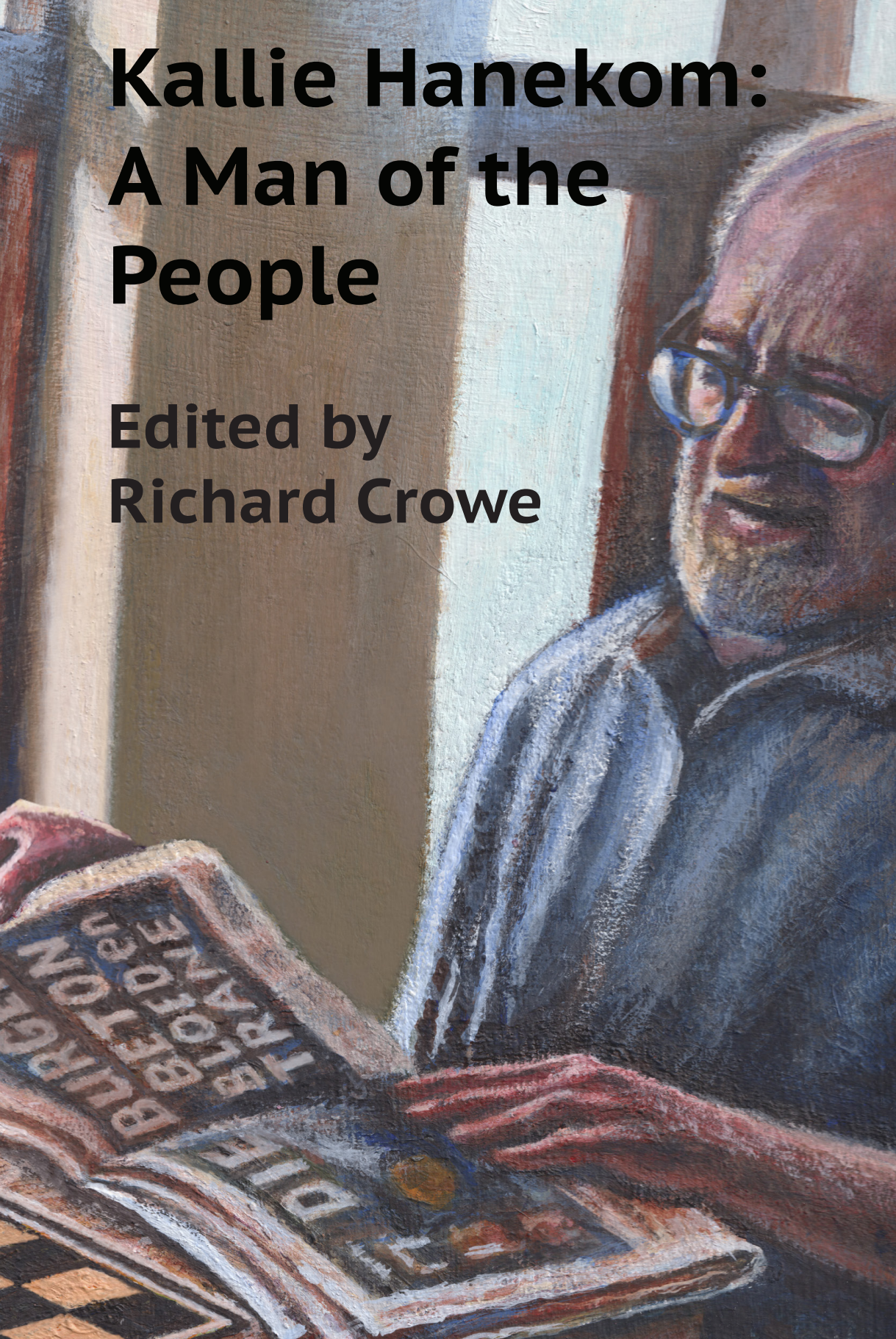
# Kallie Hanekom: A Man of the People

Edited by Richard Crowe



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# Editorial

*Hilary Regan*

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Kallie Hanekom died on August 9 2023 at Groote Schuur Hospital, in Cape Town, South Africa, at the age of seventy-three. This volume is devoted to his life and legacy with articles by his family, and others who knew. worked with and loved him over the years.

Kallie grew up in Catholic circles and was involved in Church based youth lay movements working for change in South Africa in the Apartheid era. He was a key leader in the NCFS (National Catholic Federation of Students) and the YCS (Young Christian Students movement). He participated at local, national and international levels in these movements as well as being a political activist within the ANC. It has been suggested by some that it was through Kallie, that the late Fr Albert Nolan OP was brought into contact with the ANC. Kallie used his network of contacts through the international Catholic student movement to bring money into South Africa and later Mozambique.

Thus, this volume brings together some historical information of the NCFS and the YCS in South Africa in the 1970s and also refers to other documents that have been written, most significantly the MA thesis of Tony Egan on the NCFS which is referenced to in Richard Crowe's Introduction. The volume also brings together the speeches by family and friends that were made at the memorial service held for Kalli on the 19th of August 2023 in Cape Town.

This series of articles would not have been possible without the agreement of Kallie's family for which we are most grateful and without the dedication of Richard Crowe, a long-time friend of Kallie's from involvement with the movements, who brought the volume together, undertook to make the painting which is on the front cover and also wrote the introduction. Thank you to all of them and thank

you to others who have given permission to have their contributions included here. Some of the pieces were given at a Memorial Service for Kallie after his death in Cape Town and others were written for this volume.

Hilary D Regan

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# Introduction

*Richard Crowe*

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There were few people more involved in social, theological, ideological, political or military aspects of the struggle against Apartheid than Kallie Hanekom. It will be impossible to encompass all Kallie's involvements and activities in this short collection of essays and tributes. However, each was written by someone who greatly appreciated what Kallie achieved in his life. It is hoped that these essays and tributes will present an overview of his life, and ultimately an assessment of his place in the greatest revolution in South African history.

He was a people-person who related easily to a broad spectrum of society: from those in the highest positions to homeless and destitute people who lived on the streets. He would sit down with both and recognise their equal value as human beings. He related to the person and not their social status. By taking an interest in people he brought out the best in them. He had an ability to engage with people and quickly discovered their problems and difficulties, and helped them however he could, not least by offering a friendly ear. He enjoyed the simple things in life, like going for walks, and socialising—but always inclusively—never allowing the divisions of Apartheid to intrude. And doing these simple things with Kallie was never dull because he had an infectious sense of humour and natural charisma. He was insightful, intelligent, and compassionate.

Kallie went to Stellenbosch University in 1970. This bastion of Afrikanerdom and Apartheid was an unlikely place to become an anti-Apartheid activist! He had a natural aversion to materialism and loved to interact with people—from these simple ingredients a revolutionary was made! And he was one of the best, because he did not seek a high position, or wealth, or power! It was while at