

Learning through an icon

President Nelson Mandela is turning 90. There are many activities to celebrate him through learning, writes Cornia Pretorius

● Visit South African History Online (Saho) at www.sahistory.org.za. Saho has created a new feature (see images in the centre of the page) to celebrate Nelson Mandela's 90th birthday on July 18 this year. Saho launched this project on June 26, a significant date in Mandela's life as this day was celebrated by the ANC and other liberation organisations as "Freedom Day" until the first democratic election in April 1994.

● Encourage your class to collect R20 and SMS birthday wishes to Mandela on his famous jail cell's number, 46664. You can read more about the Birthday Messages Campaign on www.nelsonmandela.org/index.php/news/article/birthday_

messages campaign, launched/. Profits will go towards all of Mandela's charitable organisations.

● Visit Liliesleaf Farm in Rivonia, Johannesburg. A farm of about 11ha, Liliesleaf was purchased in 1961 by the SACP to provide a meeting place. It was bought because, at the time, it was in a secluded and isolated area. On July 11 1963 members of the security police raided the farm after an anonymous tip-off that Walter Sisulu was hiding there. The consequences of the raid were disastrous for the internal struggle and the liberation movement. It led to the arrest of a number of key leaders, including Mandela, Sisulu, Raymond Mhlaba, Govan Mbeki, Arthur Goldreich, Ahmed Kathrada, Andrew Mlangeni, Denis Goldberg, Elias Motsoaledi, Harold Wolpe, James Kantor and Lionel Bernstein. These arrests led to the Rivonia Trial where eight ANC leaders were sentenced to life imprisonment.

Liliesleaf Farm has a learning centre that includes:

■ A resource centre with a collection of historical documents and literature. It gives academics, learners and local and international visitors access

to historical records of the liberation struggle; and

■ The Liberation Centre, which is the entry point and consists of a coffee and curio shop, an information and ticket reception, an auditorium and permanent and temporary exhibits. There is also an experiential and interactive exhibit.

There is a museum that consists of the Manor House, the Thatched Cottage, the Outhouse Buildings and the Water Tank Coal Bunker.

For information contact the Liliesleaf Trust on 011 803 7882 or visit www.liliesleaftrust.co.za.

Other 90th birthday events

Madiba's 90th birthday will be celebrated throughout the year through

events ranging from exhibitions, dialogues, book launches, 46664 concerts and the sixth annual Nelson Mandela Lecture.

In order of date, the events are:

● July: The launch of a Mandela Rhodes Foundation young leaders' facility in the Western Cape.

● August: Launch in Atlanta, United States, of a 15-city American tour of *A Portrait of Mandela*, a spectacular symphonic presentation staged by Msomi-Duhart Enterprises.

● August: The Malibongwe Dialogues, to celebrate the role of

women in society, will be launched as an annual event with the department of arts and culture.

● September 18: 46664 has been awarded the only slot reserved annually for a charity event at the Royal Albert Hall in London. A spectacular event is planned.

● November 30: The annual 46664 World Aids Day concert will be held on the Saturday before World Aids Day in Rio de Janeiro.

● The Nelson Mandela Institute for Education and Rural Development will announce a five-year developmental programme, with the department of education, to identify and support a network of rural school communities called the Mandela School Community Network. A book of poetry will be launched as a birthday gift to Mandela from the learners of the Eastern Cape.

● Under the banner of "Justice in Education in Our Lifetime", the Nelson Mandela Foundation and the Nelson Mandela Institute for Education and Rural Development will launch a series of public dialogue platforms inspired by Mandela's commitment to public education. — Nelson Mandela Foundation

