
GOVERNMENT NOTICE

DEPARTMENT OF ARTS AND CULTURE

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SOUTH AFRICAN HERITAGE RESOURCES AGENCY

DECLARATION OF THE GRAVES OF CHIEF ALBERT JOHN MVUMBI LUTHULI, DR JOHN LANGALIBALELE DUBE AND DR ALFRED BITINI XUMA

By virtue of the powers vested in the South African Heritage Resources Agency in terms of section 3 (2) (g) (IV) of the National Heritage Resources Act, 25 of 1999, SAHRA hereby declares the graves of Chief Albert John Mvumbi Luthuli, Dr John Langalibalele Dube and Dr Alfred Bitini Xuma as National Heritage Sites.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

1. Chief Albert John Mvumbi Luthuli

The remains of Chief Albert John Mvumbi Luthuli were interred in 1967 at the Churchyard of the United Congregational church of South Africa (UCCSA) in Groutville, Stanger in Kwazulu Natal. Chief Luthuli was born in Bulawayo in 1898. He was a statesman, deacon of the UCCSA church, a community leader and developer, a teacher and a visionary. He was approached by the elders of Groutville to take over the reins of Chieftainship in 1935 when the rights of traditional leaders were minimised. He challenged the Hertzog Native Bill of 1936 which sought to limit African traditional leaders by transforming them to agents of the state by restricting their rights of access to land. He joined the ANC in 1944 and was elected president of the provincial ANC in 1951. In 1952 he replaced Dr Moroka as president of the ANC. He presided over the 1952 Defiance Campaign a historical event that redefined South African resistance against apartheid. He did not only believe in non-racialism but believed that South Africa will be truly liberated when all who live in it see each other irrespective of the colour of their skin as brother and sister. As a result he was banned in 1955. His absence at the Kliptown Congress of the People meant that he only ratified the Freedom Charter. He was arrested in 1956 and stood trial in the infamous 1956 Treason Trial. His main accusation though not listed included amongst others sanctioning the Women's march that took place in 1956. In 1957 he was served with a further banning order limiting him to the magisterial district of Stanger, which prevented him from communicating with the outside world. Luthuli was the first African to receive the Nobel Peace Prize for peace in 1961 and his banning order was temporarily lifted allowing him to attend the ceremony in Oslo, Norway. He died mysteriously on 21 July 1967 after being allegedly being hit by a train while taking his usual daily walk. His teachings are well documented in a book he published that was banned during the years of apartheid entitled "Let My People Go".

2. Dr John Langalibalele Dube

The final resting home of Dr John Langalibalele Dube is at the Ohlange Institute, Inanda, Durban, KwaZulu- Natal.

Dube was born in Enanda in KwaZulu Natal in 1870. He was a political activist, an author and The first President of the ANC. He played an active role in the Bambatha rebellion by voicing his opinion in the manner Bambatha was treated.

His selfless contribution in the struggle for South Africa's liberation is captured by B.W. Vilakazi, a poet and author who wrote in 1946 that Dube was *"a great, if not the greatest, black man of the missionary epoch in South Africa"* and earlier by A.S. Vil-Nkomo who had written in the same vein that : *Dube was "one who comes once in many centuries - No one else in his education generation has accomplished so much with such meagre economic means. He was a scholar, gentleman, leader, farmer, teacher and politician"*

He studied at Oberlin College and was a promoter lecturing on the need for industrial education. In 1901 he acquired 200 acres of land in the Inanda district where he established the Zulu Christian Industrial School at Ohlange. He was the founder of a Zulu/English newspaper *Ilanga lase Natal* which articulated the urgent need for the emancipation of black people.

The establishment of Ohlange signified a general ferment in the Amakholwa community at the turn of the century. This ferment expressed itself in the independent churches and political organisations which were being formed.

In 1909 Dube was a member of the delegation to Britain to protest against the Act of Union and in 1912 he accepted the Presidency of the ANC. In 1912 Dube addressed a group of Africans in Zululand to explain the new movement (the ANC) and appeal for unity.

Dube was determined to prove and demonstrate to the world through the Ohlange Institute that the black man can run an educational institution without any white assistance based on the success that Ohlange proved to be.

As he witnessed the dramatic changes and erosion of the quality of life of Africans and the destruction of African independence as people were stripped of their dignity as freedom fighters and warriors into servitude, dispossessed of their land to become urban wage workers he articulated this in his newspaper. His selfless personal contribution to improve the lives and consciences African people about their rights cannot be understated.

3. Dr Alfred Bitini Xuma

Dr Xuma was buried in the so-called native section of the Brixton cemetery in Johannesburg in 1962. Dr Xuma was born in the Transkei in 1893.

Dr Xuma was first a teacher and then became a medical doctor in times where African medical doctors were a rarity. He became the president of the African National Congress in the 1940's.

He studied teaching at the Pietermaritzburg Training Institute and then taught at various schools in the Eastern Cape before leaving South Africa in 1913 to study medicine in the United States. Upon qualifying as a medical doctor, he decided to continue his studies in Britain, where he became the first Black South African to graduate with a Ph.D from the London School of Tropical Medicine. Xuma returned to South Africa in 1928 to practice as a physician in Johannesburg, but he soon became involved in political activities.

Xuma's freelance activities during the early 1930's revolved around the organization of opposition to the removal of Blacks from the Cape franchise and led to his election as Vice-President of the All-African Convention (AAC) in 1935 and as President of the ANC in 1940. Under his leadership, the ANC constitution was revised and the organization became more efficient and centralized, thus attracting a wider following.

In 1943, Xuma and the ANC's Atlantic Charter Committee produced a politically significant document entitled African Claims, which charted the path to racial equality in South Africa that they hoped would follow the conclusion of the Second World War. In 1946, Xuma travelled to New York as an unofficial delegate to the United Nations, where he lobbied successfully against the South African Government's plans to incorporate South West Africa (Namibia) into the Union. Dr Xuma made a significant contribution as a representative, voice and fighter for the equal rights of all South Africans. He died in 1962.
