

MHA on the Bay



methodist homes

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A MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN

We continue to live in extraordinary times. Every day I witness people with great courage and resilience, although some now have sense-of-humour failure and some have wavering faith, but mostly I meet people who just grit their teeth and move forward, knowing that things will get better. They will!

On the last day of our past financial year (31 March 2021) I wrote to MHA's senior staff, and I want to share with you what I said to them, in the hope that it will leave you with a sense of positivity and gratitude, and encouragement to embrace the 'new tomorrow' when we all have been vaccinated, and the craziness of the past year and more will be consigned to grim history.



"Greetings, colleagues.

What a year this has been!!!! As we close off our financial year this afternoon, I have been reflecting on just how much has been achieved by the MHA team and residents during the past twelve months, in the most trying of conditions and circumstances.

Some of the thoughts I have had, and want to share with you, are the following:

- ✓ *We're still in business!!! The direct and indirect impact of Covid has hammered MHA financially, with unbudgeted expenses incurred in the fight against the pandemic, and our inability to sell Life Rights for a long period, leaving cottages and apartments vacant. We will fill the large hole made in our Reserves and get the business back on track in the coming financial year, and we must be grateful that, pre-Covid, MHA was in a very healthy financial position, enabling us to weather the current storm*
- ✓ *While we recorded Covid infections of about 10% of total headcount (just over 60, roughly split 50/50 between residents and staff), we only recorded four deaths, all residents. As tragic as those losses were, all four were around 90 years of age, and two were very unwell pre-Covid. God's protecting hand was ever-present in and around MHA, every day*
- ✓ *Two weeks before Government shut down the country in late March 2020, MHA had already established its CovidCom; plans were put in place, our own facilities went into Lockdown a week before the country did that, hygiene and infection control policies and procedures had been established, documented and implemented, and we effectively had a 'head start' in going to war. I remain convinced that the disciplined way in which we have waged the Covid war over this past year has saved many, many lives*
- ✓ *The courage and discipline displayed by our staff has been a wonder to behold. Our CEO and Nursing Services Manager provided strong and decisive leadership. Our frontline staff came to work each and every day or night, facing an unknown range of risks while at the same time leaving vulnerable loved ones at home, and they dedicated themselves to providing nursing and caring services to our elderly residents. All other staff across MHA played a critically important role too, often in trying circumstances. While it was sad and difficult to have to retrench the majority of our Housekeeping staff, MHA was able to continue employing and remunerating our staff complement, and all of them applied themselves with dedication. We have so much to be grateful for in this regard. Our staff are truly HEROES, one and all*
- ✓ *Likewise, our residents displayed courage and discipline, especially during the 'hard lockdown' periods. Our Managers were suddenly presented with many new challenges for which there was no warning or preparation, and yet our Villages and other facilities continued to operate efficiently, and community life continued as best it could. Residents in our Bedsitters and Frail Cares have been locked in for over twelve months now; they have been stoic and uncomplaining, and they each deserve a medal!*
- ✓ *The wider MHA family has also played a crucial role. Family and friends of residents have had to make painful sacrifices and adjustments, and almost without exception they have seen the bigger picture, and co-operated. Our service providers and various advisors have also assisted us in coping with extraordinary times and challenges.*

On behalf of the Board, I thank you all from the bottom of my heart for your outstanding service during the past year. Please let those staff under your care know how much this means to everyone within the MHA family. Please stay safe. The war is not yet over".

Kind regards,
Malcolm Stewart
Board Chairman



THE GIFT OF GIVING

Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously. Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. (2 Corinthians 9:6-8)

During the 39 years of its existence MHA has been the recipient of wonderful, generous gifts, and this still happens. Some have been huge, and some quite modest, but every Rand or item was given with love, and received in the same way. A Chinese proverb also rings true: "If you always give you will always have".

Two recent gifts will be enjoyed by so many.

Three adult children whose parents passed away in Maranatha Frail Care in recent times donated a sum of money to be used to replace lounge curtains in MFC, and a monetary gift to the staff who had looked after the couple with great love and kindness. As the photos show, Matron Nelmar Windell and carer Lelethu Benya had 'wedding gown' fun with the old curtains, and two MFC carers, Brenda Jack and Nomhle Mtubu, showed off the lovely new curtains.



Our Chairman's neighbour, a retired librarian and obviously a lover of books, generously donated 50 once-read novels to MHA, and these have found their way into our Village libraries, where they will give great joy to our scores of bookworms.

PS: the books belonged to her, not to the library she worked for!!





OUR CORONAVIRUS PHOTO ALBUM (Volume 1!)

It is just not possible to capture the trials and tribulations, the tales and the triumphs of the past year in a few simple photographs. As was the case in other world-shaking events in our lifetimes, it will take historians and others a long, long time to adequately capture the impact of Covid-19 on the lives of almost 8 billion people. What we can do, however, is to create a collage of photographs of MHA life during the past year. When Lockdown regulations permitted, gardens still gave joy, there were trips to the beachfront for an ice cream, there was a time to braai, tea parties to enjoy, sunrises and sunsets and the occasional rainbow were there to admire and to be grateful for, and even time to refurbish a memorial bench (lest we forget). There will be more photos to share, and stories to tell, before the war is over. We are a resilient bunch, so let's celebrate the 'little big things' that have helped us get through the pandemic, thus far. Let us also bow our heads in gratitude for the blessings we receive from living in a caring community.

