



NPO 015-960
PBO 93 00 08 081

Newsletter February 2016

Dear Friends,

Our warmest greetings to you all at the start of 2016. In our first newsletter of the year we hope you'll find something of interest and inspiration. Please feel free to pass on our newsletter - the more people who understand what our organisation does in our community, the more people we can assist, and the more our community will seek to support the work that we do! In this issue:

- **Palliative Care** - what exactly does it mean?
- **Hospice Happenings** - our social calendar of the last few months plus **Upcoming Events**
- **'Reflecting on Death in order to Live Fully'** - an article by Di Atherton
- **Our Professional Nurses** - a look at our Stats for 2015
- **Candle of Compassion** and a poem by **Henry Scott Holland**



Please enjoy this newsletter! Your feedback and constructive criticism are most welcome.

What exactly does 'palliative care' mean?

We have noticed in our conversations with people that there is misunderstanding around the word 'palliative', and quite often people don't know what it means at all. Hospice care is nowadays referred to as 'palliative care' and this has become a common term amongst health care professionals, but is not widely known by the general public.

The word '*palliative*' derives from the Latin word *palliativus*, from the verb 'palliare' which means 'to cloak'. This is rather a lovely term as it brings to mind the image of one who cloaks another in comfort, enfolding them in loving care.

You will see the phrase 'palliative care' throughout Hospice literature and it is the foundation of our work.

In Hospice work, professional nurses and staff seek ways to alleviate, soothe and calm a person when they are facing a life-threatening illness. Palliative care means to literally **cloak** the person (and often their family too) in love and compassion, offering emotional and spiritual support, as well as practical assistance; from pain management to wound dressing or the supply of medical equipment.

There are many ways Hospice can support someone, not necessarily at the end of a life, but from the moment they are diagnosed. We find that often people don't realise this and we have met families who are in great distress, having left it very late before calling on us to assist their loved one. It's important to recognise that when a person is diagnosed with a life-threatening illness it does not necessarily mean that death is imminent. We have many patients who have been with us for years, and who are living with good quality of life whilst they live with a life-threatening condition. Having approached Hospice White River on diagnosis, patients have companionship on their journey from the start, and this is immensely comforting and supportive to them.

We encourage anyone who has a loved one facing a life-threatening illness not to delay contacting us. To call on Hospice is not a sign that the situation is hopeless, as some people believe. It is practical to call on us as we are then able to cloak the patient in the *palliative care* most appropriate for them and their needs. We can be reached on 013-750 3044 or call in at our offices, 19 Wildevy Street, White River, weekdays 8am to 4pm.



Summer Sundowners



What a beautiful October's evening we had at Nut Grove Manor in White River; the perfect venue for our **'Summer Sundowners'** fundraising event. The evening was a great success, having been admirably organised by Brenda Archdeacon and Madds Warrener.

Many local folks attended, suitably wearing a flash of orange, in support of Hospice. Champagne and orange juice was enjoyed, alongside a delicious table of eats, and the weather obliged with a glorious sunset and a fresh nip in the air!

Many individuals and companies in the community had donated items toward the auction, and combined with the ticket fee this event brought in a whopping R40 000 for our organisation.

As always we are bowled over by the generosity of the local community, and by their willingness to lend a hand. Thanks to all who attended and supported the occasion, with special gratitude to Madds and Brenda for all their hard work.



Once again this year we teamed up with the Lowveld Community Orchestra for a Christmas carols concert, also known as **Carols by Candlelight**. The senior choir from Uplands Prep joined us and we had several soloists performing some well known Christmas carols and songs.

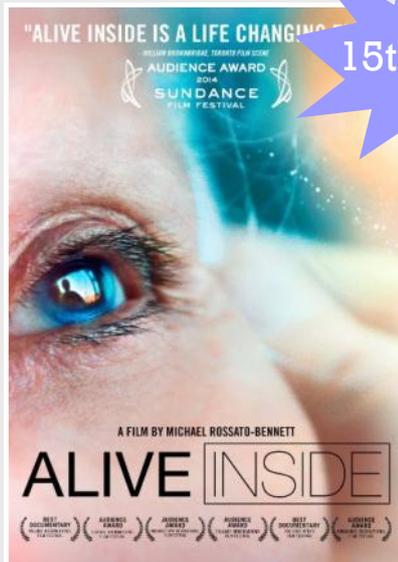
The White River community turned out in large numbers and the Casterbridge Theatre was packed. Anneke Coetzer of the Orchestra conducted and the audience enjoyed singing along to their favourite carols. We were blessed to have Father Mark Spratt lead us in prayer, and he and Renata Stewart, our MC for the occasion, conducted a beautiful candle lighting ceremony accompanied by Silent Night. It was a wonderful occasion on the Christmas calendar.

Hospice White River has an annual tradition of providing a festive **Christmas Tea Party** for our Wednesday Morning Tea Support Group, and also invited to join the fun are our volunteers, staff and board members.

The morning was a special treat for our support group, who love to get together, share a chat and a laugh, and enjoy the festive spread. This year we had lots of fun taking pictures of everyone within our special 'Hot for Hospice' frame. It was an extremely hot day but that didn't deter us from getting into the Christmas spirit!

It takes lots of helping hands to organise the Christmas Tea and we'd like to thank Sharon Richards, Renata Stewart, Angela Blanden, Senith, and the Hospice Staff for working so hard to make such a wonderful experience for our Wednesday Morning Tea Support Group. A scrumptious spread and a helping hand everywhere made the day an unforgettable experience for all.





15th April

Movie Fundraiser

FRIDAY 15TH APRIL

6pm, movie starts at 7pm

'ALIVE INSIDE' - A Story of Music and Memory

AT CASTERBRIDGE CINEMA,
CASTERBRIDGE, WHITE RIVER

TICKETS R120 PP

SNACKS INCLUDED, CINEMA CASH BAR AVAILABLE

In support of Hospice and Orange Occasions
please wear a dash of orange!

Click on the image above
to watch the trailer

A SYNOPSIS OF 'ALIVE INSIDE'

Alive Inside is a joyous cinematic exploration of the capacity of music to reawaken our souls as demonstrated in people suffering with Alzheimer's disease and related illnesses. The film chronicles the astonishing experiences of individuals who have been revitalised through the experience of listening to their best loved music. **Alive Inside** is an inspirational and emotional story, and was the winner of the Audience Award at the 2014 Sundance Film Festival. A movie that touches the heart!

** BOOKINGS AND ENQUIRIES WITH JANA 013-7503044 or whiteriverhospice@tiscali.co.za **

6th May

a Taste of Autumn

You are invited to an Orange Occasion
in aid of Hospice White River

Date	6 May 2016
Time	17h30 for 18h00
Venue	Nut Grove Manor, White River
Cost	R150pp (includes welcome drink & a variety of heart warming soups)
Contact	Madd's Warrenner on 083 454 1689 or Brenda 082 820 9855
Format	Sundowners with live music followed by pot luck auction to raise funds for Hospice WR
Cash Bar	Profits split with Hospice

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PLEASE WEAR A TOUCH OF ORANGE IN SUPPORT OF HOSPICE

Reflecting on Death in order to Live Fully

Recently I was enjoying a catch up with a good friend who lives a couple of hours from here and had come to spend the weekend with me. Over a glass of wine she shared that she was currently reading the Tibetan Book of the Dead, which I agree is a pretty macabre book title. It's a book I have heard of but never read.

"One of the things the book tells us" she said, "is that we really should be thinking about our death every day". Well, if the book title is sombre, that comment was downright morbid! I won't be surprised if you even had a little shiver of shock run through you as you read that. Or almost recoiled from the words on the page. I had more or less the same response. If there is one thing we tend to run away from, or gloss over, in our society, it is the thought of death, ours or anybody else's.

And yet, the more I thought about it, the more sense it made. Because if we did think about our death every day, and I mean really think about our death, would we not be a lot more aware of our LIFE?

That fragile, precious jewel that allows us to get up each morning, to face a new day, to laugh, cry, share, connect, hug, play, get creative, work, eat, love, sleep etc. But how many of us go through each of those days on auto-pilot? Barely functioning. Going through the motions. Seeking everything that's wrong, looking for things to complain about. Focussing on the negative. Wishing we were somewhere else, with someone else, even be someone else. If we consciously had the thought "today I could die" would we live life a little differently? More mindfully? More gently? More alive? More passionately?

Why is it that we have to wait until we are faced with a life-threatening or terminal illness, or go through some other catastrophe that brings us face to face with our mortality, before awareness penetrates the grey fog of every-day living that hey, this is MY LIFE! And it's precious and I want to squeeze every last drop out of it.

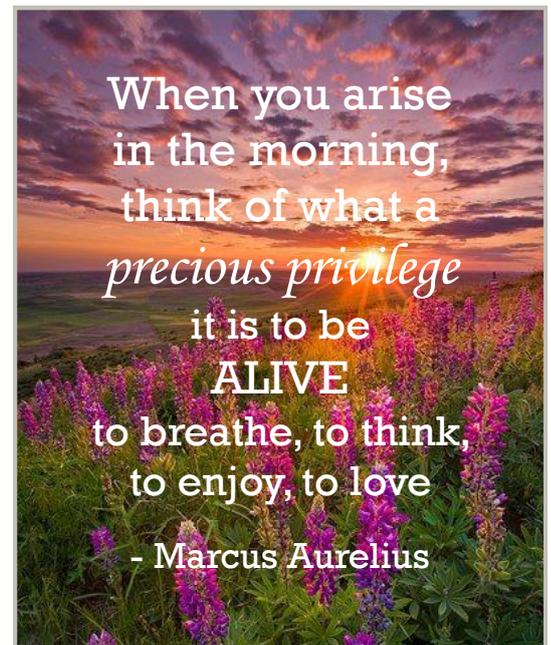
If somebody told you, right now, that this is your very last day on earth, what would you do? How would you spend those last few remaining hours?

Every day there are people facing their final hours filled with regrets at lives not lived. Not enjoyed. Time wasted, opportunities missed, words left unspoken, creativity neglected, health unappreciated until it was too late.

Every moment that we draw breath is infinitely precious. And at any moment that breath can cease, and then so do we. Just like that. It's a powerful thought.

So as shocking as my friend's statement was initially, on reflection I began to realise that daily thinking about our death is not such a bad idea after all, if it keeps us connected to the wonderful experience that we call our life and gets us to fully embrace every moment gifted to us. ♥

- this article is kindly contributed by Di Atherton



Orange Occasions Fundraisers and special events in aid of Hospice White River

Just a reminder about our Orange Occasions. If you would like to organise your own fundraising event in support of Hospice White River, we would love to hear from you! Whether it be a birthday tea, a special dinner party, a raffle, a fun-run, or an enormous ladies luncheon, you can unleash your creativity and organise your own event with funds raised coming to our organisation. We value greatly the support of individuals who have so far run with this idea and hosted their own Orange Occasions. Funds raised this way are hugely appreciated, no matter the amount raised. If you'd like to learn more please contact us at 013-750 3044, or visit our website [for details here](#)

It's been a busy year for our professional nursing staff!



Our Nursing Service Co-ordinator Sr Elsa Swanepoel receiving her certificate from Landi Bezuidenhout

We are very proud of our Professional Nurse Elsa Swanepoel. Here she is (left) with Landi Bezuidenhout, HPCA CaSIPO Project Provincial Manager for Mpumalanga. Landi presented Elsa with her certificate for achieving Cum Laude in the Short Course in Palliative Care Nursing for Professional Nurses, which Elsa completed in 2015. That is a great achievement as Elsa managed to juggle a full work load at Hospice, a busy young family, and her studies. Congratulations Elsa, we are proud of you!

At Hospice we are aware that our donors and supporters like to know what we have been busy with, and how their generous donations are being spent. All donations are valuable to us, and every cent is managed and accounted for with meticulous care. We'd like to share with you some of our statistics from 2015 which give a very good idea of our service and activities within our community.

In 2015 our professional nurses made a total of 1396 home visits to patients and implemented a total of 4613 interventions. An 'intervention' is what we do for a patient and their family, and is sub-divided into 3 categories: CLINICAL, PSYCHOLOGICAL, SOCIAL. A synonym for Intervention is *Involvement*.

At a glance, below is a breakdown of our 'stats'. We're sure you will agree that it is quite astounding what our small hospice accomplishes in our community with our limited staff and resources!

HWR Patient Care for 2015

59 patients
27 male
32 female
24 deceased
At any given time we have +/- 23 patients on our programme

Diagnoses

54% cancer
42% chronic
4% HIV/Aids

Age Groups

36 – 45 years 5 patients
46 – 60 years 7 patients
61 – 70 years 9 patients
71+ years 38 patients

Referrals came from

49 % Family and friends
23 % Self
10% GP
10% Specialist
8% Other

Home Base Care

683 visits
2824 interventions

Day Care

414 visits
1112 interventions

Hospice Clinic

87 visits
324 interventions

Hospital

5 visits
14 interventions

Telephone and Other

207 visits
339 interventions

Total for 2015

1396 visits
4613 interventions

How YOU can help us continue to help others!

We continue to encourage members of the public to contribute toward our **Candle of Compassion Campaign**, by donating R50 to Hospice on an ongoing monthly basis.

We are NEARLY at 100 regular monthly donors - please help us reach that benchmark so we can then set our sights even higher!

A recurring payment can be set up into the following bank account:

Hospice White River,
FNB White River, Branch No 270552
Account Number 6202 566 8304
Please use your name as reference on your deposit

Kindly note that all donations are tax deductible and at the end of the financial year you will receive a tax receipt.

Please help us reach 100!



**We are grateful to the individuals and companies already contributing
A big thank you to all of you!**

As always, our gratitude to all those people within the community who continue to support us, to help us, and to offer their expertise. We could not do what we do without your unwavering support. Please note that we have two awesome fundraisers in the pipeline - our Movie Fundraiser on Friday 15th April, and our 'A Taste of Autumn' Orange Occasion on Friday 6th May. For updates, please follow us on Facebook!



In signing off we leave you with a beautiful piece of writing below which we hope you will find meaningful. We are aware that many of our friends are those who have experienced our care and have perhaps lost a loved one in the recent past. At Hospice we understand the difficulties faced in the grieving process following the passing of a dear friend or family member. Part of our service is to provide compassion, comfort and guidance in bereavement.

Until next time, warm regards from

All at Hospice White River

Death is nothing at all. It does not count. I have only slipped away into the next room. Nothing has happened. Everything remains exactly as it was. I am I, and you are you, and the old life that we lived so fondly together is untouched, unchanged. Whatever we were to each other, that we are still. Call me by the old familiar name. Speak of me in the easy way which you always used. Put no difference into your tone. Wear no forced air of solemnity or sorrow. Laugh as we always laughed at the little jokes that we enjoyed together. Play, smile, think of me, pray for me. Let my name be ever the household word that it always was. Let it be spoken without an effort, without the ghost of a shadow upon it. Life means all that it ever meant. It is the same as it ever was. There is absolute and unbroken continuity. What is this death but a negligible accident?



Why should I be out of mind because I am out of sight? I am but waiting for you, for an interval, somewhere very near, just round the corner. All is well. Nothing is hurt; nothing is lost. One brief moment and all will be as it was before. How we shall laugh at the trouble of parting when we meet again!

- by the poet Henry Scott Holland, titled 'Death Is Nothing at All'

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