

Zamakhosi Mpanza.
Inanda student, 1964-1969; librarian, 1974-1978.
Interviewed in Durban, 21 March 2009.

*To begin with, I found the article that you wrote about Inanda Seminary in 1994—
In Agenda, yes.*

Yes, that was very interesting. And you did some interviews for that.
Yes, I interviewed my friends.

*That's really cool—I'm probably going to cite from some of those interviews, they were really helpful.
Well, today, let's begin with discussing when and where you were born, what your maiden name was,
your family background...*

My name is Zamakhosi Mpanza, but I was Rosemond in school. So in the last days of Lavinia Scott, she remembered me as Rosemond, when I wrote to her, she said, hey, I remember you. But I was born in Eshowe, my parents, my grandfather—I lived with my grandparents, and he was a minister in the Lutheran Church, but had sent before a daughter who actually died in Inanda Seminary around 1934, my aunt—yeah, she died of natural causes, nothing dramatic—eh, but it was just always a known fact that I would go to Inanda Seminary, because so many of my aunts down the, you know, extended family line had gone to Inanda Seminary, but really, I also feel that I chose Inanda Seminary for myself, because in my last year of primary school I went to the Eshowe Training College because on a Saturday there was a basketball match there, and lo-and-behold, they were playing visitors from Inanda Seminary. I was just so impressed by those girls. They were so confident. They were so smart. They just looked like they owned the place; they didn't look like visitors at all. And those that were playing, they were just playing for their lives. And it was just a sight to behold—I was about twelve, thirteen, and I was just impressed, and I came home and said, 'You know what, I am going to Inanda Seminary next year.' So, that was that, and that was how I got to Inanda Seminary. Since getting to Inanda Seminary I have just been so grateful. Because, you know, I came—I came from a well-to-do family, my parents were sort of leaders in the community, my grandfather—they had lived here in Durban at the Mill Street Church, so they were really, um—we weren't, you know, country, you know—but still, just to find that when you went to Inanda Seminary, you were brought up another level. I had grown up with missionary kids, white missionary kids, so by the time I got to Inanda Seminary I spoke English, I read papers, because living with my grandparents, and my grandfather, who sort of lived in the office with books, I just had to read... So, I was just impressed. And what had happened, I think, was, at school, I just passed, because I could pass. Not at Inanda Seminary—before, you know—I don't remember my primary school days, because everything came easy to me. But when I got to Inanda Seminary, I learned that you have to read, you have to organize your life, you have to have time for being serious, and then time for just being happy and carefree, and then the quiet time. And I think I'm saying this, you'll have probably found it in the article I wrote, about the quiet time. It was, like, three hours on a Sunday afternoon, and we would all choose our little corners, some with a book, some just laying flat, and it made such a difference in our lives. We just learned to get in touch with ourselves. I mean, we didn't know that these things will mean something in later life, but it was just nice to sit and be quiet, and we felt really regrouped after that. And then there was the educational aspect of Inanda Seminary.

And what do you remember about the curriculum and the courses that you took?
I remember that I hated everything but History and English. [Laughs.] Everything!

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Who were teaching History and English at that time?

Um, Miss Kuhn had come from a Catholic-orientated school, I think they were half nuns or something like that, but she had come to Inanda Seminary with five or six novices.

So she was quite young.

Yeah, and she taught History. It was just beautiful. Because Inanda Seminary allowed you to open your mouth and say something, just open your mouth and say something. And we learned a lot, because in the course of that freedom, that flexibility, we tested our ideas. And you tested also the ideas of your peers, who were not scared to tell you where to get off either... so in a sense you learned to be critical and to be criticized, that's what you got. You learned that other people had ideas that were different from yours, and it's okay. As long as you are still convinced of your side of the argument, stay with it, but when you have been convinced, it's okay to change sides too.

And what was the History curriculum—was it world history, or South African history?

No, it was world history—that's the difference between then and now. We knew about every corner of the globe. We did the geography of it, we did the history. We studied Hitler, Bismarck, Lenin, da da da, you know, all those people, and their contribution, especially to the World War... And then we also learned [American history], which stood me in good stead, because when I got to the United States and everybody in class would talk about the New Deal and the Marshall Plan, I knew exactly what they were talking about and where that came in. So, again, Inanda Seminary, if I were to characterize it, I think we felt like we were citizens of the world. Nothing could keep us back. Even though I doubt that in those years we really thought we would go far out into the world—apartheid in a way, always made it just about possible, not quite. You always felt like, you know what, I could be this and that and that, but then you'd, you know. First, it was the money. You knew that it would be very difficult to follow your dreams because of the money situation. And being black, you also felt like, oh no, there are too many wars that black people are fighting the world over. Because in 1968 when we were growing up, remember, in the United States—we were beginning to read actually about Angela Davis... the Black Panthers... and talking of reading, Inanda Seminary was a world of information. The only [African] school that had a school library, and we could get books. Books—we didn't understand about burning material. We had access to all sorts of information, and we used it well; we used it to enrich ourselves, to have those debates; we had Project Files, we used to cut up from the newspaper, and then when you had a project you could go in there, when you had a debate you could go quickly in there and refer. We got magazines regularly from all sorts of places—even the liberal institutions would send magazines and newspapers—the newspapers were mainstream, we got all, in English and Zulu. And the magazines—we got *Time*, *Newsweek*, we got, oh my goodness, I remember the magazine *Optima*, I just forget where it came from. You know, magazines that opened us up... That was the beauty of Inanda Seminary. And then there was just the social life on campus. As you have seen, for me, Inanda remains an oasis up to this day.

Yeah, and it's interesting, because you—let me double-check this—graduated in 1969?

Yes, I started in 1964.

It seems that a lot of women from when you went to school there have been very eager to talk to me and seem most involved with the school.

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Yes, I think at that time—I am worried right now about continuity at that school. Judy has taken the school again from the doldrums to where it was again. What happened last Saturday, two Saturdays ago [at the school's 140th anniversary celebration], was exactly—even the girls looked like people I know. They looked like people I grew up with; I could see myself in them. And that hasn't been happening for a long time. So we were at Inanda Seminary when it was a stable, well-run institution. So we were proud of it, we knew that we had a favoured place in life. We knew that we were privileged to be at Inanda Seminary, and we knew that we had to grab whatever was given to us with both hands; we really got that.

Mmm-hmm. You said that you enjoyed English as well. Was your English teacher Miss Cornell?
[Enthusiastically] Yes!

Yes, I've been in touch with her. She lives in Cape Town...

Tell her I still have troubles with my pronouns—he, she, he! Ehhe... I always had that problem... She encouraged a lot to me the love of reading, a lot. It was the only thing I could do and pass; it wasn't slogging. I enjoyed the literature, the poetry. I still have all my books in English and literature—but it was the only thing actually, until one day she said, 'Enough with English!'

Yeah, that's how I was in high school as well.
[Laughs.]

So as for social activities and extracurricular things—were there a lot of debates there and those sorts of things?

Yes—two of them stand out for me, even though I wasn't part of them. The one school was Kearsney Boys School, all-white, and we beat them! [Laughs]

What did you debate about?

It was usually a variety of topics—I can't remember, but debate was a big thing in South Africa in those days, in schools. You tested your mettle in those days—issues, and how to tackle them. Choose a side and think it through and present. Listen up and be ready to make you counterarguments. Those are the things that really stood us in good stead. We really felt when we got out to the world of work that we had been given a head start. We could hold our own, against anyone. It's a pity that we were growing up in a situation that was just loaded against us, you know, so we always had to limit our own aspirations. And throughout my life, I've been able to work in—not in the mainstream, but I've always worked... I went back to Inanda and was a librarian.

Oh, is it. And when was that?
1974 to 1978.

Did you replace Baba Zondi when he became principal?

Yeah. Because it was so natural—it was part of what I wanted to do, to go back to Inanda Seminary and give those girls as much as I got, in a good way. It was an opportunity and I took it.

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You went to University of Zululand after you graduated Inanda Seminary? It seems that most graduates of your generation did.

Because that was the only place. It was the only place you could go if you were Zulu. If you were Xhosa you went to Fort Hare. And if you were other than those two you went to Turfloop in the Northern Province.

So what was your experience in university? Did you feel overprepared? I heard from some other people that they felt high school had been more challenging.

You know, at the table where I was sitting [at the anniversary celebrations]—and I just wrote to Ma Aylard [wife of former principal Roger Aylard], she sent an email asking, ‘How was it, how was it, how was it?’... And I said, ‘Ma, it is surprising to me that up to today, forty years after, we still are smarting over the fact that we were so short-changed. We could have gone from Inanda Seminary straight to the world of work without spending our years of our lives and a lot of money for practically nothing. For the longest time I was just—and it was a bit inhibiting. I spent five or so years in the United States, and there was just so much to catch up to, just so I could have, you know, a meaningful contribution in class without always talking about apartheid. But there was very little I had read from books since—

When were you in the United States? Was this after you came back to Inanda? So in the 1980s?

Yeah, I was at the University of Massachusetts from 1985 to 1987, then I went to American U in Washington DC to 1991. Then I came home when there was this big change, and I thought I would finish my masters coursework here, but I never did.

So what were you studying in the United States?

I was studying for my masters in labour relations. I graduated and I went to U Mass and I was doing my Ph.D. in sociology, then I just came home and I never—when I came home I worked at the US consulate for seven years.

So that was in 1994?

That was 1992 to 1999.

And was that when Barbara Masekela was ambassador to the US?

No, that was later, after democratization—that’s why it was so impossible for me to concentrate on my studies, because there was this vibrancy in the country leading up to the elections, and I was right there, and this allowed me to be in the thick of things, otherwise I would have so suffered from reverse culture shock... When I was in the United States I had been an isiZulu instructor at the diplomatic training center in Virginia... Then I came here, and I went to the US Consulate just to greet my former student, and she said, ‘You know what, we are looking for someone,’ and I said, ‘Am I that someone?’... But I was a little too qualified for that, but because we had spent some time, he knew they would benefit from having someone like me... [She then discusses her work on Durban Youth Radio with Inanda alum Cynthia Mpati.]

When did she go to school there?

She was the class ahead. I guess, like you said, there is a core of people who are really interested in Inanda Seminary.

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And they all seem to be from your generation, for some reason. My dissertation is going to deal more with the history up to about 1985 than with the more recent history, but I haven't even been able to find people to talk to from that time.

You know why, and they won't come up—I have tried—when Inanda was having problems and we wanted a critical mass of girls, you know there is this thing—Committee of Ten, Committee of Ten—it really wasn't meant to remain a Committee of Ten. We were available, we were on the spot. I was still at the US Consulate and I could take the time. We were people that could take the time and could fight to defend the school. Then we wanted to expand the circle. Not many people were willing to expend the time, I am telling you. Some of them are pitching now, and we say, okay, okay, but really, when it wasn't clear what was going to happen, people didn't pitch. The people who are behind us went to Inanda Seminary when it was beginning to be unstable, which is sad, really, because Inanda Seminary could never have another Lavinia Scott, you know. And she was the only role model, really, who we all seemed to like, who we could fashion ourselves around, but she had put in a lot of work to be in that position.

She had been there for thirty years.

Yes, exactly, and she was firm, she had a vision, etc., etc. so other people that came in, there were a whole lot of egos, and those egos spilled over to children, because people rope in children to be on their side, that kind of thing. And so people who went to Inanda Seminary after know nothing but strife. They just felt that it was strife, and they were either on the inside or the outside looking in. They will tell you, you know, Inanda didn't do anything for me. Especially the class of 1982. I won't say much, but you know, 1982, 1983, 1984, just don't want anything to do with Inanda Seminary.

So when you came back as a librarian in the 1970s, how was the school different from when you were a student there?

It really wasn't very different. It was different in that we had a male principal. But Baba Zondi was married to Cybele Zondi and had been at Inanda Seminary for a long time as a husband, so he knew the ethos of the school, and that's it. He knew the ethos of the school. He may have been easy, and it was nice for us to have a man who was easy with us, but he did not change things in any big way. Before him there had been Roger Aylard, and [his wife] Darlene. And they, too, had kept—it was shifting every once and awhile from the rigidity of Lavinia Scott, but you know, that rigidity, she knew why she had to hold on. So, when I went back, it was still fine. Another group who were at Inanda Seminary last week, who look younger than us, I taught all of them. They were still teasing me about it—and I was there, I was young, I was fly, but they couldn't get away with anything, they couldn't get away with anything. But they were just telling us how much they admired us [herself and Esther Sangweni], how they admired our style. It was easy without the missionaries, you know, just to be ourselves—we liked dressing up, we were just being newly moneyed, it was the year of the mini and the hot pants, please! [Laughs] They were just telling me—Ndo, did you meet Ndo?

Yes, we're getting together to do an interview next week.

Yeah, that class, that group, are my products, and Esther's. And they really felt like we were there, we showed them that there's life, there's something you put in before that kind of life. There is maturity, you will grow up, there is a lot of fun, but you have to prepare for it, and

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you have to know the difference between fun in general and good clean fun, and we were for good clean fun. And they admired that, and we see they are fashioning themselves... That group there, they all went through us—with Esther Sangweni. Esther has been very active in Inanda—Committee of Ten, but she stayed on to do a lot of work.

Yes, I've talked to Esther Sangweni, and it seemed an amazing amount of work that went into revitalizing the school.

Mmm-hmm.

What was the student political climate like when you went there? I feel that by the 1970s there were some more formal student political groupings that fed into Black Consciousness groups.

Right. When we were there, like I said before, Inanda Seminary grew you into things—some of the things that happened, you were not aware of. Like you have to open your books and read, and study. Those are the things that I took for granted. Everyone knew that to shut me up they had to give me a book, because I had grown up with my grandparents. So a book was kind of like a babysitter really, I didn't know that you study and everything, and I just passed. But when I got to Inanda Seminary, I met girls from Johannesburg to begin with. And they were so worldly-wise about a whole lot of things, about life. I was so innocent; they were growing up from townships. I heard about divorce for the first time at Inanda Seminary when I was fourteen. I didn't know about divorce, and I didn't know that divorce was a traumatic thing. I shared a desk from a child who came from divorce, and all she did was cry, and I really didn't know what was happening, and I was sad for her. And as we were growing up, the person who told me about politics was actually Baleka [Mbetse], you know, the Deputy President. Her father also was a librarian. At Inanda Seminary, we got together because we sang.

I didn't know her father was a librarian.

Yes, at the University of Fort Hare. And I came from this background. And she was like, 'Ooh, the world is not an island like Inanda Seminary. There is a whole world out there and you are going to see what is happening. That made me wake up, kind of like, you know what? When we leave Inanda here we won't have all this perfection that we are having here. And then we started reading so much, so much about politics. But we were not active politicians. We just argued more. But then we had people like Miss Cornell, who were exposing us to things, you know—and Miss Cornell too was very activist in her approach, although we didn't know it, although we didn't know it, but you know, she too was like, 'There is a lot that's going to happen, are you ready for it?' She, I think, of all the teachers I remember, first she was worried because we were girls going out into the world of young men. I think that was troublesome to her, and also that we were leaving the protection of Inanda Seminary to go out there, and she wasn't sure we were really well-prepared. Looking back really I've always felt that she was trying so hard to instill the stillness that we would need going out—some of us got it. For instance, I think I got it by thinking, there is something I need to learn that is more than I know now. I need to take better care of myself now. When we left in 1969, we had 100% pass in matrics, and the following year there was 100% pass in matric. But when we were at university we were hearing that members had become very political, they were very political. And we were also being introduced just to our own politics at university. One of the people who was being mentioned a lot was Thoko Mbanjwa—she is now Thoko Mpumwana—she's, I think she's the deputy chair of the IEC. She ended up in

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exile. Gugu Khumalo—you would have met her at Inanda Seminary—she also ended up [in exile]—she was a year or two behind us. We were just hearing about that at university. But we were also being introduced to our own politics. So I don't know exactly what was happening there, but a number of them ended up in exile, from that group.

And from your cohort of students, were there many who went into exile as well?

Mmm-mm, no. Except for Baleka. No, none of us went, very few.

And then when you were back at the school in the mid-1970s, what were the students like politically then?

You know, they were not political at all. But by that time I think we all understood apartheid. We were very focused on one of the things that we did, and that I continued doing as a librarian, and which the girls also tell me was so good for them—on Thursdays we would have, kind of like, news and information at assembly. So I taught them to prepare the news and information of the week, and they would take turns presenting and informing the rest of the school. So at that time I remember we were all well-informed. We were reading about it. We were getting ready. Because nobody ever thought, you know, apartheid would end. But we were preparing ourselves, we were preparing to know how to maneuver, you know, and manipulate—we were not even going to manipulate the system, but we were going to survive the system, you know, we were going to survive the system, we were amassing a lot of personal weaponry—what do you know, what are you going to give when you get to the world out there? So by that time we understood apartheid, we understood its viciousness, but we also realized that the only way is to be educationally prepared. There was no activism at all in class. But, on the other hand, the staff were also more—for instance, there was Richard Duma, who taught history. As the staff we were very politically aware—and doing that to the kids, trying to get them to prepare themselves for the future, you know, in a kind of systematic way.

And what did you think of the all-girls environment? Did you think it was a good thing, or a bad thing? What were some of the aspects of that?

Just that we are a group of alma mater? Is that what you're asking?

No, just the fact that there weren't any boys that went to Inanda. Did you think that was a good thing, a bad thing?

It was such a good thing! And I think all of us at my time embraced the fact that there were no boys. Not for sexual reasons, not for—because it just made us be us. It made us do things that would ordinarily be done by—we felt like hey, we can manage this. And we would. And that was exactly what impressed me when those first girls in 1963, maybe 1962, came to our area in Eshowe. The boys were more scared of approaching them, you know what! And when they did the girls would just talk to them, you know, look them in the eye and talk to them, no flinching, nothing! That's exactly what attracted me to Inanda Seminary girls that first time. And it went on, it went on and on. We are a bunch of fun people. Fun girls. We mix so easily. Somehow being Inanda Seminary we never felt there was never something missing out because there were no boys. We used it to our advantage. And it seems like all of us did. At university, all my friends were boys. And I was able to tell them exactly what I wanted in our friendships. At university everybody would be like, 'This is not a party, where is Khosi? Let's go get Khosi,' and they would wait for me, and they would come for me, and

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they knew that if you come for me you will take me back. And I think they liked me more for that, until it got to a time and to a place that girls would be like, 'Tell me when we leave,' and I would say, 'No, no, you be responsible for yourself. If someone takes me they will take me back...' And I enjoyed boys so much. And they enjoyed me. Because I could say anything. I could express myself. I could tell them where to get off, you know. And I think we were just a breath of fresh air really. And then it was the boys at university who were, 'Sit down, tell us nicely. What did you do as girls at Inanda Seminary?' [Laughs]

[Laughs] What secret things were happening?

'What did you do?' And they were my best friends, and I really was scratching my head to give them some tidbit to put me in the inner circle, and I really didn't have anything to tell them. I said, 'You know what? I really have no dirt for you. I can't think of one thing.' Because even those who were disgraced and had to leave the school left because they went out with boys, you know. But they were trying to push me towards the lesbianism and stuff, and I'm truly thinking, 'I don't know one person who was disgraced because of that! I don't know any rumour about that!' What we had when we came in was—the relationships were mother-baby. That was what was the most important thing. So I had lots of babies when I was at Inanda Seminary, and I was someone else's baby, and some of them now, when I see them I say, 'Hey, ma!'

Was that structured by the school, or was that just the girls taking care of each other informally?

It was an informal thing. So I, yeah, I did disgrace—I did disappoint my best friends at university. They wanted some tidbits. And I would have, you know, I would have shared, you know, if I had something to share. I was scratching my head, and truly, I couldn't think of anything! I couldn't even think of a case that went ahead. And we were not allowed to sleep in two a bed. But there were times—you look at Phelps Hall, there was the open space, and it was cold. But we stayed there when we were first-years, and when you are a first-year you better stick to the rules, because there were prefects who were just waiting to devour you! And then there was Lavinia Scott, who took—Miss Scott was so hands-on. About everything, and she knew everything. So we didn't. And when we got to be Form Fours, and you know, Grades 11 and 12s, we did feel cold, but we would really just get together for warmth! And I would swear, 'Hey guys, I know nothing.'

That's really funny that you brought that up. A friend of mine asked me if, studying girls' schools, I've ever run into any stories of lesbianism.

And then we got to university, and we started mixing with other people, and—my friend, down on the South Coast, went to Mariannhill, which was a Catholic school. And they were telling us weird stories, I mean, weird stories. The way they used to bathe. She would go in, put a towel at the bottom, sponge, and wipe, and then they would put the towel on the top, and sponge, and I was like, 'What!' [Laughs] At Inanda Seminary we each had a basin and your own bedpan. So in the morning you're carrying your bedpan and you're carrying your basin, and all there is is cold water. And all you can think of is running in and soaping up; we would run naked to the bathroom, all you are thinking of is, 'Soap, soap, soap!' Really, when I was at Inanda, I don't even think it was things we spoke about. And my friends were saying, even the sisters at the school—one thing during Lavinia Scott's time was that there were no pets, there were no teachers' pets. None whatsoever. There was just one, but she is now the speaker, she is now married into the Luthuli family—Weli Luthuli—she used to be Weli

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Tshabalala then—she was just such an all-around—played with all her heart, studied, sang, did Campus Care like it was the only thing for the day that she needed to do. She was loving to us as kids, she still is—and she was just about the only person for whom Miss Scott had a soft heart. The day she was marked at school—you know, if you got a mark, you would have to go and cut the grass—you got three marks for speaking Zulu—can you imagine? That's so unfair! For speaking vernacular you got three marks, for leaving your panty, you know, we got marks for all those things. And that day she had been marked for the first time, and Miss Scott said, 'Hey, you're all excused,' and the whole school was excused simply because Weli had got a mark! [Laughs] And also there had been a school playing with us and she had scored so many, so we got excused that day... She was just astounding, the way she was all-around, really. She did everything with all her heart.

And what did you think of the religious aspect of the school? To what extent was Christian instruction involved when you were there?

I'll put it this way—what I liked about Inanda is that they would never cram anything down your throat. They would say, 'It is done this way, it is done that way, this is how we do it at the school, I don't know how you do it in your homes.' But also, religion was made to be meaningful today and here and now. It was just a part of life. Not a separate part of our lives, just part of our lives, just like the quiet time, just part of our lives. Nothing crammed down, nothing dramatic. And we were all able to take time for religion, no time for complaints, nothing. I think missionaries did a good job...

That's the general range of questions I wanted to ask—oh, there is one more—

One more question I want to raise is the question of trust. We were so trusted. Everyone just had so much confidence in us. So much so that some people who would not come forward and count themselves as Inanda girls are people who feel that they embarrassed themselves in the school, and I was surprised to find how many people—I don't know if it's good or bad. But, you know, people who were expelled from Inanda Seminary carry it to this day. And they don't acknowledge Inanda Seminary nor the last schools they matriculated from. And I have always felt like, I am so grateful... I wouldn't have been able to take this rudderlessness.

Were a lot of people expelled?

No, not in my time, just a few. But there was a big crisis where they went to play somewhere and the buses went to go, and they were not all there at the same time—did they drink? Well, we were all at Adams College—I didn't go, that's why I am so grateful because so many of them are my friends—but I don't think I would have [broken the rules]. I'm not naturally drawn into things—I mean, I laugh, and play, and scream, but I really don't go overboard about anything at all, up to know. Kind of like I draw the line... At university I had so much stuff to try and inhale, dagga, but I didn't. Because I am so fun in so many other ways, nobody ever pressed me to do things I didn't want to do. So those people—you see them here—'Inanda Seminary At Home? Don't tell me about Inanda Seminary.'

But there are so many people who do come to these events—it's really impressive.

Yeah. So are those who are not coming anymore, and we do want them to come. We want them to feel that they belong somewhere. It's nice for me, to have the sense of, go there and touch the ground and be reoriented and then go out again... The real roots and my orientation is at Inanda Seminary.

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Was there any career guidance at Inanda?

Yes, there was, oh my goodness—Carol Garn, has anyone mentioned her? Yeah, Carol Garn... She came in and was a maths teacher. I think she succeeded because I could add A and B by the time she was finished with me... In matric I just didn't do maths... but I now had to do home economics. I couldn't cook to save myself! And I had grown up with a grandmother who baked like a dream—all I can remember—because we lived in mission houses that had been built by white missionaries—Norwegian mission, Swedish mission. So when apartheid ended and removed whites, when the separation of races was at its highest, like 1956, black missionaries could go in.

This was at Eshowe—what were the mission stations called?

The Kwamunye mission. So I had to do home economics, eh... Inanda girls just have no domesticity, none whatsoever [laughs]. We would far sooner spend our day reading, or screaming and running around, or debating about some issue at the top of our voices.

And what is your profession now?

I don't know anymore. I've done so many varied things... I've been having a tough time now, because there is no order, there is no—we don't know really what they want for this country, how it's going to be done. So after 1999 I went to work on my own, just self-employed. I went into development, community development. But we should have aided service delivery a lot because there is so much to deal with, but we are not getting there... The men get the jobs, and they will subcontract us as women to do their jobs. If there is a presentation to be done, I am telling you, they wake me up now and tell me let's go to Maritzburg and make the presentation for us. One, I don't even know what they're talking about... But you try your damndest because they know if anyone can do it you can, but I'm telling you, the whole package is coming to them... Until one of them said, 'Khosi, you used to get so many interesting jobs. What happened?' I said, 'It's because, at that time, there was stability in the country. It was a white man's country, but they knew what they wanted to do. When they spoke to you, they could just hear, you know, in your tongue that you knew what you were talking about, and they can trust you to do it. I never in my life, ever, had to interview for a position. It was referral, referral all the time... And KwaZulu-Natal was kind of like, our area. But when things changed you found that your own education—this is what we are all complaining about—our own education has become a stumbling block. If you haven't been an activist you have no place; this is what it has come to. But in the days when I enjoyed all sorts of jobs—I started as a teacher-librarian, then I went on to something that was called SACHED—South African Committee for Higher Education. The patrons were Archbishop Desmond Tutu and a Roman Catholic pastor, that was the organization that actually got so many of us to go in droves to the United States. So what that was about was organizing classes for mature students going through Unisa. So I was coordinator for the bursary section of it, SACHED. It was a big organization, it existed in all the four regions at that time... By 1982 it had so grown that the Overseas Educational Council, they took droves and droves of South African students to the United States, and they planted us in all these institutions, and that is why we came back so many of us so highly educated. But in those days, when you went to Inanda Seminary you just got a job like that—all you need to do—qualifications, you put Inanda Seminary first, and everything else, even your [university] degree came next... And then from there I went to the University of Natal as a research

Zamakhosi Mpanza.
Inanda student, 1964-1969; librarian, 1974-1978.
Interviewed in Durban, 21 March 2009.

assistant, and I worked with Professor Jill Nattrass. I had come in just as a field worker and interpreter and such, and she was the one who recognized my talent... So I am published. And that too, when I applied to go to the United States... I understood the research enterprise... When I came back from the United States, I went to the US Consulate—after the Consulate I started my own enterprise—floundering, still floundering after all these years... I had been lecturing [in the Department of Social Work at UKZN]. But I simply stopped—I said, ‘I am not going to do it anymore,’ because the students today—I am from Inanda Seminary. I think—you know, they were crying to me, ‘You must understand, English is our second language’—wait a minute. English is my second language. You are Xhosa, you are Sotho, you are from the Francophone Africa... I can’t guess what you are all saying. Let’s use English! And you know that you have registered in an English-speaking institution... I think it’s getting worse by the year... But I’ve done a lot of varied things, just because I was at Inanda... Yeah, the trust at Inanda Seminary, never a lock on the door. And I also don’t remember a case—there was a case in my year, 1969, where they had checked, and there was nobody in the beds. They thought they had gone. But what had happened is they went into a classroom, put blankets on the windows, turned on the lights, and they were studying.

That’s pretty innocent.

But hey, it being Inanda, they made such a big deal of it!

... Addendum from an email, 22 March 2009:

‘Afterwards I realised that I had so rambled on and forgot to say the most important thing about Carol Garn. She introduced career/vocational counselling and was instrumental in accessing bursaries for many of us to continue to university. I am one of those who was awarded one by the ‘Race Relations...’ I forget their full name. We all still think of her very fondly, the last time I heard she was in Turkey, I do not know where she is now. She was originally from Denver Colorado.’