Sita Gandhi (1928-1999) was Mahatma Gandhi’s granddaughter. She wrote a memoir of her childhood in Phoenix Settlement, titled *Sita – Memoirs of Sita Gandhi* (2003).

These memoirs shed light on what it meant to be related to Gandhi. There were accusations that his descendants were, as Sita says, ‘basking in reflected glory’. Yet as Sita shows, being Gandhi’s granddaughter was not easy. Her book not only describes growing up at the Phoenix Settlement in the shadow of a strong man, but also discusses being an Indian woman in South Africa.

**Extract from *Sita - Memoirs of Sita Gandhi***

My grandfather’s farm, which was fifteen miles away from the city, and in those days around us were plantations of sugar cane fields. Over 100 acres of land was called Phoenix Settlement. It was the most beautiful piece of land, untouched by the then racial laws. It was a hard life for my parents. There were no proper roads to go into the city. If it rained there was mud all over and the little bridges would be over-run by the water and it was impossible to go anywhere.

...

I remember my life on the Settlement when I was five. We had a beautiful garden surrounding the house and in the middle of it was a very tall coconut tree which was planted by my grandfather. A little way from the house was a grove of Mango trees and they bore every type of mangoes and these were also planted by my grandfather. … There were a few little houses surrounding our house where the press and farm workers stayed with their families and my father encouraged all to grow gardens. We had a beautiful white horse and often sat on him. We also had five or six cows and calves and dogs and cats. My father loved animals and so I grew up loving them too.
Bibliography


**Author Map (Phoenix Settlement)**