

**R171 Diploma in General Nursing**

**First Year**

**Foundations of Nursing Practice**

**Reader 1: History of Nursing in South Africa**



**Cecilia Makiwane** was born in 1880 at the MacFarlane Mission in the Victoria district of Alice in the [Eastern Cape](#). Her father was a teacher and a minister and so she was taught at home before she even entered school. She later attended the Lovedale Girl's School where she obtained a teacher's certificate.

In 1898, an experimental nurse's training school was opened for black nurses at the Lovedale Mission Hospital and in 1902 a three-year nursing course was introduced at Lovedale College. In 1903, Makiwane enrolled, even though she had her teacher's certificate.

On completion, she and the other student she enrolled with were sent to Butterworth Hospital for further training to prepare them for the Colonial Medical Council examination. She sat for her final examination for general nurses of the Colonial Medical Council on the 19 December 1907.

On the 7 January 1908, after passing her exams, Makiwane was registered as the first black professional nurse.

In 1912, Makiwane took part in what was probably the first [women's anti-pass campaign](#). In this campaign, a petition was signed by some 5000 black and coloured women in the [Free State](#) was sent to Louis Botha asking for the pass laws to be repealed.

She resumed work with the Lovedale Hospital and served the hospital for many years until she was granted long leave due to ill health.

After leaving Lovedale, she joined her sister, Majombozi, in Thaba 'Nchu where she died in 1919 at the age of 39. A statue of Cecilia Makiwane was erected by the nurses of South Africa at the Lovedale Hospital in 1977 and a hospital in Mdantsane Township in the Eastern Cape has been named after her.

In 2002 the government introduced the Cecilia Makiwane Nurse's Recognition Award for healthcare professionals in her honour.



**Professor Rachel Gumbi** made a name for herself when she was recalled from retirement in 2010 and turned around the then-troubled Prince Mshiyeni Memorial Hospital in Umlazi.

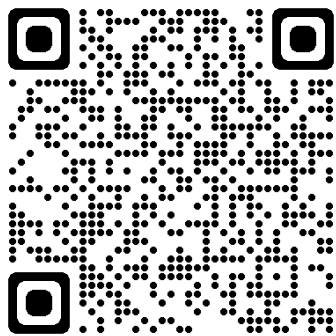
“This she did with aplomb, helping restore public confidence in the institution, which she led until her retirement in April 2015,” the Department of Health said. Gumbi became the first woman vice-chancellor at the University of Zululand in 2003.

This was after she had served as human resources development chief director in the national Department of Health between 1996 and 2003.

Between 1998 and 2000, Gumbi, who held several diplomas and degrees, served as a council member at the university. She started her academic career at the University of Zululand, where she worked as a lecturer and was then promoted to senior lecturer in the department of nursing science.

In 1988, she took the position of professor and head of the departments of health education and nursing science at the University of Transkei.

The department said Gumbi’s indomitable drive resulted in her establishing numerous rural and urban community empowerment initiatives. “She was one of the founding members in the University of Transkei Community Partnerships, resulting in four health centres with resource facilities for education, community empowerment and experiential learning for health



**Thembani Grace Mashaba** was the first professor and head of the University of Zululand Nursing Department. Before becoming an academic she had been a matron (nurse administrator) at many KwaZulu government hospitals. She was one of the first two Black South African nurses to be awarded a doctorate in nursing in South Africa, the degree being awarded by the University of South Africa in 1986.

What is worth noting is that Thembani Mashaba achieved academic and professional heights during the apartheid era. This means that she completed

her university education when few Blacks and, more specifically, women were undertaking further education.

Them bani Mashaba was greatly respected in the University of Zululand community for her significant contributions to nursing over a period of 16 years (1977-1994). During this time she served the university in a number of capacities. She was described by Dr Steve Edwards, Professor and Head of the Department of Psychology at the University of Zululand, as a role model, an outstanding leader and developer in her chosen academic profession' (Mhlongo, 1998).

These general biographical details indicate that Them bani Mashaba is a suitable candidate for having her significance as a nurse leader assessed by researchers. The biographical details outlined below should help to substantiate the accolades she has received and encourage further investigation into her contribution to nursing.

### **Family background**

Them bani Mashaba's life began in the small region of Magogo in Nquthu magisterial district (KwaZulu-Natal). She was born Them bani Grace Mbatha on October 17, 1932, the third in a family of four girls. Her sisters were the late Jabulile, Nomvula, and the late Doreen Twana. Her mother (Zikithi) died of heart failure just when Them bani began schooling.

Like most rural Zulu men, her father (Albany) worked away from home and the girls' grandparents brought them up. The grandfather was unemployed but assisted in the local Anglican church as a catechist. The Black people of Nquthu were generally poor, but a relative confessed that the lifestyle of the Mbatha family was better than that of the other families in the surrounding community.

### **Educational background**

Education was highly valued by the Mbathas. Them bani's father was a teacher and all her sisters were educated. Jabulile died during her training as a nurse at King Edward Nursing College, Nomvula was a teacher and Twana was a nursing science lecturer at the University of Zululand.

Them bani Mbatha started her primary education at Magogo Primary School in 1941. After passing standard four in 1944, she left Magogo School for Greytown Intermediate School where she studied in standards five and six, before going to Endlozana School for standard seven. From here she went to the Nazarene school at Bremsdorp in Swaziland for standards eight and nine. She then proceeded to Inkamana High School near Vryheid in Kwa-Zulu-Natal

where she completed her Matriculation, attaining the Joint Matriculation Board Certificate in 1950.

### **Entrance to the nursing profession**

After completing her high school education, Them bani decided to make nursing her career. Entrance into the nursing profession was not her first choice, but there were few options available to her. In her words: 'The only career avenues open to Black girls in the 1950s were teaching and nursing. I cannot say I loved nursing, but I had no other alternative.' (Mhlongo, 1998). She embarked upon nurse education and training in 1952 at McCords Hospital, Durban, in KwaZulu-Natal. Soon after acquiring the Certificate for General Nursing in 1955, she enrolled at King Edward VIII Hospital in Durban for midwifery training. It was at this stage that she aspired to becoming a nurse teacher, contrary to her earlier convictions. It would appear that her nursing college teachers were responsible for such a change of heart, for she commented: 'Miss Pinson and Mrs Brown, my midwifery tutors, made such a lasting impression on me that I began investigating ways of undertaking the tutor course.'

### **Nursing experience**

Them bani Mbatha worked as a nurse practitioner at Greytown Provincial Hospital before moving Edendale Hospital. Her marriage to Solomon 'Solly' Mashaba of Ladysmith in 1958 compelled her to go and work at Ladysmith Provincial Hospital, near her new home. Here she was allocated work in the operating theatre and worked there for nine years.

In 1969, Them bani Mashaba joined her husband in Zululand where he had found a job in Eshowe. Fortunately, for her, the matron of Edendale, was very understanding and supportive and encouraged Them bani to apply for a matron's post that was shortly to be available at Ngwelezana Hospital in Empangeni, about 70k from Eshowe. She was appointed to the job and began work there in February 1970. She thus became the first Black matron in KwaZulu-Natal to be entirely in charge of a hospital and the second in South Africa (second to Miss Harriet Shezi of Springs). However, because the hospital was not quite finished before she was due to take up the post she became matron at Empangeni Provincial Hospital for three months.

When Ngwelezana Hospital opened in February only medical, surgical, and paediatric wards were operational but, gradually, more wards were opened and the staff gradually increased. At this stage, Ngwelezana Hospital was regarded as a wing of Empangeni Provincial Hospital, so it depended on the latter for everything.

**Setting up a university department**

In May 1977 Them bani Mashaba joined the University of Zululand as a warden and completed a Bachelor of Nursing degree there in 1978. In 1981 she completed a BA Honours degree at the University of South Africa and was appointed lecturer and acting head of the department of nursing and charged with the responsibility of establishing and running the Department of Nursing Science in the Faculty of Arts. But in the same year, a Department of Nursing Science at the University of Zululand was established and she returned there as an educator.

**Becoming a nursing professor**

In 1987, Them bani Mashaba was made professor and head of the Department of Nursing Science at the University of Zululand, the first Black nurse to take up a post of this kind. In 1988, she became vice-dean of the Faculty of Arts another first for a Black female. She resigned in 1995 as head of department but continued to serve as professor.

**Professional activities**

Professor Mashaba distinguished herself professionally and was involved in a number of academic and community activities. For instance, she served on the Executive Committee of the Ulundi branch of the South African Nursing Association and later, in the early 1970s, as chairperson of the branch. She also served as chairperson of the KwaZulu-Natal Tutors' Discussion group from 1986 to 1989.

In an academic capacity, Professor Mashaba served on the committee for the Research and Documentation Centre of the University of Zululand from 1986 to 1990 and on the Joint Committee for the BA Degree from 1985 to 1996. She also served as the chairperson of the standing sub-committee to the Joint Committee for the BA Degree from 1985 to 1996.

From 1984 to 1996 she was a member of the Committee for University Heads of Departments of Nursing. In 1994 she became vice-president of the South African Nursing Council, and served on the executive committee of the same body. In the same year she was invited to participate in the international assessment of the basic nursing degree curriculum at a meeting held in Hong Kong.

**Community activities**

Professor Mashaba was actively involved in community work, serving on many committees, such as the St Mary's Hospital Board, Melmoth, from 1986 to 1989 and on many school and Anglican Church committees. In addition, she served from 1988 to 1989 on the committee investigating the feasibility of establishing community-based medical education at the

University of Zululand. She was a founder member of the international organisation Women Working for Change, which was launched at Coventry in the United Kingdom in 1989. She also served on Kwa-Zulu-Natal's regional institutional co-operation project, Health Education. Assignments and addresses outside South Africa

In 1992 Professor Mashaba visited British nurse training institutions in London and Sheffield and attended a course on innovative community development at the University of North Carolina, USA. She was also a member of the People-to-People nurses' delegation to the USA in 1983 and attended a Faculty fellowship development programme at the University of Illinois in Chicago, USA, in 1991. In addition, she attended a meeting of the World Health Organisation's collaborating centres for nursing development at Fernery Voltaire, France, and in 1992 attended the World Health Assembly in Geneva, Switzerland. In the same year she read a paper at the Primary Health International Congress in Sydney, Australia, and at the International Community Health Nursing Congress, at Edmonton, Canada, in 1993.

### **Honours**

Owing to her outstanding achievements, Professor Mashaba was recognised widely. She was listed in Fair Lady's WHO's WHO: Cape Town, in 1982 and was decorated in the USA as a Kentucky Colonel by the governor of Kentucky in 1983. In addition she was listed in the seventh and eighth editions of WHO'S WHO In the World: Chicago, in 1984 and in the WHO's WHO of Women: Cambridge, in 1985.

---



**Professor Charlotte Searle** is remembered as "the doyenne of nursing in South Africa" and as an administrator who brought great strength of character to bridging the divide between nursing and the male-dominated world of 20th-century academia. In the 1940s, she also defied the racist attitudes of her day by initiating training and promotion for black nurses. In 1941, she was responsible for sending the first Indian woman to train as a nurse, and in 1947 she promoted the first black nurse to the position of sister in a state hospital. In 1948, due to her efforts, black nurses were allowed to attend university courses for advanced professional education. Searle was born in the Eastern Cape in 1910. She graduated from Unisa with a BA in Social Science and went on to become Director of Nursing in the Transvaal Provincial Administration. In 1955, she approached the University of Pretoria (UP) to introduce a degree course for nursing training. This was an ongoing success,

and in 1967, UP appointed Searle as South Africa's first Professor of Nursing. She returned to Unisa in the 1970s to found the Department of Nursing Science. Charlotte Searle was born in Uitenhage and educated at Riebeek College. She undertook general nurse training at Kimberley Hospital and was registered as a midwife. In 1964, Searle was the first nurse in South Africa to obtain a doctorate for her thesis *The History of the Development of Nursing in South Africa, 1652-1960*.

She was a founder member of both the South African Nursing Council and the South African Nursing Association, of which she was president for 10 years. She wrote *The Definitive History of Nursing in South Africa*, and this and her other books have been the standard works for successive generations of nursing students for many years. She was responsible for sending the first Indian woman in South Africa to train as a nurse and in 1947, promoted the first African nurse to the position of sister in a state hospital. In 1955, she was responsible for the introduction of the first basic nursing degree courses in Africa. She became the first Professor of Nursing in South Africa in 1967 at the University of Pretoria. She was an Emeritus Professor of that university until her death.

The Charlotte Searle Museum is accommodated within the Department of Advanced Nursing Sciences at the University of South Africa. This museum portrays the development of the history of nursing in South Africa and was opened by Professor Searle on the 17<sup>th</sup> of June 1991 on the occasion of her 80th birthday. Sadly on the 21<sup>st</sup> of October in 2001, Professor Searle, doyenne of the South African nursing profession, passed away at the age of 91.

Searle received an honorary doctorate from the former University of Port Elizabeth in 1982, for being actively associated with the planned reorganization of the South African Nursing Association, giving many hours of her time, over and above the call of duty, and for her wisdom and guidance in order that the Association may more readily reach out to and serve all its members.

---





**Leana Ria Uys** was born on December 14, 1948 in Bloemfontein, South Africa. Daughter of Willem V.D. Ryst and Len Margaretha (Rupping) University.

She obtained her Bachelor Science Society in Psychology with honors, UOFS, Bloemfontein, 1973.

Master

Science Society in Psychology Nursing, UOFS, 1975.

Phd in Science Society Nursing, UOFS, 1980. Bachelor in Philosophy with honors, UOFS, 1985. Nurse supervisor of units, Groothoek Hospital, Zebediela,

1971-1972

**Career:**

senior lecturer department nursing, UOFS, Bloemfontein, South Africa, 1973-1982; professor department nursing, UOFS, Bloemfontein, 1983-1986; professor, head department nursing, U. Natal, since 1986. She was also a visiting lecturer Rush Presbyn St. Luke University, Chicago, 1985. Leana Ria Uys has been listed as a noteworthy nursing educator, researcher by Marquis Who's Who. Chair Mental Health Society, Bloemfontein, 1976-1986. Founding committee member National Alliance Mental Health, 1992. Treasurer South African Nursing Association, 1982-1986, vice president, 1986-1990. Secretary transitional nurses committee, 1994-1995. Member interim Nursing council, since 1995. Committee member Nursing Education Association, since 1993. Member Private Teaching and Research Institute for Nursing (director, founding member, Exploratio award 1994).

---





**Henrietta Stockdale** is remembered as a heroic founder figure of professional nursing in South Africa, having introduced the first nurse training programmes, established standards for this training, and led the campaign for the statutory registration of nurses. Stockdale's work led to South Africa becoming the first country to achieve a state registration scheme for nurses in the world through the 1891 Medical and Pharmacy Act, sanctioned by the Cape Colonial Government.

Stockdale was born on the 9 July 1847 at Gringley on the Hill, Nottinghamshire. Her father, Reverend Henry Stockdale, had been appointed to the nearby parish of Misterton with West Stockwith, Nottinghamshire, and the family moved to live in Misterton from 1850. Determined to become a missionary attached to an Anglican Mission, Stockdale joined Allan Webb, the then Bishop of Bloemfontein, South Africa, in response to his appeal for teachers and nurses to come and work with him in the Orange Free State.

In preparation for this role, Stockdale undertook nursing training from 1873 with the convent community of St John the Baptist, Clewer, situated between Windsor and Maidenhead. The sisterhood administered nursing services to St Andrew's Convalescent Hospital, Clewer. In 1874, Stockdale travelled with four nursing sisters to Bloemfontein where they formed the Community of St Michael and All Angels.



Du Toit's Pan Road, Kimberley, 1899

Credit: Wikimedia Commons  
Nursing services in South Africa were dominated by religious sisterhoods in the last three decades of the nineteenth century. The country had been colonised by Britain in the

eighteenth century and became a popular place for emigration from 1818, seeing a significant increase in emigration when diamonds were discovered in 1867. The rush to the settlement of Kimberley in 1871 by diggers and speculators, as well as service providers, shopkeepers,

barkeepers, hoteliers, and the like, resulted in a population of 30,000 living in crowded and insanitary conditions. Diseases were rife and the need for a public institution and a nursing service for the care of the population was realised in 1875 when two hospitals near Kimberley were erected; the Diggers Central Hospital with twenty beds, run by the committee of diggers, and the Carnarvon Provincial Hospital, with fourteen beds, established by the government. The two hospitals stood side by side in the same compound. In 1876 the services of the Sisterhood of St Michael and All Angels, Bloemfontein, were enlisted, and Stockdale was deployed to work in Kimberley.

Various versions of Stockdale's life exist, and dates and events are often conflated. In her own account, published after her death, which she had edited with Lady Elizabeth Villiers Loch, she outlines how she undertook district work and lived in the tents of the people in the camp from 1877. Recuperating later that year from typhoid fever, she took her vows as a nun and returned to England, spending time at University College Hospital, London, to gain additional nursing experience. She also trained as a midwife under a local doctor, prior to returning to Bloemfontein in 1878.

In 1879, she relocated permanently to Kimberley to take charge of the Carnarvon Hospital, as matron. There she initiated a two-year training programme for nurses, providing lectures and demonstrations for the women she recruited and those who successfully completed the course were awarded a certificate as a qualified nurse. The training was extended to three years by 1889. Attention was also paid by Stockdale to the moral and ethical behaviour of the pupil nurses, wishing them to be 'ladies and god-fearing women'. (Bhengi, 2016). After qualification these trained nurses took up positions as matrons in other hospitals across South Africa, establishing small, local schools of nursing attached to Anglican mission outposts. In 1887, Stockdale joined Ethel Gordon Fenwick's newly formed the British Nurses' Association (BNA), and the Kimberley nurses were some of the first qualified nurses to be entered onto the BNA volunteer register in 1890. She was also an Honorary member of the Matrons' Council of Great Britain and Ireland and the International Council of Nurses.

There can be no doubt that Stockdale made a significant contribution to nursing, however, it is important to consider the context and time frame in which her life's work took place. She was the first to introduce model professional training standards, for white South African nurses and provided the profession with its founding charter. The training was however, as Shula Marks (1994) notes, constructed on a model of patriarchal British imperialism, resulting in

subordination to an authoritarian medical profession and the reinforcement racial and class social hierarchies. Formal nursing training for black African women emerged later in South Africa and was segregated. The first black nurse to register in 1909 was Cecilia Makiwane who trained at the Victoria Hospital, Lovedale. Stockdale's life in many respects is only the beginning of a rich, albeit complex history, of South African nursing which was impacted by apartheid. Stockdale remained in post at the Carnarvon Hospital as matron until 1895, when the sisters were withdrawn and she returned to her order at Bloemfontein. There she established a midwifery training school and nursing agency on behalf of her religious order. She died in Bloemfontein on the 6 October 1911 aged 64 and was buried in Dutoitspan Cemetery. A memorial mass has been celebrated at Kimberley Hospital every year on the 6 October and since 2016 there has been a Henrietta Stockdale Memorial Lecture.

#### Sources

<https://www.bing.com/ck/a?!&&p=f023e99f19262607JmltdHM9MTcwNTg4MTYwMCZpZ3VpZD0zYjQxNGJhZi1IN2NhLTYzZDEtMjVkJkZS01ODYwZTY1NDYyNGlmaW5zaWQ9NTUxNA&pptn=3&ver=2&hsh=3&fclid=3b414baf-e7ca-63d1-25de-5860e654624b&psq=cecilia+makiwane+history&u=a1aHR0cHM6Ly93d3cuc2FoaXN0b3J5Lm9yZy56YS9wZW9wbGUvY2VjaWxpYS1tYWtpd2FuZQ&ntb=1>

<https://www.bing.com/ck/a?!&&p=7ab19654244b872eJmltdHM9MTcwNTg4MTYwMCZpZ3VpZD0zYjQxNGJhZi1IN2NhLTYzZDEtMjVkJkZS01ODYwZTY1NDYyNGlmaW5zaWQ9NTQ1OQ&pptn=3&ver=2&hsh=3&fclid=3b414baf-e7ca-63d1-25de-5860e654624b&psq=rachel+gumbi+history&u=a1aHR0cHM6Ly93d3cua3puaGVhbHRoLmdvdi56YS9tZWRpYXJlbGVhc2UvMjAxNS8yNjEyMjAxNS5wZGY&ntb=1>

<https://www.bing.com/ck/a?!&&p=d48f587941776d31JmltdHM9MTcwNTg4MTYwMCZpZ3VpZD0zYjQxNGJhZi1IN2NhLTYzZDEtMjVkJkZS01ODYwZTY1NDYyNGlmaW5zaWQ9NTI1NQ&pptn=3&ver=2&hsh=3&fclid=3b414baf-e7ca-63d1-25de-5860e654624b&psq=rachel+gumbi+history&u=a1aHR0cHM6Ly93d3cucHJlc3NyZWFKZXluY29tL3NvdXRoLWFMcmJjYS9zdW5kYXktdHJpYnVuZS1zb3V0aC1hZnJpY2EvMjAxNjAxMDMvMjg5NzI4Nzg5NjAx&ntb=1>

<https://www.bing.com/ck/a?!&&p=d48f587941776d31JmltdHM9MTcwNTg4MTYwMCZpZ3VpZD0zYjQxNGJhZi1IN2NhLTYzZDEtMjVkJkZS01ODYwZTY1NDYyNGlmaW5zaWQ9NTI1NQ&pptn=3&ver=2&hsh=3&fclid=3b414baf-e7ca-63d1-25de-5860e654624b&psq=rachel+gumbi+history&u=a1aHR0cHM6Ly93d3cucHJlc3NyZWFKZXluY29tL3NvdXRoLWFMcmJjYS9zdW5kYXktdHJpYnVuZS1zb3V0aC1hZnJpY2EvMjAxNjAxMDMvMjg5NzI4Nzg5NjAx&ntb=1>

<https://www.bing.com/ck/a?!&&p=d48f587941776d31JmltdHM9MTcwNTg4MTYwMCZpZ3VpZD0zYjQxNGJhZi1IN2NhLTYzZDEtMjVkJkZS01ODYwZTY1NDYyNGlmaW5zaWQ9NTI1NQ&pptn=3&ver=2&hsh=3&fclid=3b414baf-e7ca-63d1-25de-5860e654624b&psq=rachel+gumbi+history&u=a1aHR0cHM6Ly93d3cucHJlc3NyZWFKZXluY29tL3NvdXRoLWFMcmJjYS9zdW5kYXktdHJpYnVuZS1zb3V0aC1hZnJpY2EvMjAxNjAxMDMvMjg5NzI4Nzg5NjAx&ntb=1>

<https://www.bing.com/ck/a?!&&p=d48f587941776d31JmltdHM9MTcwNTg4MTYwMCZpZ3VpZD0zYjQxNGJhZi1IN2NhLTYzZDEtMjVkJkZS01ODYwZTY1NDYyNGlmaW5zaWQ9NTI1NQ&pptn=3&ver=2&hsh=3&fclid=3b414baf-e7ca-63d1-25de-5860e654624b&psq=rachel+gumbi+history&u=a1aHR0cHM6Ly93d3cucHJlc3NyZWFKZXluY29tL3NvdXRoLWFMcmJjYS9zdW5kYXktdHJpYnVuZS1zb3V0aC1hZnJpY2EvMjAxNjAxMDMvMjg5NzI4Nzg5NjAx&ntb=1>

Mhlongo, T., 2004. Profiling Black South African nurse pioneers: Promoting the Black biography. *NT Research*, 9(1), pp.65-72.

Orton, P., 2014. Tribute to Professor Leana Uys (18 November 1948 to 26 March 2014). *Occupational Health Southern Africa*, 20(3), p.26.