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DECEMBER 2015 NEWSLETTER

FROM THE CHAIRLADY

We are coming to the end of another year and it always amazes me how time flies! Perhaps this is more noticeable at my age!

Sharon, Charlotte and I attended the KZN Hospice Association meeting in Durban yesterday. It was good to get together with the representatives of the other KZN Hospices and to exchange news and ideas. Our Chairlady is character of note and leads us in an enlightened way. It was also good for me to share some time with Sharon and Charlotte away from the pressures of the office.



We are most fortunate to have members of staff who are dedicated to Howick Hospice and who carry out their duties in exemplary fashion - ably led by Sharon, our General Manager. On behalf of the Board I thank every member of our staff for their diligence and attention to their duties. To Sharon our thanks for her efficiency and co-operation in leading our organisation. Her business acumen is of the highest standard and, as a Board, we are able to place our trust in her with the utmost confidence.

Without our volunteers we would not be able to cope with the myriad tasks which they undertake for us not only on a regular basis, but also for our various events. Thank you one and all for your efforts which are very much appreciated.

It remains for me to wish all our donors, friends and acquaintances the Compliments of the Season and Peace, Good Health and Prosperity in the New Year.

Sheelagh Smallwood



FROM THE GENERAL MANAGER'S DESK

Well it's that time of year again, Christmas is almost upon us and the New Year is on the horizon! As always, it's the time that, once we have put the busyness of the year's activities and the season's festivities with families and friends behind us, we are able to take stock of our achievements, learn from our shortcomings and plan what needs to be done in 2016.

2015 has been a year of financial challenge for most of us, no less for Howick Hospice. But by the grace of God, the support of our community and the hard work of our staff and volunteers, here we are at the end of it, still sustainable into the future. God is good! We have held our Strategic Income Generation meeting and have put together a full Calendar of Hospice events for 2016, so I am inviting you all up front, to join us as they happen! Without money in our coffers we would not be able to continue to offer our free Palliative care service to our community!

We have had two of each, very successful Fairs and Car Boot Sales, an exceptional Food and Wine Fair, a well organized and thoroughly enjoyable Golf day, and just recently now in December, 2 wonderfully presented Carol functions organized by the Howick Prep School and by John Tungay respectively, at which Howick Hospice has been the beneficiary. Still coming on 16 December is the "Babe of Bethlehem" Cantata at Fern Hill Hotel, organized by John Tungay and followed by dinner. The event starts at 19.00 and tickets are R150 per person and net proceeds again will come to Hospice. A special thank you to everyone who holds an event and then donates the net proceeds to our organization; I cannot tell you what a blessing it is to receive this unexpected income!

Our Palliative Care service to our community continues to run at full speed. I am privileged at Howick Hospice to be working with a committed team of healthcare professionals dedicated to those patients (and their

families) entrusted to us for palliative care. We have cared for an average of 93 patients per month during 2015, 27 of whom are children.

Several new volunteers have joined our organization and some have retired after several years of dedicated service. Sadly, some have also passed on. I speak on behalf of everyone here at Howick Hospice by saying that I do not know what we would do without our volunteers! Thank you for your efforts on our behalf!

It is always hard to say goodbye as people leave us, but wonderful to welcome new folk on board. Kaylynne Pannifer joined us in January as our new Fundraiser and has proven herself very capable in this position. To my Board, my management team, all my staff and Hospice volunteers, thank you for your dedication over the past year. It's an honour to work alongside of you all!

Wishing you all, our Hospice friends, a blessed and peaceful Christmas and a joyous and prosperous New Year. Stay safe until we chat again!

With Love Sharon Nugent

NEWS ON THE STAFF FRONT



They say that time goes by faster the older one gets, but this year has *really* just flown by!

A warm welcome to Jeannie Hampson, who joined our team as Bookkeeper in June this year. Jeannie hails from Merrivale, and previously worked for many years at our local municipality. She has fitted well into the team, is extremely efficient and is also a very firm believer in the Banting Diet which she sticks to religiously!

We are very proud indeed of our two Sisters, **Nola Poole** and **Chantal Hathorn**, who both passed the Palliative Course held at Highway Hospice *cum laude* – Nola achieved 96% and Chantal 94%! I couldn't help thinking that the examiner could surely have found just a *few* more marks each to top them right up! But wonderful results and we know just how hard they both worked, fitting study and "away" time in with their daily Hospice work. Well done to you both!

We are very pleased that **Gerry Folker** has elected to remain on the Hospice staff, certainly for the foreseeable future. She has also been working very hard after hours on a bookkeeping course, which she aims to finish in the near future.

All staff and volunteers, I'm sure, are very concerned for **Colleen Walker**, our Shop Manager, who has been very unwell and in hospital recently. The doctors have not, as yet, come to any firm conclusions as to exactly what the problem is, but she is having a scan on Friday, 11th December 2015, and we do hope and pray that this will bring more clarity. Please would you all keep Coll in your prayers.

On a much happier note, we recently yesterday that Melanie (our former fundraiser) is pregnant, and her baby is due in June! Our congratulations to her and Dave, who are now living at Garlington.

On a personal note, it has been a very stressful and, at times, traumatic year for me with Simon having spent so much of the year in hospital in England after being so badly assaulted last December and going to England three times to visit him and try to sort out proper accommodation for him. However, I am happy to say that he is now well on the road to recovery and he will, hopefully, ease slowly back into employment in the not-too-distant future. He is now living in a village outside Hitchin in Bedfordshire with his partner, Jane, whom he met two months before the assault and who has remained an incredibly committed and caring person in his life. I would like to take this opportunity to thank each and every one of you who held Simon in your thoughts and prayers through this very difficult period in our lives. Please know that your kindness has been greatly appreciated.

Love Gill



OUR VOLUNTEERS

We have been happy to welcome Penny Turner and Alice Clarke to our volunteer team in the past few months, and we thank them for coming forward to help us. Generally, though, volunteers are becoming more difficult to source – many of our longstanding “regulars” are now themselves in frail care, younger women are working every day, and there are just so many charities in the Howick area which all have similar needs. However, we consider ourselves to be very blessed to have such a reliable, friendly and committed team here at Hospice, and I would like to thank each and every one of you for all that you have done for this organisation over the past year.

The Front Office will miss having Ros Kenyon and Gill Woods each week, both having left us to pursue other avenues of interest. If anyone has a friend or family member who might be interested in helping us in the office once a week (either morning or afternoon), please contact me on 033-3305257 (mornings).

In closing, I'm sure all our staff and volunteer will join me in wishing our wonderful, generous community a blessed and peaceful Christmas.

Happy Christmas, be safe while travelling, and all good wishes for 2016!



Love Gill

A NOTE FROM THE CLINICAL DEPARTMENT



The Howick Hospice Care Team is divided into the two categories of care that is offered by the organisation. Our two service elements are; HIV/AIDS/TB component and the Cancer Care component, or as commonly referred to as Traditional Hospice.

Each service element presents the Care Team with varied challenges - abject poverty, no financial resources, lack of basic amenities, inadequate supply of medication used for pain and symptom control, very limited nutritional resources but the common over riding challenge is emotional strain for the Care Team.

Our Team offers a FREE service to all patients and families on our programme. This care will encompass compassionate holistic Palliative Care given unconditionally. Depending on the particular service element some of our patients do experience improved health, following our interventions and care.

The following brief case study demonstrates this aspect.

The Hospice staff had known this person for many years as she is a loving and caring foster Mother to a child patient on our programme. At the beginning of 2015 this lady was diagnosed with TB and at the time of diagnosis was diagnosed with HIV. She was admitted to our Hospice programme. The Registered Nurse visited her, at home, weekly and the Community Health Worker visited her twice a week. It was a very challenging time for this lady who felt very ill and had difficulty in taking the prescribed treatment. With the encouragement and support of Hospice she persevered and gradually started to improve. She completed her TB treatment in July of this year and is enjoying much improved health.

The following statement is what the patient said of her 'journey' with Hospice:

Thank you very much Howick Hospice for helping me and my family. We wish you all the best and keep on doing this to other people. God bless you and we love you so much.

I would like to wish all our Staff, volunteers of Howick Hospice, the community who financially support our free service of care and our patient families a Blessed Christmas, Peace and love in 2016.

“When you are a nurse, you know that every day you will touch a life or a life will touch yours.” (Anonymous)

Love Charlotte

A NOTE FROM THE FUNDRAISER



What an incredible year it has been, I have now been the fundraiser here at Howick Hospice for almost a year and cannot believe how quickly time has gone by...

I am in disbelief that December is upon us once again, 2015 has been a busy year of planning and co-ordinating fundraising events for Howick Hospice with the guidance and support of staff and volunteers. I would not have been able to do it without you.

A big thank you to all who have assisted Howick Hospice in our fundraising efforts by either offering your services or organising events on behalf of Howick Hospice, we appreciate each and every one of you.

I look forward to the adventures and challenges that 2016 will bring, and wish you all a happy and safe Festive Season and 2016.



My exciting news for the year is that I got engaged to my High-School sweetheart in July this year, which came as an unexpected but wonderful surprise.

Love Kaylynn

CHARITY SHOP NEWS

This year has been a full year, not all happiness I am afraid. Some of you have lost loved ones, seen family leave our country, witnessed families torn apart and still continue to support loved ones in their illness! Guess that's what life is all about.

We are strong and will bounce back.

A big thank you to all who support our Charity Shop by either donating items to be sold in our shop, shopping for bargains as our shop sales are a vital component of our income generation or donating your time weekly to assist with running the shop. I am truly grateful for all the support we receive from each of you.

Our shop is open Monday – Friday from 8:30am – 3:00pm, so please pop round to have a browse around as new items are unpacked daily.

So raise your glasses over Christmas and remember the good times, keep safe and see you all January 2016.

Thank you for your great friendship and Hospice support.



Love Colleen



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