

# Oral Histories of Individuals Involved in Astronomy in South Africa: Advances with SALT



The Southern African Large Telescope  
(SALT), recent photo



Cape Royal Observatory,  
Cape of Good Hope,  
photo ca 1842

By Prof **Lerothodi Lapula Leeuw**, University of South Africa and Prof **Jarita Holbrook**, University of the Western Cape; **supported by the NRF**

**Advances with SALT**  
14 November 2018  
**Pretoria, South Africa**

# Content

- **Context for the Talk**  
and **the Oral Astronomy History Project in South Africa (SA)**
- **Selected Early History** of Astronomy in **SA or Cape of Good Hope**
- **Modern History** of Astronomy in SA
- **A Deep and Diversity of Individuals over Time and History** in SA
- **History, Development and Astronomy** in SA



# South African Astronomical Observatory, **SAAO, will be 200 years in 2020**



# Context I

- The Cape Royal Observatory or **South Africa Astronomical Observatory (SAAO)** will be **200 years in 2020**.
- Also, the Cape of Good Hope or **South Africa (SA)** will **celebrate its 100 year anniversary as an IAU member in 2020**, following the IAU centenary in 2019.
- The SA National Research Foundation (NRF) has this developed a **Roadmap for the History of Astronomy in South Africa**, in anticipation of **SAAO's 200 year anniversary in 2020**.

# Context II

- We are conducting **an oral history of astronomers to complement the historical celebrations of the institutions** and science relating to astronomy in SA
  - supported by the SA NRF
- **IAU GA 2024 coming to South Africa, *the first IAU GA in Africa***
- A Deep and Diversity of Individuals over Time and History in SA
- ***Opportunity to Explore In-Links of History, Development and Astronomy in SA and beyond***

# Oral History Goals and Plans

- Semi-structured Interviews / Conversations
- Digital **Video** and **Audio** Recorded
  - **Transcribed**, with the video and audio **archived**
- Approximately 1.5 (to 2+) hours
- At least 18 interviews a year for 2.5 years
- Online archive of > 45 interviews

# Oral History Target Interviewees

- Individuals Involved in Astronomy in S Africa
- Across
  - the country,
  - ages,
  - gender and race,
  - seniority (including directors, HoDs),
  - scope of work (observatories, academic, agencies)
  - time periods (*former and present*)

# Interview Protocol

- CV, Cited Works
- Identifications / Date / Location
- Spell Names, Embargos Allowed
- Background
- Education/Career
- Tastes
- Significant Work



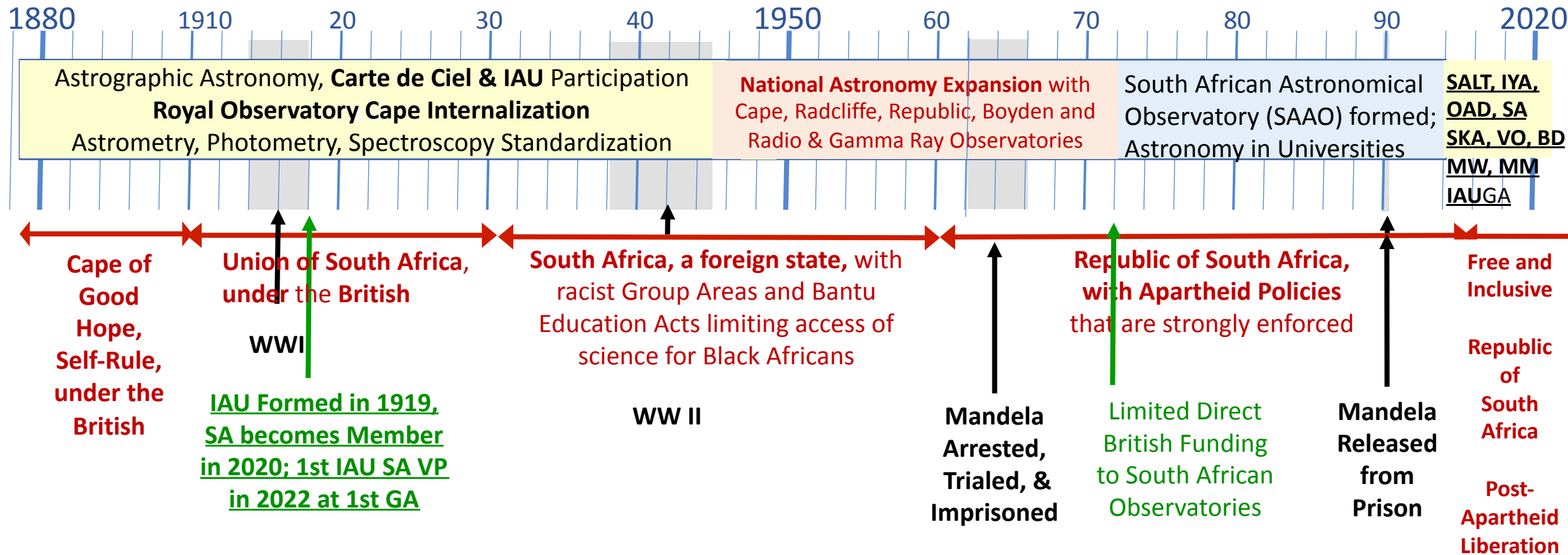
# Interview Protocol

- Funding
- Societies, particularly the **IAU**
- Life-work
- Huddles
- Religion
- South African Issues: Apartheid, Black Tax,
- Empowerment, Gender
- Current Issues : Sexual Harassment, Big Data, MW, MM
- Advice

# The Role of the IAU in SA Astronomy

by L Leeuw & J Holbrook 2018

## Timeline of Episodes in South African Astronomy



Major International and National Historical Events