reason for the move was that Caroline, Julie and Jonny Blundell were all living in Cape Town at this point and Blundell and Pamela wanted to be close to their children.⁹³ During his time at home, Blundell helped his wife produce variety shows with their grandchildren and extended family.⁹⁴ These performances were private affairs for family enjoyment.⁹⁵ Other than helping his wife with these performances, he practised multiple hobbies, including painting with watercolours and pastels.⁹⁶ He also watched live sport on television, especially tennis and cricket.⁹⁷

⁹¹ Hidden Years Music Archive. Keith Blundell collection, Videos. Mi's 80th birthday slideshow.

⁹² Teper Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, May 24, 2021.

⁹³ Teper Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, May 24, 2021.

⁹⁴ Teper Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, May 24, 2021.

⁹⁵ Teper Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, May 24, 2021.

⁹⁶ Teper Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, May 24, 2021.

⁹⁷ Teper Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, May 24, 2021.

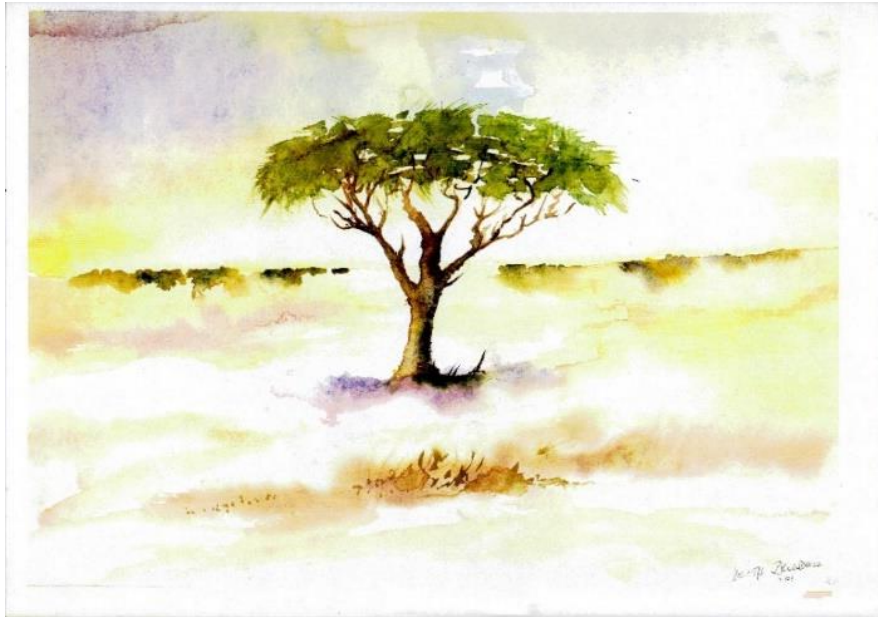


Figure 33: One of Keith Blundell's watercolour paintings, 2001.⁹⁸

As Blundell grew older, his pain increased, and his health deteriorated. During the last two years of his life, he was diagnosed with cancer, and these health issues left him bedridden for the last few months of his life until 13 October 2002, when he passed away peacefully.⁹⁹

The last few years of Blundell's life clearly showed his determination not to give up on his love for music and his family after his accident. Throughout his life, he was adaptable. He flourished in many different careers and had to learn how to cope after his life-changing accident. Even though his accident left him paralysed, he still performed at the barn dances, and he performed until he physically could not do so. The last years of his life show the tenacity of Keith Blundell. During his life, Keith Blundell was an influential musician and entertainer who left a profound impact on folk musicians in South Africa.

⁹⁸ Hidden Years Music Archive. Keith Blundell collection, Keith Blundell 1927-2002 file, Project. Painting.

⁹⁹ Hidden Years Music Archive. Keith Blundell collection, Keith Blundell 1927-2002 file, Project. Email from Tom Meyer to Pamela Blundell, 1.

Chapter 7: Conclusion

This biographical study attempts to trace the life of Keith Blundell against the backdrop of an increasingly repressive state in post-war apartheid South Africa. Keith Blundell lived in a time when multiple important historical events occurred, such as the Great Depression, the Second World War, and apartheid. It seems that, throughout Blundell's life, these historical events did not directly affect him or his family. It is uncertain why these events did not affect him. The reasons – being disconnected from the global politics of the time and the idea of the family living in a “religious cocoon” – recognised as possible explanations. However, it cannot be confirmed and can hence be nothing more than speculations.

Blundell grew up in a white English-speaking Anglican household, with an Anglican minister as a father. At a young age, Blundell joined the church choir, a beneficial experience for his music career as he was taught how to read music at the choir. St. Andrew's College was also renowned as one of the best Anglican schools in the country, and Blundell spent his high school years here. He did not excel academically and failed to pass his matric exam. Despite this, he showed real tenacity when it came to sports. He only lost two boxing matches while competing at school, the first and the last match, and in high school participated in rugby, hockey and cross-country. After leaving school to join the Navy, Blundell broke away from his Anglican upbringing and the strict manner in which he was raised, which shows his individualistic personality. In contrast to his upbringing, Keith Blundell allowed his children the freedom to make their own decisions, for example, Caroline, who was allowed to stay behind with her boyfriend when the family went on tour, and they could choose if they wanted to be religious or not.

Throughout his life, one can see that Blundell was a tenacious and determined individual. He, for example, learned how to play the guitar at age 30, playing until his fingers bled. One year after picking up the guitar, he started performing on stage. Similarly, Blundell was determined to still perform at the barn dances despite the pain this caused him after the accident that left him partly paralysed.

The biggest part of Blundell's life was dedicated to his career as a folk singer. He performed as a solo singer, in groups, and regularly with his family. In the 1960s, he established one of

the first live music venues, the Troubadour, dedicated to folk music, and, in the 1970s, he became active in the newly formed South African Folk Music Association (SAFMA), serving as chairperson in 1969. Soon after its establishment, two performance streams became apparent in SAFMA: those who preferred to sing traditional folk music and those who encouraged the performance of new and original songs that reflected the realities of living in South Africa.

When looking at Blundell's career, one can see that he was a complex performer. According to his children and the musicians with whom he regularly performed, he was not outspoken about politics. He came across as rather conservative in his views of what folk music is and should be. Yet, he sang light satirical songs that did critique the staunch ideologies of the Calvinist apartheid government, and he associated closely with musicians, such as Des Lindberg, who were outspoken in their criticism of apartheid, on and off stage. While he insisted that his wife, Pamela, leave the Black Sash organisation, he later performed at their benefit concert (1980) and events organised by the Progressive Federal Party (1984). Performing during apartheid was not clear-cut, and even though Keith Blundell was conservative in his political opinions, three of his songs were censored. What clearly comes to the fore, is Blundell's complex and multi-faceted identity and the legislative rules that governed his career. On the one hand, he comes across as a-political and conservative, while on the other, his close friends were outspoken against the apartheid regime and voiced their opinions publicly. His songs were censored, yet the very bodies responsible for censorship also hired him to organise festivals, radio and television programmes for them.

While censorship was also enacted by the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC) who had their own censorship committees that banned material,¹⁰⁰ Blundell was invited in 1974 to organise one of the first music festivals for the SABC. The programme excluded most of the more outspoken musicians, and audience members complained about the lack of their favourite musicians at the event. From this, we see the unfolding of a complex performance career of an individual who uttered light critique against the apartheid government through satirical songs such as "Ou Tante Koba". He performed at political events of liberal organisations, but also played it safe and worked for state organisations such as the SABC. The fact that the SABC asked Blundell to work on several radio and television shows for them

¹⁰⁰ Drewett, "Aesopian strategies," 191.

shows the public image Blundell constructed as someone not interested in politics. This image allowed him to work for the state, and stay involved in folk music performances.

In this, Keith Blundell shares many similarities with a sizeable section of White English speakers in South Africa. They did not support the National Party and generally voted for the more liberal English-orientated UP and, later, the PFP. Neither did they support the extra-parliamentary struggle organisations that worked for a simple “one man, one vote” democratic system in South Africa. White English-speaking South Africans had multiple ways of staying connected to their British identities, which included listening to folk music and commemorating important historical events such as the First World War and the 1820s settlers. Keith Blundell grew up in a household that participated in these practices – he was sent to an Anglican school; his mother was part of the Church’s Women’s Fellowship and the Mothers Union. While Blundell broke with many of these traditions, he wrote a memorial song, “Dick King’s Ride,” that celebrates one of the 1820 settlers.

Throughout his life, Keith Blundell remained committed to his family. His children and wife, all talented musicians, regularly featured in concerts, tours and radio and television shows that Blundell organised. His family travelled with and joined in performances all over South Africa and Zimbabwe during their yearlong tour, and they also performed with him on cruise ships. Blundell nurtured the talents of his children, encouraging them to form groups of their own and supporting their careers by involving them in recording albums, and television and radio shows. Julie, Caroline and Johnny Blundell still have careers as musicians, performing in bands such as Masala, Fat City and Fintry. Jonny works as a director and producer at Rootspring Studios.¹⁰¹ This close family bond also helped the family during a difficult time after Blundell’s accident, and everybody stepped in to help.

This biography reveals Keith Blundell as an individual who played an integral role in establishing and maintaining an English Folk Music movement in South Africa. While this movement did not last, it provided avenues for many musicians to start careers in the entertainment industry and for young individuals to be inspired by the musicians known in the movement.

¹⁰¹ “Meet the team”, <https://rootspring.co.za/meet-the-team/> (Accessed 16 August 2022).

This biography not only attempts to contribute towards the research on Keith Blundell, but it also adds to the small body of research on the English Folk Music movement in South Africa. This thesis identified various gaps in the literature, and there is scope for future research on these topics. Biographies can be written on the musicians who were part of the movement, such as David Marks and John Oakley-Smith, and a detailed study can be done on the venues and clubs that played a part in this movement. This movement was predominantly based in the Johannesburg area, however, there were folk clubs in other areas of South Africa, such as Port Elizabeth, Bloemfontein, Durban and Cape Town.

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- Keith Blundell with his wife, Pamela Blundell, and three of his children, 1962.
- Des Lindberg and Keith Blundell.
- Keith Blundell conducting the Balladeers, circa 1966.

Videos

Video, Mi's 80th birthday slideshow.

Interviews

Pamela Blundell, interviewed by Roger Lucey. Rough transcript of interview [n.d.].

Verlein 'Ginger' Seipp, interviewed by Prof. Lizabé Lambrechts, March 15, 2017.

The South African Broadcasting Network Archive (SABC Archive), Auckland Park, Johannesburg

Audio recordings

Audio recording of Song and Country radio show 1974, File name: SONG AND COUNTRY
Keith Blundell 19740726.

Audio recording of South African Spotlight, File name: SOUTH AFRICAN SPOTLIGHT
Keith Blundell Sam Sinclair 19850304.

Oral Sources

(Covid conditions enforced innovation. Telephonic interviews and email correspondence had to substitute for face-to-face interviews)

Caroline, Julie and Teper Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, 22 April 2022.

Caroline, Julie, Jonny and Teper Blundell, document sent by email to Marion Webber, 24 May 2022.

Caroline Blundell, email sent to Marion Webber, 1 July 2022.

Des Lindberg, document sent via email to Marion Webber, 28 July 2021.

Des Lindberg, document sent via email to Marion Webber, 26 August 2021.
Des Lindberg, document sent via email to Marion Webber, 23 September 2021.
Des Lindberg, telephonic interview with Marion Webber, September 24, 2021.
Des Lindberg, telephonic interview with Marion Webber, September 26, 2021.
Julie Blundell, email sent to Marion Webber, 4 August 2021.
Julie Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, 27 September 2021.
Julie Blundell, email sent to Marion Webber, 11 October 2021.
Julie Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, 25 October 2021.
Julie Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, 18 November 2021.
Julie Blundell, document sent via email to Marion Webber, 26 January 2022.
Julie Blundell, email sent to Marion Webber, 26 January 2022.
Julie Blundell, email sent to Marion Webber, 31 January 2022.
Julie Blundell, email sent to Marion Webber, 20 August 2022.
Liesel Coetzee, email sent to Marion Webber, 17 June 2021.
Mariota Muller, document sent via email to Marion Webber, 18 June 2021.
Tertius Louw, email to Marion Webber, 25 January 2022.

Index of the performers referred to in the thesis

Barker, Oliver – Oliver Barker was a geologist who joined Blundell’s folk group the Balladeers.¹

Bashew, Roger – Roger Bashew was a bass player known for being part of the Afrikaans jazz group called Clari.² He studied a traditional jazz arranging course at the Berkeley College of Music.³

Bebbington, Brian – Brian Bebbington was a folk singer originally from Manchester, England. He was a member of the Three Ravens Trio. He was known for playing ethnic folk songs and playing the 5-string banjo. He came to South Africa in 1966.⁴

Bryden, Gary – Gary Bryden was a SAFMA regional convenor in 1968 and he was a folk musician.⁵

Butler, Robert – Robert Butler was an actor and singer who studied drama at the University of Cape Town and performed in plays with the Performing Arts Council of the Transvaal (PACT).⁶

Campbell, Shelagh – Shelagh Campbell was a folk singer who performed with the Balladeers, and she took guitar lessons from Blundell’s daughter, Caroline Blundell.⁷

Casaloma Brothers – The Casaloma Brothers was a family singing group that consisted of two brothers and two cousins.⁸ The names of the members were Alton Maduna, Elphas Nkosi, Meshack Nglobo and Mathews Zwane.⁹ The group started performing in 1949 and they performed at social gatherings, weddings and churches.¹⁰

Cox, Vincent – Vincent Cox was a director and cameraman from Johannesburg. He worked with the African Film Productions company at Killarney, Johannesburg. In 1957 he

¹ Hidden Years Music Archive, Documentation Centre for Music, Stellenbosch University. Keith Blundell collection, Miscellaneous, Programme. *Song and Country programme* (1970), 8.

² M. Dobson, “Listen to the sound of the music-makers fest,” *Rand Daily Mail*, May 21, 1980, 10.

³ Dobson, “Listen to the sound,” 10.

⁴ Miller, “*The 60s folk scene in South Africa*,” 44.

⁵ Miller, “*The 60s folk scene in South Africa*,” 38.

⁶ “Robert Butler,” *Encyclopaedia of South African Theatre, Film, Media and Performance (ESAT)*, accessed July 6, 2021, https://esat.sun.ac.za/index.php/Robert_Butler.

⁷ Hidden Years Music Archive, Documentation Centre for Music, Stellenbosch University. Keith Blundell collection, Miscellaneous, Programme. *Song and Country programme* (1970), 8.

⁸ “Casaloma Brothers: a tribute to Elijah Nkwanyana,” accessed August 19, 2022.

https://www.flatinternational.org/template_volume.php?volume_id=221.

⁹ “Casaloma Brothers: a tribute to Elijah Nkwanyana.”

¹⁰ “Casaloma Brothers: a tribute to Elijah Nkwanyana.”

left Johannesburg for England to gain experience as a freelance cameraman and while there, he worked with Don Sharp on the movie *The Golden Disc*.¹¹

Du Toit, Marié – Marié du Toit was a South African actress known for playing in Afrikaans films such as *En die vonke spat* (1961).¹²

England, Maureen – Maureen England was an English folk singer who regularly performed in Johannesburg’s coffee bars. She also performed in the folk show *Folk Trouble*.¹³

Fefer, Zwi - Zwi Fefer was a theatre director and designer. Amongst others, he worked with Taubie Kushlick to design the set for the play *Jacques Brel is Alive and Well and Living in Paris*, and he has worked on productions including *Hansel and Gretel* and *Amahl and the Night Visitors*. He also performed and sung in plays such as *Kiss me Kate* and *Carmen*.¹⁴

Fenesey, Leandra – Leandra Fenesey (stage name Leandra Speedie) was a musician and actress who was part of the Indigo Three with Peggy Stapley and Julie Girdwood.¹⁵

Fisher, Michael – Michael Fisher is a South African actor and director. He was part of the Performing Arts Council of the Transvaal (PACT).¹⁶

Frangs, Irene – Irene Frangs was a musicologist in South Africa. She attended the St. Marys Waverly school in Johannesburg and after school went to Cape Town to study music at the University of Cape Town.¹⁷ She performed at the Troubadour in mid-1960s.¹⁸ She became a well-known singer in the folk music arena and worked as a vocal coach for performers such as Des Lindberg.¹⁹ She was part of the founding of the South African Folk Music Association (SAFMA) in 1966, and one of the few women that served in SAFMA.

Fraser, Jane – Jane Fraser was a contestant at the first folk singing competition in 1967 but was more well-known for her work as a journalist at the *Rand Daily Mail*.²⁰

¹¹ *Rand Daily Mail*, November 11, 1957, “She poked her nose into his business,” 11.

¹² *Rand Daily Mail*, August 4, 1961, “She will star in ‘En die vonke spat’,” 12.

¹³ R. Daniel, “Wistful waif of folksong,” *Rand Daily Mail*, May 5, 1971, 15.

¹⁴ “Zwi Fefer,” *Encyclopaedia of South African Theatre, Film, Media and Performance (ESAT)*, accessed July 6, 2021, https://esat.sun.ac.za/index.php/Zwi_Fefer.

¹⁵ *Rand Daily Mail*, June 16, 1978, “Mood Indigo,” 9.

¹⁶ “Michael Fisher”, *Encyclopaedia of South African Theatre, Film, Media and Performance (ESAT)*, accessed July 6, 2021, https://esat.sun.ac.za/index.php/Michael_Fisher.

¹⁷ “Irene Frangs,” *Encyclopaedia of South African Theatre, Film, Media and Performance (ESAT)*, accessed January 14, 2022, https://esat.sun.ac.za/index.php/Irene_Frangs.

¹⁸ D. Lindberg, “Tribute: Irene Frangs,” accessed January 14, 2022, https://www.artlink.co.za/news_article.htm?contentID=21327.

¹⁹ Lindberg, “Tribute: Irene Frangs.”

²⁰ Staff reporter, “Meet the Mail... Jane Fraser,” *Rand Daily Mail*, November 15, 1976, 3.

Glover, Clive – Clive Glover was a South African folk musician who performed at the Troubadour. He was a good friend of Des and Dawn Lindberg.²¹

Gluckman, Leon – Leon Gluckman was an actor, director and producer who produced plays in South Africa until 1964 when restrictions were placed on his work because of the apartheid system. He was known for working with Taubi Kushlick on plays such as *Waiting for Godot*.²²

Henkel, Peter – Peter Henkel was a South African director known for directing the film *Three bullets for a long gun*.²³ He also worked as an editor on the films *Die Kandidaat* and *Katrina* produced by Emil Nofal.²⁴

Kongos, Johnny – Johnny Kongos was a South African folk singer and guitar player. He played in the band, G-men, who sold albums worldwide.²⁵

Lascelles, Kendrew – Kendrew Lascelles was an actor, musician, mime, writer and comedian born in 1935 and he moved to the USA in 1960.²⁶

Lawrence, Ian – Ian Lawrence was a modern dancer, a cabaret singer, choreographer and actor who became interested in folk music.²⁷ He performed regularly at the Nite Beat and the Troubadour club, and later partnered with Ritchie Morris to form a folk duo.²⁸

Le Roux, Peter – Peter le Roux was a South African folk musician who performed at the Troubadour with Nick Taylor.²⁹

Le Roux, Val – Val le Roux worked as the secretary of SAFMA. She was married to Peter le Roux (see entry above).³⁰

Linder, Annabel – Annabel Linder was an actress, comedian and singer based in South Africa. She became well-known for her radio career in the country and for being part of the Performing Arts Council of the Transvaal (PACT).³¹

²¹ Lindberg, *Every Day is an Opening Night*, 49-50.

²² “Leon Gluckman,” *Encyclopaedia of South African Theatre, Film, Media and Performance (ESAT)*, accessed February 2, 2022, https://esat.sun.ac.za/index.php/Leon_Gluckman.

²³ *Rand Daily Mail*, May 13, 1971, “Ham and Tortillas,” 10.

²⁴ R. Daniel, “Legendary outlaw on the screen,” *Rand Daily Mail*, May 13, 1970, 14.

²⁵ Lindberg, *Every Day is an Opening Night*, 137.

²⁶ “Kendrew Lascelles,” *Encyclopaedia of South African Theatre, Film, Media and Performance (ESAT)*, accessed July 6, 2021, https://esat.sun.ac.za/index.php/Kendrew_Lascelles.

²⁷ Hidden Years Music Archive. Keith Blundell collection, Scrapbook, 51. Programme. “*Lions International folk festival*” programme (1967), 6.

²⁸ Hidden Years Music Archive. Programme, Keith Blundell collection, Scrapbook, 51. Programme. “*Lions International folk festival*” programme (1967), 6.

²⁹ Miller, *The 60s folk scene in South Africa*, 46.

³⁰ Hidden Years Music Archive, Documentation Centre for Music, Stellenbosch University. David Marks collection, Box nr. 374, Letter. Letter. SAFMA-members, 1970, “Dear member.”

³¹ “Annabel Linder,” *Encyclopaedia of South African Theatre, Film, Media and Performance (ESAT)*, accessed January 13, 2022, https://esat.sun.ac.za/index.php/Annabel_Linder.

Malombo – Malombo was a crossover band who performed worldwide from the mid-1960s to mid-1970s.³² The band was created by a self-taught guitarist named Philip Tabane, and the members of the band were Julian Bahula, Gabriel Thobejane and Abe Cindi.³³ All of these members came from the Mamelodi township.³⁴

McGovern, Mike – Mike McGovern was a South African actor and performer who was born in London and moved to South Africa when he performed in the London production of the American musical *The Pajama Game* in South Africa.³⁵

McHale, Chris – Chris McHale was a folk singer who was part Irish.³⁶ He performed in the National Folk Festivals of 1968 and 1969.³⁷

Meyer, Louis – Louis Meyer was a singer and banjo player who was part of Keith Blundell's group the Balladeers in 1966. He was known for playing the 5-string banjo.³⁸

Morris, Ritchie – Ritchie Morris is a Welsh born professional folk singer who started singing professionally in Britain and came to South Africa in 1954.³⁹ He later partnered with Ian Lawrence to form a folk duo.⁴⁰(see above)

Muller, Trevor – Trevor Muller was a bass player known for joining the all-girl group, Wow, in 1981.⁴¹

Newfield, Brenda – Brenda Newfield was a musician who was part of the folk group We Three with John Rice and Gary Bryden, and she was one of the few female singers to perform at the Troubadour.⁴²

Nofal, Emil – Emil Nofal was a South African producer known for the film *The Winners*.⁴³ He had his own production company called Emil Nofal Film Productions (Pty) Ltd, that focused on making feature and documentary films.⁴⁴

³² M. Andersson, *Music in the mix: The story of South African popular music*, p. 81.

³³ Andersson, *Music in the mix*, 158.

³⁴ L. Lambrechts, "The house where history ended up: Packing up the Ben Segal Collection," *Fontes Artis Musicae* 62, no. 3 (2015): 167.

³⁵ "Michael McGovern," *Encyclopaedia of South African Theatre, Film, Media and Performance (ESAT)*, accessed September 13, 2021, https://esat.sun.ac.za/index.php/Michael_McGovern.

³⁶ Hidden Years Music Archive, Documentation Centre for Music, Stellenbosch University. Keith Blundell collection, Miscellaneous, Programme. *Song and Country programme* (1970), 8.

³⁷ Hidden Years Music Archive. Keith Blundell collection, Miscellaneous, Programme. *Song and Country programme* (1970), 8.

³⁸ Miller, *The 60s folk scene in South Africa*, 44.

³⁹ Miller, *The 60s folk scene in South Africa*, 44.

⁴⁰ Hidden Years Music Archive. Keith Blundell collection, Scrapbook, 51. Programme. "Lions International folk festival" programme (1967), 6.

⁴¹ *Rand Daily Mail*, January 23, 1981, "Wow! It's a man!," 14.

⁴² Miller, *The 60s folk scene in South Africa*, 39.

⁴³ *Rand Daily Mail*, March 23, 1972, "Now Madeleine bounces back!," 2.

⁴⁴ *Rand Daily Mail*, May 20, 1970, "Films chief suspected secretary," 5; *Rand Daily Mail*, August 6, 1964, "Nofal His Own Boss," 8.

Oakley-Smith, John – John Oakley-Smith was folk musician, musical director and performer who was born in Zimbabwe in 1949 and came to South Africa to study at the University of Cape Town.⁴⁵

Perkle, Ray – Ray Perkle was a folk musician who performed with Colin and Muff Shapiro and was part of the group Uncle John’s Band.⁴⁶

Rabinowitz, Leon – Leon Rabinowitz was an attorney turned singer who was known for his regular performances at all folksong festivals in South Africa.⁴⁷

Ramsbottom, John – John Ramsbottom was an actor in South Africa who was known for performing in productions in Cape Town, such as *Macbeth*, *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* and *The Lower Depts*.⁴⁸

Rauch, Laurika – Laurika Rauch was a singer and songwriter known for her involvement in the Musiek-en-Liriek movement. She had early performances on television in 1976, performing her poems on the television show *Fyn Net van die Woord*.⁴⁹

Rautenbach, Jans – Jans Rautenbach was a South African screen writer and director who is known for directing South African films such as *Pappa Lap*, a film about a young Afrikaans girl trying to break out of the small world in which she grew up.⁵⁰ Rautenbach also had his own production company called Jans Rautenbach Productions.⁵¹

Reichman, Hilary – Hilary Reichman played Dorothy in the production *The Wizard of Oz*, directed by Kushlick. She was 16 years old at the time.⁵²

Rice, John – John Rice was a musician who performed at the Troubadour and was well-known for playing the bass guitar.⁵³

⁴⁵ “John Oakley-Smith,” *Encyclopaedia of South African Theatre, Film, Media and Performance (ESAT)*, accessed August 18, 2022, https://esat.sun.ac.za/index.php/John_Oakley-Smith.

⁴⁶ R. Daniel, “Excitement of a folk renaissance,” *Rand Daily Mail*, June 7, 1974, 5; The South African Broadcasting Network Archive (SABC Archive), audio recording of Song and Country radio show 1974, SONG AND COUNTRY Keith Blundell 19740726.

⁴⁷ Hidden Years Music Archive, Documentation Centre for Music, Stellenbosch. David Marks and 3rd Ear Records Collection, Digital sources, Programme. “Leon Rabinowitz,” *Sing out 1971 programme*.

⁴⁸ “John Ramsbottom,” *Encyclopaedia of South African Theatre, Film, Media and Performance (ESAT)*, accessed June 2, 2021, https://esat.sun.ac.za/index.php/John_Ramsbottom.

⁴⁹ “Laurika Rauch-biography,” accessed May 16, 2022, <https://laurikarauch.com/kort-biografie/>.

⁵⁰ R. Daniel, “A candid look at rural life,” *Rand Daily Mail*, December 28, 1970, 8.

⁵¹ *Rand Daily Mail*, July 29, 1970, “Film chief at R69 000 thrift inquiry,” 5.

⁵² *Rand Daily Mail*, December 15, 1964, 10.

⁵³ Miller, *The 60s folk scene in South Africa*, 38.

Rivera, Nina – Nina Rivera was a folk singer who performed with the Hootenanny, the children’s folk group, at the first National Folk Festival, and he also performed regularly at Folk clubs and festivals.⁵⁴

Roberts, Don – Don Roberts was a singer and was part of Keith Blundell’s amateur group the Balladeers.⁵⁵

Roberts, Rita – Rita Roberts was a professional singer in South Africa. She performed in the opera *Un ballo in maschera*.⁵⁶

Seeliger, John – John Seeliger was a musician stage performer who performed folk songs with Keith Blundell at the Troubadour.⁵⁷

Shamley, Colin – Colin Shamley was a contemporary folk singer in South Africa and he wrote, amongst others, the theme song for the movie *Katrina*.⁵⁸

Shaw, Pat – Pat Shaw was a well-known actor and producer in South Africa who was known for productions such as *The Sorcerer and Patience*.⁵⁹

Silver, Gordon – Gordon Silver was a South African musician and the brother of the folk musician, Dawn Lindberg.⁶⁰

Silver, John – John Silver was a guitarist in South Africa who regularly performed and toured with Des and Dawn Lindberg. John Silver was also Dawn Lindberg’s brother.⁶¹

Sklair, Peter – Peter Sklair was a folk musician who performed with the Blundell family for the album *The Younger Generation*. He is Susie Sklair’s sister and the child of the Jazz musician, Sam Sklair.⁶²

Sklair, Susie – Susie Sklair was a folk musician who performed with the Blundell family for the album *The Younger Generation*, and with Caroline and Julie Blundell in the band Just Us. She is Peter Sklair’s sister and the child of the Jazz musician, Sam Sklair.⁶³
(see above)

⁵⁴ Hidden Years Music Archive. Keith Blundell collection, Miscellaneous, Programme. *Song and Country programme* (1970), 8.

⁵⁵ Hidden Years Music Archive. Programme, Keith Blundell collection, Miscellaneous, Programme. *Song and Country programme* (1970), 8.

⁵⁶ *Rand Daily Mail*, August 29, 1962, “‘Masked ball’ was at midnight,” 8.

⁵⁷ Miller, *The 60s folk scene in South Africa*, 39.

⁵⁸ Lindberg, *Every Day is an Opening Night*, 47.

⁵⁹ *Rand Daily Mail*, April 15, 1959, “G. and S. early but lively,” 6.

⁶⁰ Lindberg: *Every Day is an Opening Night*, 58.

⁶¹ Lindberg: *Every Day is an Opening Night*, 66-67.

⁶² C. Blundell, “The Legacy, Where I come from,” accessed October 25, 2021, <https://carolineblundell.com/#!/the-legacy/>.

⁶³ Blundell, “The Legacy, Where I come from.”

Sonnenberg, Mike – Mike Sonnenberg was a folk musician who regularly performed at the Troubadour with Leon Rabinowitz.⁶⁴

Stewardson, Joe – Joe Stewardson was an English actor known for performing in productions organised by the Performing Arts Council of the Transvaal (PACT).⁶⁵ These include *Hamlet* (1964) and *The Lionel Touch* (1971).⁶⁶

Taylor, Nick – Nick Taylor was a South African folk singer from Cape Town who recorded more than 30 albums over his career. He was one of the first musicians who performed at the Troubadour in 1964.⁶⁷

The Fellows – The Fellows was a quartet folk group who performed at the National Folksong festivals in the late 1960s and early 1970s.⁶⁸

Tholet, Clem – Clem Tholet was a Rhodesian folk musician who performed regularly at the Troubadour in the mid-1960s.⁶⁹

Thompson, Barbara – Barbara Thompson was a folk musician from Canada who came to Johannesburg and learned to play the guitar in the Troubadour. She joined The Balladeers, and after a few years started to perform on her own. She became a well-known name in the folk music industry.⁷⁰

Van Nierop, John – John van Nierop was a folk singer who got well-known as a solo artist and for performing with his wife, Caroline Blundell.⁷¹

Van Nierop, Pat – Pat van Nierop was a British folk singer and was known for teaching folk singers guitar picking techniques such as the Claw Hammer.⁷²

Wessels, Louise – Louise Wessels was a professional singer in South Africa.⁷³

Whittle, Jimmy – Jimmy Whittle was a folk musician from Durban.⁷⁴

Williams, David – David Williams was a folk musician who was part of the folk group Flibbertigibbet in the 1970s before joining The Square Set.⁷⁵

⁶⁴ Lindberg, *Every Day is an Opening Night*, 46.

⁶⁵ *Rand Daily Mail*, November 26, 1969, “Best actor award for Stewardson,” 19.

⁶⁶ *Rand Daily Mail*, January 29, 1973, “Actor confirms long romance,” 7.

⁶⁷ Miller, *The 60s folk scene in South Africa*, 46.

⁶⁸ *Rand Daily Mail*, November 4, 1968, “Enjoyable folk concert,” 5.

⁶⁹ Lindberg, *Every Day is an Opening Night*, 50.

⁷⁰ “Barbara Thompson,” *Encyclopaedia of South African Theatre, Film, Media and Performance (ESAT)*, accessed January 13, 2022, https://esat.sun.ac.za/index.php/Barbara_Thompson.

⁷¹ R. Daniel, “Excitement of a folk renaissance,” *Rand Daily Mail*, June 7, 1974, 5.

⁷² Hidden Years Music Archive. Keith Blundell collection, Miscellaneous, Programme. *Song and Country programme* (1970), 8.

⁷³ *Rand Daily Mail*, May 7, 1963, “Tenor discovery in ‘Gipsy Baron’,” 6.

⁷⁴ Hidden Years Music Archive, Documentation Centre for Music, Stellenbosch University. Verlein ‘Ginger’ Seipp, interviewed by Dr. Lizabé Lambrechts, March 15, 2017.

⁷⁵ *Rand Daily Mail*, January 11, 1978, 6.

Wishnia, Joey – Joey Wishnia was a South African actor who performed with Keith Blundell in the play *Wake Up or It's a Helluva Funeral*.⁷⁶

⁷⁶ “Joey Wishnia,” *Encyclopaedia of South African Theatre, Film, Media and Performance (ESAT)*, accessed June 2, 2021, https://esat.sun.ac.za/index.php/Joey_Wishnia.