

Nelson Mandela Biography

<http://www.notablebiographies.com/Lo-Ma/Mandela-Nelson.html>

Born: 1918

Transkei, South Africa

South African president and political activist

Nelson Mandela is a South African leader who spent years in prison for opposing apartheid, the policy by which the races were separated and whites were given power over blacks in South Africa. Upon his release from prison, Mandela became the first president of a black-majority-ruled South Africa in which apartheid was officially ended. A symbol of hope for many, Mandela is also a former winner of the Nobel Peace Prize.

Youth and education

Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela was born in a small village in the southeastern region of South Africa called the Transkei. His father was chief of the village and a member of the royal family of the Thembu tribe, which spoke the Xhosa language. As a boy, Mandela grew up in the company of tribal elders and chiefs, which gave him a rich sense of African self-government and heritage, despite the cruel treatment of blacks in white-governed South Africa.

Mandela was also deeply influenced by his early education in Methodist church schools. The instruction he received there set Mandela on a path leading away from some African tribal traditions, such as an arranged marriage set up by a tribal elder, which he refused. After being expelled from Fort Hare University College in 1940 for leading a student strike, Mandela obtained a degree from Witwatersrand University. In 1942 he received a degree in law from the University of South Africa.

Joining the ANC

In 1944 Mandela joined the African National Congress (ANC), a South African political party. Since its founding, the ANC's main goal had been to work to improve conditions

and rights for people of color in South Africa. However, its fairly conservative stance had led some members to call for less timid measures. Mandela became one of the ANC's younger and more radical leaders as a member of the ANC's Youth League. He became president of the league in 1951.

The years between 1951 and 1960 were troubled times, both for South Africa and for the ANC. Younger antiapartheid activists (protesters), including Mandela, were coming to the view that nonviolent demonstrations against apartheid did not work, because they allowed the South African government to respond with violence against Africans. Although Mandela was ready to try every possible technique to destroy apartheid peacefully, he began to feel that nonviolent resistance would not change conditions in the end.

In 1952 Mandela's leadership of ANC protest activities led to a nine-month jail sentence. Later, in 1956, he was arrested with other ANC leaders for promoting resistance to South Africa's "pass laws" that prevented blacks from moving freely in the country. Mandela was charged with treason (a crime committed against one's country), but the charges against him and others collapsed in 1961. By this time, however, the South African government had outlawed the ANC. This move followed events at Sharpeville in 1960, when police fired on a crowd of unarmed protesters.

Sharpeville had made it clear that the days of nonviolent resistance were over. In 1961 antiapartheid leaders created a semi-underground (operating illegally) movement called the All-African National Action Council. Mandela was appointed its honorary secretary and later became head of Umkhonto weSizwe (the Spear of the Nation), a militant ANC organization which used sabotage (destruction of property and other tactics



Nelson Mandela.

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used to undermine the government) in its fight against apartheid.

Political prisoner

In 1962 Mandela was again arrested, this time for leaving South Africa illegally and for inciting strikes. He was sentenced to five years in jail. The following year he was tried with other leaders of Umkhonto weSizwe on a charge of high treason, following a government raid of the group's secret headquarters. Mandela was given a life sentence, which he began serving in the maximum security prison on South Africa's Robben Island.

During the twenty-seven years that Mandela spent in prison, his example of quiet suffering was just one of many pressures on South Africa's apartheid government. Public discussion of Mandela was illegal, and he was allowed few visitors. But as the years dragged on, he was increasingly viewed as a martyr (one who suffers for a cause) in South Africa and around the world, making him a symbol of international protests against apartheid.

In 1988 Mandela was hospitalized with an illness, and after his recovery he was returned to prison under somewhat less harsh conditions. By this time, the situation within South

Africa was becoming desperate for the ruling white powers. Protest had spread, and international pressures for the end of apartheid were increasing. More and more, South Africa was isolated as a racist state. It was against this backdrop that F. W. de Klerk (1936–), the president of South Africa, finally responded to the calls from around the world to release Mandela.

Freedom

On February 11, 1990, Mandela walked out of prison. He received joyful welcomes wherever he went around the world. In 1991 he assumed the presidency of the ANC, which had been given legal status again by the government.

Both Mandela and deKlerk realized that only a compromise between whites and blacks could prevent civil war in South Africa. As a result, in late 1991, a multiparty Convention for a Democratic South Africa met to establish a new, democratic government that gave people of all colors rights to determine the country's future. Mandela and deKlerk led the negotiations, and their efforts gained them the Nobel Peace Prize in 1993. In September 1992, the two leaders signed a document that created a freely elected constitutional assembly to draft a new constitution and to act as a transition government (a government that functions temporarily while a new government is being formed). On April 27, 1994, the first free elections open to all South African citizens were held. The ANC won over sixty-two percent of the popular vote, and Mandela was elected president.

Presidency and retirement

As president, Mandela worked to ease the dangerous political differences in his country and to build up the South African economy. To a remarkable degree he was successful in his aims. Mandela's skill at building compromise and his enormous personal authority helped him lead the transition to democracy. In an effort to help the country heal, he also backed the establishment of a Truth and Reconciliation Commission which offered amnesty (exemption from criminal prosecution) to those who had committed crimes during the apartheid era. This action helped to promote discussion about the country's history.

Mandela retired in June 1999, choosing not to challenge Thabo Mbeki, his vice president, in elections. Mbeki won the election for the ANC and was inaugurated as president on June 16, 1999. Mandela quickly took on the role of statesman after leaving office, acting that year as a mediator in the peace process in Burundi, where a civil war had led to the killing of thousands.

In late 2001, Mandela joined the outcry against terrorism when he expressed his support for the American bombing of Afghanistan after terrorist attacks against the United States on September 11, 2001. By January 2002, however, Mandela had modified his support somewhat after South African Muslims criticized him for appearing to be insensitive to the sufferings of the Afghan people. As quoted by the Associated Press, Mandela called his earlier remarks supporting the bombings an "overstatement" and urged caution against prematurely labeling Osama bin Laden, the man suspected of plotting the attacks, as a terrorist.

For More Information

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marriage, time, year <http://www.notablebiographies.com/Lo-Ma/Mandela-Nelson.html#ixzz1jB5CQwph>

Nelson Mandela Timeline

This History Timeline has been developed to provide a 'snapshot' of the famous people and events during this historical time period. Important dates in a fast, comprehensive, chronological, or date order providing an actual sequence of important past events which were of considerable significance to the famous people involved in this time period.

A full History Timeline...

Read on!

Short Biography of Nelson Mandela

Date of Birth: Born on July 18, 1918

Place of Birth : Eastern Cape of South Africa

Parents: Father - Gadla Henry Mphakanyiswa

Mother: Nosekeni Fanny

- **1918** July 18: Rolihlahla Dalibhunga Mandela is born a member of the Madiba clan. His tribal name, "Rolihalah," means "troublemaker." He is later given his English name, Nelson, by a teacher at his school
- **1919** His father is dispossessed of his land and money on the orders of a white magistrate
- **1927** His father dies. The acting chief of the Thembu clan, Jongintaba Dalindyebo becomes his guardian and ensures he receives an excellent education
- **1937** Moves to Healdtown attending the Wesleyan college in Fort Beaufort.

Fort Hare University: Studied for a B.A. and met his lifelong friend Oliver Tambo
- **1939** Asked to leave Fort Hare due to his involvement in a boycott of the Students' Representative Council against the university policies

Moves to Johannesburg to escape an arranged marriage and experiences the system of apartheid which forbade the black population to vote, travel without permission or own land

Worked as a guard at a mine and then clerk at a law firm

Completed his degree via a correspondence course at the University of South Africa

Studies Law at the University of Witwatersrand whilst living in Alexandra

- **1943** Joins the African National Congress (ANC) as an activist.
- **1944** Forms the Youth League of the ANC with Oliver Tambo and Walter Sisulu

Marries his first wife Evelyn Ntoko Mase. The couple had three children but the marriage breaks up in 1957
- **1948** South African government (Afrikaner-dominated National Party) limits the freedom of black Africans even more when the apartheid policy of racial segregation is introduced across the country
- **1952** Opens the first black legal firm in South Africa with fellow lawyer Oliver Tambo providing free or low-cost legal counsel to many blacks who would otherwise have been without legal representation.

Mandela was prominent in the ANC's 1952 Defiance Campaign
- **1955** Freedom Charter adopted at the Congress of the People calling for equal rights and a program of the anti-apartheid cause
- **1956** December 5: Accused of conspiring to overthrow the South African state by violent means with 155 other political activists and charged with high treason. The Treason Trial of 1956–61 follows and all were acquitted
- **1957** His marriage of 13 years to his first wife Evelyn Ntoko Mase breaks up
- **1958** Marries Nomzamo "Winnie" Madikizela, a social worker, and the couple have two children. Their marriage ended in separation in April 1992 and divorce in March 1996
- **1959** Parliament passes new laws extending racial segregation by creating separate homelands for major black groups in South Africa

The ANC loses most of its financial and militant support when members break away to form the Pan Africanist Congress (PAC) under Potlako Leballo and Robert Sobukwe
- **1960** Sharpeville Massacre: Police kill 69 peaceful protestors and the ANC is banned

Mandela goes into hiding and forms an underground military group with armed resistance
- **1961** Issues a call to arms and becomes the ANC leader of the newly formed Umkhontoat guerrilla movement at the All-In African Conference
- **1962** August 5: Arrested after living on the run for seventeen months and was imprisoned in the Johannesburg Fort.

25 October 25: Nelson Mandela was sentenced to five years in prison but again goes on the

run

- **1964** June 12: Captured and convicted of sabotage and treason and sentenced to life imprisonment at the age of 46, initially on Robben island where he would be kept for 18 years
- **1965** Rhodesia gains its independence and only whites are represented in the new government
- **1968** His mother dies and his eldest son is killed in a car crash but he not allowed to attend either of the funerals
- **1974** Rhodesia expelled from united nations due to the policy of apartheid
- **1976** Over 600 students killed in protests at Soweto and Sharpeville
- **1977** Steve Biko, the leader of the protests, is killed whilst in police custody.
- **1980** The exiled Oliver Tambo launches an international campaign for the release of his friend
Zimbabwe gains its independence
- **1983** The government allows farmers to re-arm and protect themselves from black dissidents.
- **1984** Government sources state that declared that since 1983 black dissidents have murdered 120, mutilated 25, raped 47 and committed 284 robberies
- **1986** Sanctions against South Africa tightened costing millions in revenue
- **1988** Amnesty is announced for all dissidents - 122 surrender.
- **1990** February 11: Nelson Mandela is released from prison after 27 years
President De Klerk lifts the ban on the African National Congress (ANC)
The ANC and the white National Party begin talks on forming a multi-racial democracy for South Africa.
- **1991** Becomes President of the African National Congress (ANC)
The International Olympics Committee lift a 21 year ban on South African athletes competing in the Olympic Games.
- **1992** April: Separates from Winnie Mandela after she is convicted of kidnapping and being an accessory to assault.
- **1993** March: Divorces Winnie Mandela

Nelson Mandela and Mr de Klerk are awarded the Nobel Peace Prize

- **1994** April 26: Free Elections where black South Africans are allowed to vote for the first time. Nelson Mandela runs for President

The ANC won 252 of the 400 seats in the national assembly

May: Inaugurated as the first black president of South Africa. He appoints de Klerk as deputy president and forms a racially mixed Government of National Unity.
- **1995** South Africa hosts the 1995 Rugby World Cup and South Africa wins. Nelson Mandela wears a Springbok shirt when he presents the trophy to Afrikaner captain Francois Pienaar. This gesture was seen as a major step in the reconciliation of white and black South Africans.
- **1998** Marries Graca Machel, the widow of the former president of Mozambique, on his 80th birthday.

Tour of Canada
- **1999** Relinquishes presidency in favor of Thabo Mbeki, who was nominated ANC president in 1997.

Toured the world as a global statesman
- **2000** Appointed as mediator in the civil war in Burundi
- **2001** Nelson Mandela was diagnosed and treated for prostate cancer with radiation

Made an honorary Canadian citizen
- **2003** Attacked the foreign policy of the George W. Bush

Later that same year, he lent his support to the 46664 AIDS fundraising campaign. The initiative was named after his prison number
- **2004** June: Nelson Mandela announced that he would be retiring from public life at the age of 85

July: Flew to Bangkok to speak at the XV International AIDS Conference.

23 July: Johannesburg bestowed its highest honour by granting Nelson Mandela the freedom of the city
- **2005** 6 January: His son, Makgatho Mandela died of AIDS



Biography of Nelson Mandela



Nelson Mandelas.com

Former South African President's Journey to Civil Rights Leader

“For to be free is not merely to cast off one's chains, but to live in a way that respects and enhances the freedom of others.

The life of Nelson Mandela is without a doubt a fascinating one. Fewer men in history have done so much in the name of equality, freedom and peace. Nearly every nation in the world is interested in the biography of Nelson Mandela. The Nelson Mandela biography is sought everywhere. This is a man who transcends all languages. His biography exists virtually everywhere and in every language. He was, and is, a powerful and peaceful man. So where does the Nelson Mandela story begin?

In the small village of Mvezo, in the Transkei territories of South Africa, the Nelson Mandela bio began on July 18, 1918. He was not born with the name Nelson, but with his African name Rolihlahla, which literally means –pulling the branch of a tree, or in it's colloquial sense 'troublemaker' (It seems Rolihlahla Nelson Mandela certainly lived up to his given name, but in the best of ways).

No Nelson Mandela history would be complete without knowing who his parents were. His father was Henry Mqadla Mandela. Mqadla was one of the main councillors to the acting chief of the Thembu tribe. The Mandela name itself comes from one of the royal's in the Thembu tribe on Nelson's grandfather's side. Due to his grandmother's position though, that branch of the family was unable to succeed the throne. His mother was Nonqaphi Nosekeni. She was Mqadla's third wife. (Interestingly the famous Nelson Mandela has also had three wives).

Rolihlahla's father died when the boy was nine years old (from tuberculosis). The Mandela biography continues with the young Mandela coming under the guardianship of Jongintaba Dalindyebo, who was regent and an heir to the Thembu throne.

Rolihlahla Mandela was the first of his father's family to receive formal schooling. It was his school teacher Miss Mdingane who gave him the English name Nelson.

Nelson Mandela then went on to finish his Junior Certificate from a Wesleyan school and on to college where he studied for a Bachelor of Arts. Engaging in a boycott against university policies at the Fort Hare he was essentially kicked out and the Nelson Mandela story moved on.

Rejecting an arranged marriage from his guardian (regent Jongintaba) Manela Rohililaha Nelson escaped to Johannesburg. He completed his degree through correspondence and eventually became involved in the ANC (African National Council). From there it seems there was no looking back.

Once he became involved in the ANC there was no looking back in the Nelson Mandela life. Mandela and those who were with him took many actions against the injustice of apartheid. A system where one's color discriminated so totally against the basic laws of freedom was unthinkable (just as slavery) and yet it was a reality.

The Nelson Mandela bio continues with him becoming the leader of the African National Councils Umkhonto weSiswe - the armed wing. They organized protests and sabotages to bring to light the inequality that was happening throughout South Africa. While Mandela had worked hard to bring about understanding and change through peaceful methods, military and government targets were bombed (always with no intention of physical harm) to get the message across.

In 1962 Nelson Mandela was arrested and sent to prison. Many other ANC leaders were also arrested at this time. The biography of Nelson Mandela has much to show of the work he carried out during his imprisonment. He never gave up the struggle. He wrote many books and his

main place of imprisonment came to be known as a place of learning. A man of peace, the Nelson Mandela life involves nearly 27 years of imprisonment. Songs have been written, and praises sung. The call for freedom was heard around the world.

Under President de Klerk, Nelson Mandela was finally released from prison in 1990. He returned as the leader of the ANC and fought on for freedom. Along with deKlerk he was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1993.

Nelson Mandela 1994 is elected president of South Africa; A triumph for equality and a triumph for peace. The world rejoiced in finally seeing a wrong come right. This does not mean that there is total equality and peace in South Africa yet. What it does mean is that one man who stands firm can make a difference for millions. The Nelson Mandela story is one of hope for all mankind.

June 13, 2008

A Modern Hero

As he celebrates his 90th birthday, Nelson Mandela continues to be an inspiration

BY JESSIE MAXWELL

Every year on July 18, schoolchildren gather on Nelson **Mandela**'s doorstep to sing him "Happy Birthday." And every year, Mandela lights up with his famous, gentle smile and hugs each child, thanking him or her for the song. This year, Mandela enjoyed a low-key 90th birthday at his home in Qunu, South Africa. A group of grandchildren serenaded him with the birthday song. He was surrounded by gifts that had come in from around the world.

But Mandela didn't need a large celebration. He used the occasion to spread his messages of peace, freedom, equality and service. "There are many people in South Africa who are rich and who can share those riches with those not so fortunate," he said. He pointed out that although he is grateful to have been able to lead a long life, people who live in the poverty-stricken towns of South Africa are not as fortunate. "If you are poor, you are not likely to live long," he said.

Cry Freedom

South Africans call Mandela "Madiba," an honorary title adopted by older members of his clan. South Africans love and respect Mandela because he helped unite the nation after years of racism and segregation. He fought for racial equality and opposed a government policy called apartheid (a-par-tate). Apartheid means, "to keep apart."

Under **South Africa**'s apartheid laws, white people were separated physically and legally from non-white people. Oftentimes, this meant that non-whites couldn't go to school or get good jobs. Mandela fought hard to overthrow the unjust laws. He wanted South Africa to be a democratic nation that treated all of its citizens equally.

In 1944, Mandela co-founded the youth league of the African National Congress, a group that fought for equality. In 1962, he was arrested and sentenced to life in jail. But he continued to fight for what he believed in. He helped negotiate an end to apartheid laws from his jail cell.

Mandela was freed from prison in 1990 and elected president in South Africa's first fully representative democratic election in 1994. After serving a five-year term, Mandela stepped down as president. He has devoted himself to fighting illiteracy, poverty, and HIV/AIDS.

Birthday Festivities

Across South Africa, organizations hosted celebrations in Mandela's honor. At Drakenstein prison, where Mandela was imprisoned for a short time, prisoners created portraits to honor him. In Johannesburg, South Africa's largest city, children gathered at the Nelson Mandela Foundation, a charity that Mandela set up, which works to promote social justice. The children enjoyed a giant birthday cake.



DENIS FARRELL—AP

Students from Bertrams Junior School celebrated Mandela's birthday with a giant cake at the Nelson Mandela Foundation.

Madiba's Rules

TIME magazine's managing editor, Richard Stengel, is close friends with Mandela. In the 1990s, Stengel spent almost two years working with Mandela on his autobiography, Long Walk to Freedom. Last month, Stengel and his sons visited Mandela.

The July 21, 2008, issue of TIME features Mandela on its cover. Stengel shares "Madiba's Rules," which are eight lessons the world can learn from Mandela's extraordinary leadership style. One of the rules is "remember to smile." Today, the world smiles with Nelson Mandela. Happy Birthday, Madiba!

<http://www.timeforkids.com/TFK/kids/news/story/0,28277,1824424,00.html>