

A3373 Ronald Ngilima Photographs, 1940s - 1960s

Approximately 5600 negatives

INTRODUCTION

The collection contains the photographic archive of Ronald Ngilima, dating from the late 1940s until he died tragically on the 13 March 1960. After his death his son Torrance continued photographing and adding his negatives to the collection for another 5 years.

In 1999, Ronald's grandson Farrell Ngilima, re-discovered the negatives which had been kept safely by Ronald's wife Sarah. He decided to create a foundation in order to promote his grandfather's legacy for the benefit of the Wattville community and to guarantee the long-term preservation of the original negatives. In 2012 the Ronald Ngilima Photographic Archive Foundation was finally conceptualised by Farrell Ngilima and Sophie Feyder.

Farrell Ngilima was joined by Sophie Feyder in 2008, who was at the time a visual researcher and PhD student from the Leiden University in the Netherlands. From 2010 the Ngilima collection became the object of her PhD study as part of a larger research project from the Leiden University and has been the subject of published journal articles. See also this website <http://africaphotography.org/collections/ronald-torrance-ngilima> (link not

COLLECTION

The images in the Ronald Ngilima collection consist of commissioned portraits and documentary photographs of the communities in the Benoni Old Location and the Wattville township. They depict people from the various Coloured, Indian and African communities in their homes, on the streets and in the studio that Ronald Ngilima had set

The individual images in the collection have remained largely undescribed, with the negatives stored in several boxes labelled A-Y and numbered RN001-RN5671.

The negatives were scanned at the Centre for Curating the Archives at the University of Cape Town, after which they were deposited at the Historical Papers Research Archive. There are no photographic prints of any of the negatives. The digital images are available to researchers in the Reading Room of Historical Papers.

The description of the box content makes use of a common terminology used in the racially divided South African context.

- A RN001-RN513
Including indoor and outdoor activities; in front of car; with turntable; photos of weight lifters; in front of Wilberforce Institute. Contains the negatives from "Sleeve" and "Blue
- B RN514-RN1087
Including couples; birthday and wedding functions; wedding couples; Master Abdullah Khan; SA police Non-European Training depot
- C RN1088-RN1389
Including religious outfits; at the train; wedding groups; display of car
- D RN1390-RN1431

- Including Sangoma; on motorbike
- E RN1432-1787
Including with horse; in hospital bed; boxing; in front of ambulance
- F RN1788-RN2060
Mainly Coloured community, including group of women in church attire; police man; women at piano; at kitchen stove;
- G RN2061-RN2298
Mainly Indian community including Indian attire; next to car; African male individuals
- H RN2299-RN2441
Large part babies and small children; images relating to a man called Mpongose, dated 6 January 1960
- I RN2442-RN2623
Large part women individuals
- J RN2624-RN2810
Mainly babies and small children
- K RN2811-RN2991
Mainly Coloured community, individuals, couples and groups;
- L RN2992-RN3126
Individuals and groups
- M RN3127-RN3238
Mainly Coloured and Indian communities, individuals and groups
- N RN3239-RN3373
Mainly Coloured community, individuals and groups
- O RN3374-RN3475
Individuals and groups, including man with sewing machine
- P RN3476-RN3619
Including mainly African nurses (with White nurse holding 2 African babies); women individuals, mainly Indian and Coloured communities
- Q RN3620-RN3750
Staff and student nurses, individuals and groups; African workers posing at entrance door to 'Dingler' Tobacco company
- R RN3751-RN3918
Wedding photos; couple reading 'Life' magazine; at the kitchen stove; girls reading 'Zonk' newspaper;
- S RN3919-RN4092
Women in church attire; boxing; with car of the 'Brandweek dept Benoni';
- T RN4093-RN4154
Images of workers and security guard from the 'Dingler' Tobacco company
- U RN4155-RN4265
Including Sangoma or traditional healer posing with child
- V RN4265-RN4345; RN5661-RN5671
Including lady at telephone; many holding record album 'Strobe';
- X RN4346-RN5194
15 rolls of negatives, including weddings; man with various musical instruments; baby pram; drinking Castle beer (clear label); church groups; Ngilima cover photo (RN4728, roll 10); body building; beauty contest (rolls 13, 14);
- Y RN5195-RN5671
Indian families; with horse; woman in baseball attire; woman Sangoma or traditional healer; group of body builders; at piano and with accordion; police man at depot; man with photo equipment. Item RN5364Y depicts a photographer with his equipment, who

Z VARIOUS

Z1 Unscanned negatives

Z2 4 photographs, unknown

Z3 3 membership cards of Ronald Ngilima, L. Dingle factory in Benoni, which entitled him to benefits by the Transvaal Tobacco Industry Medical Benefit Society, issued 1946, 1950,

Z4 Original Kodak paper boxes (contained in one large box)

Z5 Miscellenous items

Z6 Description of the Ronald Ngilima Photographic Archive
Stored with photographic collection

Z6.1 The Ronald Ngilima Photographic Archive Mission statement, 2012

Z6.2 "Ngilima & Son (& grandson): The story of an ambulant photographer and his archive" by Sopie Feyder, 2011

Z6.3 "Lounge photography and the politics of Township interiors: The representation of the Black South African home in the Ngilima Photographic Collection, East Rand, 1950s" by Sopie Feyder, published in Kronos, no. 38, 2012, copy of article

Z6.4 "A space of one's own: Studio photography and the making of Black urban femininities in the 1950s East Rand" by Sophie Feyder, published in Safundi: The journal of South African and American Studies, 2014, copy of article