

Jeanette, 11, on the beach
with her brother, Rob

My beach moment

Sultry summers, first loves – and a summer holiday in Port Elizabeth. Seven celebrities tell Chereen Gibson about some of their happiest holidays

“I felt beautiful and powerful and capable of anything”

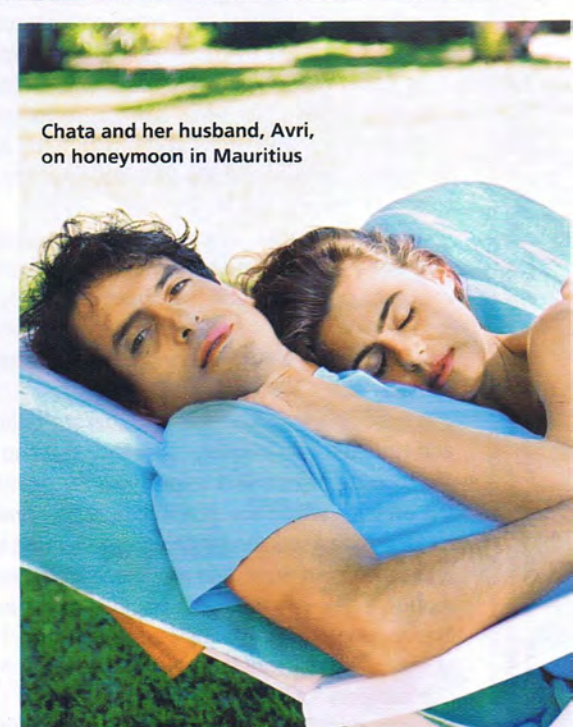


JEANETTE LORING, 51, lives in Beaulieu with her husband, Richard Loring, and their daughters, Samantha, 23, and Natasha, 21.

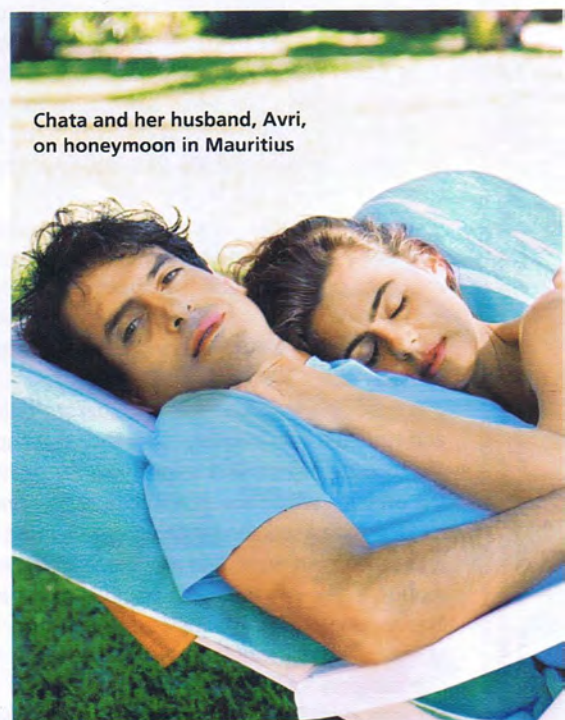
This photo of my brother, Rob, and me was taken in Port Elizabeth when I was 11 years old. I played with passionate energy – fearlessly diving from the wall of the tidal pool, challenging myself to somersaults and building sandcastles. My most vivid memory is of entering a beauty contest without telling my family. Still a child in my ballet leotard, I didn't stand a chance against gorgeous,

busty girls in bikinis! I later mentioned the contest to my mom, and she said, “Oh my darling, you should've entered – you're so beautiful!” I shyly told her that I had, but hadn't been placed. I so clearly remember my mom's arms around me, telling me how proud she was of me for being so courageous. In those important few moments, my mom, Mona Stuart, made me feel beautiful and powerful and capable of anything.

My advice to that little girl? Don't be afraid to stand up to authority, but do so with respect and dignity – you have a right to be heard. Take care with all your choices – you are where you are as a result of decisions you made in the past.



Chata and her husband, Avri,
on honeymoon in Mauritius



Jenna (FRONT) soaks up the sun with her friends



“We ran around in the teeniest bikinis”



Jewellery designer, JENNA CLIFFORD, 49, commutes between Sandton and White River, and lives with her husband, Dex, and two daughters, Chanelle, 14, and Summer, 7. Jenna

also has an older daughter, Shayna, 21.

I grew up in Durban as an only child, and I suppose you could say I was a bit lonely. As a result, I threw myself into my swimming and trained for four hours every day during the week, and spent literally every weekend

on the beach.

I remember hopping onto a train to Scottburgh with my girlfriends as a teenager, in our quest to “hunt” down the boys! We were all a bit boy crazy, but it was always good clean fun! I remember one boyfriend in particular – he had the most fabulous little car and we used to get together for beach braais – these were always such joyous occasions.

My advice to that little girl? Often the best opportunities come out of the worst situations. It’s up to you to make the most of everything that comes your way.

“In the arms of the man I love”



CHATA ROMANO, 43, commutes between SA and Australia. She’s been married to Avri for 23 years.

My beautiful husband, Avri, and I got married

in 1990, and 23 years on we are more in love than when this photo was taken. We’d just started our business and didn’t have any money to go on honeymoon.

Five years later we eventually saved enough to go to Mauritius – warm, sunny, beautiful, carefree – just what we needed. We arrived at the most beautiful beachside resort only to discover we had been checked into a room between the nightclub and the kids’ club – not very

romantic at all! The front desk manager took one look at my face and promptly upgraded us to a suite far away from everything and everyone. What could have been the biggest disaster turned out to be the most magical two weeks! There was something so wondrous about those 14 beautiful days spent lounging on the beach on our first holiday together.

Whenever I want to recharge my batteries, I curl up on Avri’s chest, close my eyes and, in a very short while, all is good.

My advice to that young woman? Believe in yourself and your dreams will come true. Dreams can become reality. It may take some work, but very little comes close to the sense of self-pride once you’ve reached your goals. Surround yourself with positive, honest people.

“We spent days exploring little rock pools”



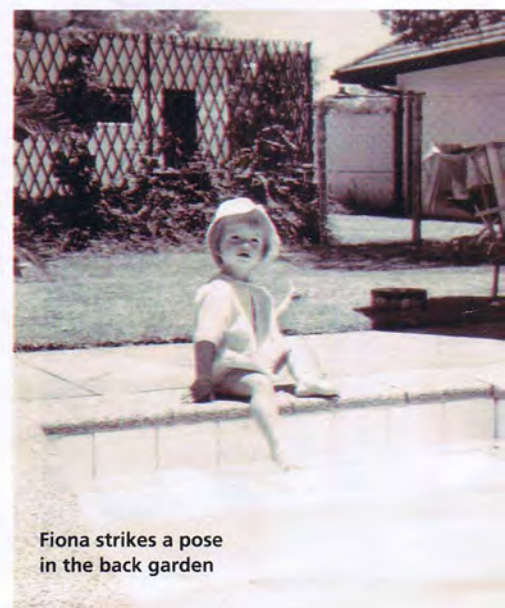
FIONA BUDD, 38, is a director and founding member of The South African Ballet Theatre.

This is me at 18 months, sitting on the steps of our pool in Bulawayo. I refused

to get in, so I sat perched on the edge with my foot daintily suspended over the water. We left Rhodesia for SA in 1974, and my grandparents later moved to Uvongo, where we used to spend our Christmases. My days were spent on the beach, either teetering tentatively on the shore line, or being dragged into the deeper breakers by my uncle. I’d explore little rock pools and try to catch fish in the river that runs between the ocean and the lagoon.

I once netted a prize stash of six tiny silver fish that happened to be dead, but I was determined to keep them because they were so pretty. I took them home in a bucket, but my mom forced me to return them to the sea before the smell became unbearable!

My advice to that little girl? Never stop believing in yourself, and retain that innocent love of life. >>



Fiona strikes a pose in the back garden