

Jeanette Carlson (June 1929 - August 2020)

Jeanette Carlson was among the active and dedicated leaders of the Black Sash in its Transvaal Region, where she served as the Regional Chairperson from 1965 to 1967. Her annual regional reports published in the SASH magazine reflect her energy and the new ideas she brought to the region – not only plenty of action, but also initiatives in self-education, discussion groups and various campaigns.

She would have been a young woman when she joined – we do not have records of the exact date. When the Black Sash was formed in 1955 she would have been 26 years old. Her marriage to Joel Carlson, well-known human rights lawyer, made them a family committed to justice and active in politics. Jeanette was responsible for a group of new younger members in the mid-1960s, and establishing new branches.

Her successor as Regional Chair, Sheena Duncan, wrote:

“Jeanette Carlson’s enthusiastic and energetic leadership has brought about many things and laid the foundations for many more. The Region thrived during her years in the chair; we all felt her influence most keenly and found ourselves full of ideas and the eagerness to carry them out.”

When Joel Carlson left the country in 1971 under threat of being detained in terms of the draconian Terrorism Act, Jeanette and their four children followed a few months later. South Africa was the poorer for their departure.

Jeanette died in the USA on 18 August 2020, aged 91. An [article in the New York Times](#): records her activities there over the many years in which she and her husband lived far from the country of their birth.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/30/world/africa/jeanette-carlson-dead.html>