



Mrs Kholekile Mthethwa
Director: Swaziland National Archives

1 March 2016

RE: SWAZILAND ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

Dear Mrs Mthethwa

The Swaziland Oral History Project was a University of the Witwatersrand research project set up by Philip Bonner and Carolyn Hamilton in the 1980s. It focussed on the precolonial history of Swaziland. When the project came to an end the Historical Papers Research Archive (HPRA) at Wits took custody of the various research products. These included audio materials, handwritten transcripts and typed summaries. In 2012 the HPRA digitised all of our analogue audio materials, including the Swaziland Oral History Project collection. In 2013 we provided a full copy of the digitised audio to the University of Swaziland.

In 2015 a new initiative, the Five Hundred Year Archive Project (FHYA), undertook the digitisation of a selection of the handwritten transcripts and all of the typed summaries. The FHYA will be providing the HPRA with copies of the materials it has digitised. It also paid an archivist to expand on the existing finding aid to the collection held at Wits.

The FHYA will further cover all the costs of making a full copy of all the material digitised thus far (audio files, handwritten transcripts and typed summaries), plus a copy of the finding aid, available for deposit at the Swaziland National Archives. As all of this material is already digitised, this can be expected to be achieved within the first half of 2016.

Should an opportunity arise in the future to digitise any of the remaining materials, the FHYA and the HPRA would wish to supply copies to the Swaziland National Archives. Similarly, should any further materials be collected as part of the Swaziland Oral History Project, the intention would be to supply digital copies to the Swaziland National Archives. The original researchers, the FHYA and the HPRA are committed to ensuring that this collection is fully shared with the Swaziland National Archives.

Yours sincerely

Michele Pickover

Principal Curator: Archives and Digital Library