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EMBRACING  
QUALITY  
OF LIFE

## December 2014 NEWSLETTER

### CHAIRPERSON'S NEWS

First and foremost I would like to pay tribute to the late Greta Schoeman, the Founder of the Hospice Movement in South Africa, who passed away recently in Durban, aged 79. She was the prime instigator of palliative care in South Africa, and in 1982 established the first hospice at her home in Durban where she nursed dying patients with the help of volunteer nurses and her two young children, whom she encouraged to communicate with the patients. Although she was heavily criticized for this, she felt that exposing children to cancer, death and dying, was a perfectly natural thing to do.

She accepted patients without payment, which meant that fund-raising was critical. She started a monthly ladies' lunch club at her home, doing all the cooking herself, and persuaded hotels to donate lunches, which she would raffle at these gatherings.

Two years after starting she had raised R80,000, which, together with a R20,000 donation from the Lions Club, was used to buy Stretlitzia House in Sherwood, Durban. This, together with two adjoining houses which were also bought, became Highway Hospice.

Greta also started a second-hand shop, which was the foundation for our hospice shops in existence throughout South Africa today and which play a pivotal role in income generation for our organization.

In 1992 Greta was presented with the MBE by Queen Elizabeth at Buckingham Palace for her contribution to Palliative Care in South Africa. This year the eThekweni Municipality declared her a Living Legend for her services to the people of Durban.

In 1991 she was diagnosed with cancer of the oesophagus and underwent major surgery, but her indomitable spirit and with help from her doctors, she survived for 23 years until a second tumour was discovered in October last year.

We in Howick Hospice salute Greta Schoeman for her untiring efforts in the face of many difficulties and criticism and thank her for her selflessness in fostering the Hospice Movement in South Africa.

(My thanks to Chris Barron for compiling the Obituary to Greta which was published in the Sunday Times on 16<sup>th</sup> November and which forms the basis of my article above).

As far as current events are concerned, you will be aware of the tough decisions the Board were obliged to take recently to ensure the sustainability of Howick Hospice. We are certainly not out of the woods yet and we appeal to the community to support us in our efforts to generate income – whether it be at our events, our shop or our collection boxes which are scattered in and around Howick.

Our thanks to Sharon, our General Manager, and her staff for all their efforts this year and to our volunteers who play such an important role in our organization.

We wish you and your families a very Happy Christmas and all the best for 2015.



Greta Schoeman, founder of the Hospice movement in South Africa, died after a protracted battle with cancer recently this year.

*Sheelagh*

# EMBRACING QUALITY OF LIFE

## FROM THE GENERAL MANAGER'S DESK

It's hard to believe that we are drawing towards the end of 2014 – Christmas is around the corner and planning is already beginning for 2015.

As you are probably aware from the article in the Village Talk and on our Facebook page, Howick Hospice Association will begin the New Year by taking a pre-emptive measure towards ensuring our sustainability into the future. In spite of well planned and excellently supported events, a very successful charity shop and over 40 fundraising proposals having gone out locally, nationally and internationally, we have started digging into our reserves. As a result of this our Board has decided that we will be reducing our hours/salaries by 20% come January and so, much strategic planning is going into income generation in 2015 in order to be able to continue offering excellent palliative care free to our community. Many thanks to those of you in our community who have responded to our appeal for individuals to donate to us R50 per month and businesses, R150 per month (and in some cases much more!). And thanks, too, to all of you who are sending us ideas for ways in which we can generate more income. We promise to keep you updated as time progresses. This is definitely a community effort and we greatly appreciate all the support.

And now a snapshot of Howick Hospice 2014...

We have cared for an average of 100 patients per month this year, 55 odd of whom are children.

We have several new volunteers, and some who have retired after years of dedicated service to the organization. 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!

2014 has been a good year for Howick Hospice events:

We have had two very successful fairs, the last of which, on 01 November, netted a bumper total of R38 000. We had a comedy show at the Hilton College theatre and a Food and Wine Fair at Fern Hill Hotel. We had Keith Kirsten giving a Gardening talk at Amber Valley, and we are about to launch our very own Howick Hospice Recipe book which features recipes from top Midlands restaurants and businesses. And don't forget the upcoming New Year's Bash at Howick High! Very capably at the helm for our events is our young fundraiser Mel Brauteseth, who sadly is leaving us at the end of the year to continue her studies and to devote time to her own income generating venture. We are going to miss you Mel, but you go with our thanks for all your hard work on our behalf, our love and our very best wishes for your future!

I am privileged at Howick Hospice to be working with a committed team dedicated to those patients (and their families) entrusted to us for palliative care. It is always hard to say goodbye as people leave us, but wonderful to welcome new folk on board and so to all of you my staff, my management team, my Board, and Hospice volunteers, thank you for your dedication over the past year. It's an honour to work alongside of you all!

And now it only remains for me to wish you, our Hospice friends, donors and customers to our charity shop a blessed and peaceful Christmas and a joyous and prosperous New Year. Stay safe until we chat again. *With love Sharon*

### *A Message from the Charity Shop*

2015 is almost here....We have had a bumper year thanks to our supporters ~ A BIG THANKS TO YOU ALL 😊

Going forward in to the new year we pray it will be as productive and as happy as this year has been with bigger and better donations. Please remember we can collect any items big or small . When donating please check that you DO NOT want any of the items you are so kindly donating.....once sold..... they cannot be retrieved!

Sadly a few of our shop volunteers have left us so we are appealing to anyone who would be prepared to give up some of their time to help out in the shop. If so, please pop in and we can discuss which days you are able to help.

Wishing you a very merry Christmas and all the best for 2015.

*Colleen*

# EMBRACING QUALITY OF LIFE

## NEWS ON THE STAFF FRONT:

*We extend a warm welcome to:*

### **Sister Chantal Hathorn**



We were delighted to welcome Sister Chantal Hathorn to our Clinical Team at the beginning of August this year. Chantal is working in our traditional cancer programme in place of Lauren Funnell. She has settled very well into the team, and we all wish her a long and happy association with Hospice.

P.S. And we specially love her for the very yummy and more-ish homebaked rusks which she brings in for tea from time to time!!

*Goodbye to ~*

### **Sister Lauren Funnell**

We were all sorry (and some of us more than a little envious!) when Lauren Funnell told us she would be retiring at the end of July this year. Lauren had been with us for eighteen months and was a very welcome addition to the Clinical team, with her extensive nursing experience and training qualification. We will miss her and wish her a long and happy retirement.

### **Melanie Brauteseth**

Our young and lovely “breath of fresh air”, who has done such a wonderful job with Events, PRO and social media. Mel will be leaving us at the end of December, but has kindly agreed to stay on for a while to mentor her replacement and we are very grateful for this. She is going to pursue her own business interests and study part-time and we know that she will do well in whatever she turns her hand to. We have been privileged to have such a very capable and organised Fundraiser for the time she has been with us. We will miss you lots, Fairy, but wish you every success for the future and thank you for all your hard work and dedication.

### **Rest In Peace Our Beloved Zama Maphumulo**



All Hospice staff were deeply saddened and very shocked by the news of Zama’s death at the end of September, aged 37. Although Zama had been very ill and off work since the end of July this year, being cared for at home in Mevana by her husband and mother, as well as in hospital, we had all prayed and tried to remain optimistic for her eventual complete recovery.

However, sadly, it was not to be, and Zama passed away in Edendale Hospital with her close family around her on 27<sup>th</sup> September. A very moving and well-attended Memorial Service was held for her, at the request of her family, at Hospice House on Thursday, 9<sup>th</sup> October.

Zama had only been married for eighteen months when she died. Many of the staff had been invited to her wedding, where they saw a radiant and very beautiful bride. In the course of her work, she was quite simply one of the most helpful members of staff that Hospice has ever employed – always willing to learn new skills and then put them to good use; always kind, compassionate and willing to go the extra mile. She used initiative, and would always take her work into the front office when no volunteer was available, answering the phone and attending to visitors. She has left a huge void in the team, and we all miss her greatly.

### **Thank You, SACan and Knight Security Solutions!**

Following on from the most unfortunate hijacking incident involving Howick Hospice staff and vehicle in Mpophomeni in September, all Hospice staff were very grateful indeed to hear that SACan, in conjunction with Knight Security Solutions, had offered to provide a free “in touch” and response service to each one of us. We would like to say just how very grateful we all are for this unexpected, very generous and thoughtful, gesture on the part of Knight Security Solutions and SACan. Thank you to all concerned!

# EMBRACING QUALITY OF LIFE

## NEWS ON THE VOLUNTEER FRONT...

*We extend a warm welcome to:*

**Shirley Gorrie**, who has joined our Bereavement Team; **Gillian Woods**, who now helps in our Front Office on Thursday mornings, **Sr. Jane Miller**, who has very kindly offered a counselling service to staff members as part of our staff wellness programme; **Jean Heaton**, will be helping Colleen in the Shop on Tuesday mornings, as well as being on the "stand by" list for the Front Office and helping with Events; **Steve Spencer**, who has joined the Fundraising team and will be co-ordinating monthly sales tables at our various shopping centres; and last, but by no means least, **Faith Baum**, who worked for many years at the Howick Magistrate's Court, is now retired and is our new Board Minute Taker. We welcome you all to our team and hope you will have a very long and happy association with Howick Hospice!

*Farewell :*

To **Audrey Borland**, a long-standing Shop volunteer, who has now left Howick to live with her family in Gauteng. We shall miss you, and we hope you will be very happy in your new home!

*Sad news :*

We were deeply saddened by the deaths of two loyal volunteers, **Margaret Elvy** and **Ian White** earlier this year. **Margaret** was a "Friday volunteer" in our Shop for many years. A quiet and gentle soul who always had a wonderful sense of humour, she was unfailingly helpful and reliable and has been sadly missed by all who came into contact with her. **Ian** joined the "Hospice family" when we cared for his wife in the terminal stages of cancer in 2009. He was a very kind, generous and caring man, who was always interested in hearing about the daily activities and happenings at Hospice and how the staff were doing. He became a very committed and valuable member of our Bereavement team, where he played an active role until his death. He will be sadly missed by us all.

In conclusion, I take this opportunity to thank all our wonderful volunteers for all the hard work and help they have given us during 2014. This year has been a particularly difficult one in many respects. As you will be aware from recently publicity, sourcing sufficient funding to meet our monthly running costs has become particularly worrying, and without the loyal and committed help of our volunteer team, we simply would not cope. We look forward to seeing as many of you as possible at our Volunteers' Tea on 4<sup>th</sup> December and wish you all a very blessed and peaceful Christmas. Thank you all ☺

*Gill*



*The Howick Hospice  
Care Team*

Wishes you a blessed  
Christmas.  
May 2015 be a year  
of love, peace &  
special memories

Love Charlotte

### Nice to know from the P.R.O

As the year draws to an end, I would like to say a **HUGE** thank you to the Howick Hospice team and our dedicated staff and volunteers for all their help and support this year. I could not have done it without you all so thank you from the bottom of my heart!

Howick Hospice came into my life when I was most vulnerable and truly has been an absolute God-send in so many ways. I have learnt and grown tremendously in the last two years ☺

With a very heavy heart and after much consideration, I have decided to leave my Hospice family at the end of January 2015.

My true passion lies in events planning and co-ordination so I am going to focus on expanding my existing part-time photobooth business as well as furthering my studies by going back to university next year to study graphic design.

I will continue to support the work of Howick Hospice going forward and look forward to attending events in the future. I wish Howick Hospice and the entire team all the very best. I know it is in good hands and have faith that the financial concerns will be a thing of the past in months to come.

Lastly, I would like to take this opportunity to wish all our loyal supporters a very Merry Christmas and all the very best for the new year.

*God Bless, Mel xxx*