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HOW two brothers have kept vibrant District Six alive — with a camera and a sense of history.

THE

Essence

OF DISTRICT SIX

WHEN Government Gazette No 1370 of February, 1966, formally reserved the greater part of District Six for whites, two brothers, who had grown up in the centre of the vibrant community, felt that there was history to be recorded.

So Hoosain and Mogamat-Noor Ebrahim bought a Voigtlander camera for R38, and proceeded to capture in photographs the essence of the doomed "Ses".

Hanover Street and its fish market, Constitution Street, the Avalon and National cinemas, The Seven Steps — all images etched into the memories of former inhabitants.

Special emphasis was laid on 247 Caledon Street, the double-storey corner house three doors away from still-standing St Mark's Anglican Church, which had been the stamping-ground for three generations of Ebrahims.

THE Ebrahim archives were recently put to good use in film-maker Yunus Ahmed's award-winning production, *Dear Grandfather, Your Right foot is Missing*, and their names appear in the credits list.

The "Dear Grandfather" referred to is Table Mountain, and the "Right Foot"

is one of the names by which District Six was known.

Now the photographs may be used as the basis for a book.

"A newspaper publisher

has suggested that we get together to work on this project, and I feel the sooner we get going the better," said Mr Hoosain Ebrahim, a graphic artist.

"To get the best overall picture of our birthplace, we'll have to interview people as old as 80, and they may not be around for too much longer."

An exercise in jaw-dropping is listening to the reminiscences of those who once walked the steep, cobbled streets of District Six.

"There was religious tolerance in those days. Christians and Muslims lived side by side without friction."

MR Mogamat-Noor Ebrahim remembered the wash-house in Clifton Street, where those without bathrooms performed their ablutions.

"There were 18 cubicles and four baths for men, with a separate section for women.

"Bathing was a social gathering."

In keeping with the age-old tradition of singing in the bath, many of the Eacon Group's finest tenors gave full vent to their vo-

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