



Brotherhood of Blessed Gérard

NEWS LETTER
No. 12

August 1997

Dear members and friends of our Brotherhood,

OUR MEMBERS WERE AWARDED THEIR CERTIFICATES:
Another mile stone!

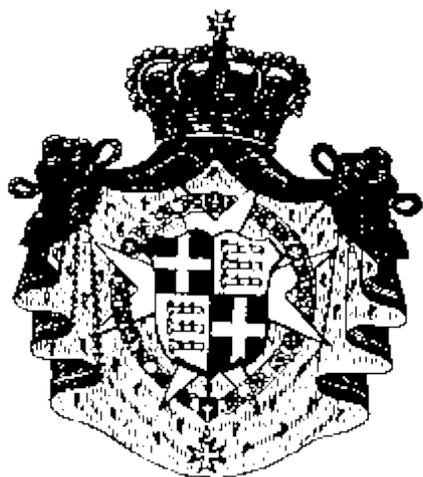


The associate members meeting took place on 8th March, 1997. This was very well attended by members from all over the greater Mandeni area. It was an occasion marking another mile stone in the activities of our organisation.

The highlight of the meeting was the awards ceremony. Three categories of certificates were presented. We congratulate the following members on receiving their just rewards.

Home Nursing - Adults	First Aid - Adults	Instructor
Mrs. Estelle Denner	Mrs. Hetta Henning	Mrs. Hetta Henning
Mrs. Shona Pieters	Mrs. Beryl Bouchier	Mrs. Beryl Bouchier
Mrs. Elise Bozas	Mrs. Estelle Denner	Mrs. Elise Bozas
Mrs. Elizabeth Mntungwa	Mrs. Elise Bozas	
Mrs. Margaret Hawthorn	Mrs. Roálien Ogle	
Mrs. Cookie Terreblanche	Mrs. Greta Filer	
Mrs. Renéé Pieters	Mrs. Cookie Terreblanche	
Mrs. Yvonne Renaud		
Mrs. Tandi Delport		
Mrs. Joice Buss		
Mrs. Roálien Ogle		
Mrs. Sandy Messenger		
Mr. Hayne Clark		
Mr. Gerald Clark		
Mrs. Marge Clark		
Mrs. Beryl Bouchier		
Mrs. Greta Filer		
Mrs. Megan Woolridge		
Mrs. Nettie van Schalkwyk		
Mrs. Hetta Henning		
Miss Simoné Dutton		
Mrs. Lorraine Ragaven		
Mrs. Jean Geswindt		
Miss Samantha Geswindt		
Mrs. Phyllis Cunningham		
Home Nursing - Juniors	First Aid - Juniors	
Bronwyn Barnes	Bronwyn Barnes	
Elaine Prumdeen	Elaine Prumdeen	
Kerry-Anne Mathieson	Kerry-Anne Mathieson	
Davina Gounden	Davina Gounden	
Sarishna Singh	Sarishna Singh	
Sheryl Pillay	Sheryl Pillay	
Donna Messenger	Donna Messenger	
Lucia Messenger	Lucia Messenger	
Brendon Beaumont	Brendon Beaumont	
Malissa Beaumont	Malissa Beaumont	
Bianca Williamson	Bianca Williamson	
Caroline Wachter	Annastacia Geswindt	
Kerryn Watkins	Kerryn Watkins	
Reon Rorke	Reon Rorke	

A letter from the Grandmaster
of the Sovereign Military Order of Malta:



via Condotti 68
00187 Roma

27th January 1997

The Reverend Father Gérard
Lagleder O.S.B.,
The Brotherhood of Blessed
Gérard
P.O. Box 440
Mandeni 4490
Republic of South Africa

Dear Father Gérard,

Your letter, with the cassette and album of photographs, posted on 17th December, arrived this morning, so unreliable is the post here at Christmas time!

The Grand Commander had given a very enthusiastic report on his visit to your Centre, and showed me some photographs he had taken. He also gave me the beautifully carved walking-stick, for which many thanks.

Your work is very impressive, and I pray that God will continue to bless you, your workers and all those that you help.

With my best wishes
Yours sincerely,

Frà Andrew Bertie

NGIYABONGA NKOSI

I am a widow of 54 years of age, I have seven children some are married and have given me many wonderful grandchildren. I live on a farm north of Eshowe in kwaZulu/Natal.

Three years ago my husband passed away leaving me alone to look after our children who are still at school. One day I was busy working in the fields where I grow vegetables to feed my family when I had this terrible headache. It was extremely hot and so I did not take much notice of the pain, as I thought it was just a normal headache from the sun. When the weeding was complete for the day and the vegetables watered, I made my weary way home. I was tired and sweaty. The children had returned from school and were hungry, as usual. The pots of puthu and stew were on the fire and the food was almost ready. Pain, oh such pain. My head is going to split open. I remember my youngest daughter calling me from a distance. "Mama, Mama". I have to go to her, she is in trouble and needs me. There is no one else to help her. "Mama, Mama". I must go to her, but it is so difficult, so dark, like swimming through soup.

I open my eyes and there is Thokozile, my baby daughter. Tears were running down her face. I tried to lift my hand to wipe the tears away, but my hand would not do what I wanted it to. My mind told my arm to move but nothing happened. Slowly the realisation came to me, something was seriously wrong. I tried to ask my family what had happened, but the words which came out sounded garbled and nobody could understand me. Finally a man dressed in white came into the room. Then I realised that I was in a hospital. "You have had a stroke", he told me. "You are paralysed down the left side of your body". He carried out some tests. My face, my arm and hand and my leg would not move. This must have been one of the worst moments of my life. I had never thought that something like this could happen to me.

One day rolled into another. The programme was the same each day. The physiotherapists were so kind and gentle. They encouraged me to keep up my exercises. Very soon the doctor discharged me from hospital where I

had felt safe and secure. The family took me home to the farm. How am I going to manage, I thought. I was so tired after the journey, I fell asleep. The next morning I awoke with my little daughter crying. She was hungry. I tried to get up to help her, I could not. I fell on the floor. Sobbing, I pulled myself along the floor to her and tried to comfort her. We sat together for a long time. When she had quietened down, I asked her to help me by doing exactly what I told her. She was a little angel. She did everything I asked of her, but a child of four is limited in her ability to help. The older children had already left for school. I sat on the cold cement floor of my hut for hours until the older children came home.

How was I going to manage?

Somehow we got through the next week, but circumstances at home were becoming more and more complicated and difficult. Is that a car I hear? Please, Lord, let that be a visitor. What a relief, it is Dudu, my daughter and her husband from Mandeni. There is not much discussion, they bundle my children and me into the car and drive me to their home. The house is small, it has four rooms. Two bedrooms, a living room and a kitchen. It takes a lot of reorganising to fit us all in. My daughter, her husband and their two children now live in one room and my three children and myself in the other. Ngiyabonga Nkosi, you have really blessed me with good children. Now if only I can become independent again.

One day my son-in-law came home with the news that there is help for me, right here in Mandeni. There is a new centre opened up where volunteers are prepared to help. Simon told the family that he went to speak to the people at Blessed Gérard's Care Centre and they would come to visit me tomorrow morning. The morning comes, it is a beautiful sunny day and for the first time, in months, I feel happy. The anticipation is almost unbearable. Finally at 9am the ladies in white and black arrive. They seem so nice. But they are speaking English, how am I going to tell them what I want and what I feel? It does not matter. Simon, tells them for me what has happened. One lady takes my blood pressure and asks lots of questions. The other one shows so much concern, I want to cry. They promise to come and fetch me tomorrow and take me to this centre in

Mandeni. Although, I am happy, I am also nervous. What will it be like? Will they speak Zulu? Is it a hospital? What will happen when I want something, a cup of tea perhaps? Will they bring me home again? Will I ever be independent again?

I should never have worried. When we arrived at Blessed Gérard's Care Centre the next day, there were other people just like me. I never realised that I was not the only one in the world that had suffered a stroke. I had been so wrapped up in my own pain and self-pity that I never thought there might be somebody else worse off than me. The volunteers are so friendly and even though there is a language barrier, it makes no difference. We get tea and biscuits and then the exercising begins. It is not hard work because we are all together in a group and everyone is laughing and happy. After lunch we are asked if we would like to have a sleep. Only one man says yes. The rest of us are so enthusiastic that we cannot rest. We go back out onto the patio to do more exercises with fun, laughter and happiness.

For a short while all the pain and suffering are forgotten. Now it is 4o'clock and it is time to go home. That night I slept as I have not slept for months. There really is help for me. I cannot wait for tomorrow morning, to continue my rehabilitation.

We have continued this routine for four weeks now. I can stand up and can walk with one crutch, which The Brotherhood of Blessed Gérard has leant me. My arm is still very stiff, but each day my condition improves. I can talk now, but more important that anything else, I have made new friends.

I do not go into Blessed Gérard's Care Centre any more, but the volunteers come to our home to visit me each week. I look forward to every Tuesday, because I know that my friends are coming. My leg and speech continue to improve and I am now walking a short distance without my crutch. Soon I will be able to go home.

Ngiyabonga Nkosi

APOLOGIES

to all our members who did not receive their invitation to St. John's feast in time. This service was truly "snail mail"!!!!!! 😊

ST. JOHN'S FEAST WITH A DIFFERENCE.

St. John's Feast presented an opportunity for us to display our activities, both past and present, to all our members.

It was a pleasure to welcome Mrs Yvonne Renaud, one of our Dedicated members, and Louis, who joined us from Nelspruit in Mpumalanga, to celebrate this feast.

Following a wonderful festive Holy Mass and the formal reception of our new members into our Brotherhood, our junior active members took part in a display of 1st Aid. The mock bicycle/skate board accident was very realistic and gave the cadets a chance to show the adults what they had learnt from Sr. Elaine Taylor.



Our ambulance was put to good use by loading the "accident victims" in and being transported away, with lights flashing and sirens blaring.



Estelle Denner and Sandy Messenger demonstrate techniques in home nursing to our members.



Elise Bozas shows how she would give CPR

VOLUNTEERS FROM AROUND THE WORLD



Elaine Taylor from Ireland (packing for home)



Bobbie Braun and Nancy
Bartell from the USA



Gisela Rinderle from Germany

THANKS

- To our member Aine Beausang from Ireland came to visit Sr. Elaine, but got very actively involved in our volunteer work.
- to all of you for sacrificing so much of your time, for leaving your family and friends behind, for the huge amount of dedication and energy which you put into your work.

It is difficult to single out one person. But I think that there is someone who should get a special mention. She originally came to Mandini for six months and then decided to stay for another six. She gave one full year of her life to be with us. This was indeed a big sacrifice for anybody to make. Sr. Elaine Taylor set up our home nursing courses, she trained some of our local volunteers as far as instructor's level, she began our first aid courses, she started the cadets (junior members) and trained them in both home nursing and first aid. Over and above all this she was our nurse-in-charge in Blessed Gérard's Care Centre where she set up all our nursing strategies and care plans. To top all this she worked many night shifts as well.

We take this opportunity to wish Elaine farewell and may God bless you abundantly for all your efforts.

A special mention of gratitude should be made to all the Maltese organisations who have sponsored the volunteers -

- Malteser-Hilfsdienst, Munich;
- The Order of Malta Ambulance Corps., Ireland;
- The Federal Association of the Order of Malta, Washington.

THE BROTHERHOOD OF BLESSED GÉRARD HELPED TO SAVE A LIFE



It was when Comdr. Frank Hearn from the Irish Order of Malta Ambulance Corps visited us with his wife on 21st July 1997 and we took them on a tour to our different projects, that Mr. & Mrs. Hearn and Fr. Gérard came across a terrible road accident just outside Mandini village. A car had a head-on collision and had overturned killing one passenger instantly and leaving the other two trapped. We were the first medical personnel to arrive at the scene with our home nursing vehicle. Having phoned Blessed Gérard's Care Centre it took just a few minutes for our ambulance to arrive. Other ambulances and the fire brigade arrived as well. We fought for the lives of both the surviving until the fire brigade succeeded to cut them out of the vehicle, but unfortunately one of them died before he could be freed from the wreckage. Thanks be to God, we could stabilise him to a degree where he could be transported to hospital.



We would like to compliment Comdr. Frank Hearn on the professional way in which he helped. He was very calm, supportive and efficient. It is wonderful to see, that a head of a relief organisation practises what he preaches.



We would like to take this opportunity to thank Malteser-Hilfsdienst (Germany) who have donated our ambulance and its equipment. Your investment has paid off through a life saved!

A GREAT WAY TO GET TO KNOW PEOPLE.....

A progressive dinner!

In April, while our "American nurses" were here, the Mandini group enjoyed an evening of fun and laughter.

Starting at the Care Centre with Hors D'ouvres and punch, everyone travelled in allotted vehicles to Colin & Caroline Beaumonts' house for soup. With much laughter and anticipation we piled into our cars again and made our way to Hennie & Estelle Denners' house where we ate our main course. Feeling rather relaxed and happy the group had dessert in John & Reneé Pieters home, ending up back at the Care Centre for coffee.

It was unanimously agreed that this event should be repeated soon. Thank you to all who contributed to the cooking etc. and for hosting us. It was indeed a very joyous social occasion.



THANK YOU too

to Mandini Round Table No. 81 for the new wheel chair which they presented to us on 24th April, 1997.

our youngest member Nadine tested it and found it very comfortable.

(see picture)



MEMBERS' NEWS

Birthdays



We wish a blessed and very happy birthday to.....

Altabt Bertrand Baumann & Frau Hildegard Förster on their 80th

Frau Anni Strell on her 75th

Margarete Gräfin Waldstein-Wartenberg, Sr. M.

Valeria Baumeister, Frau Philomena Baumann,

Frau Margarete Schindler, Mrs. Greta Filer, Mrs.

Enize Feeke & Mrs. Eunice Luthuli on their 70th

Mrs. Marjorie Clark on her 65th

Mrs. Anna Schmid, Herr Hans Spielmann & Mrs.

May Goodwin on their 60th

Frau Helga Bohlender & Herr Robert Knöpfle on their 55th

Mrs. Julia Khuzwayo, Mrs. Helma Lintvelt & Mr. Paul Dempsey on their 50th

Mrs. Gail Slatter, Mr. Edward Jenkinson & Mrs. Wendy Richardson on their 40th

Mr. Adrian Dempsey & Mr. John Gundi Ndlovu on their 21st

Obituary

Our sincere condolences go to the families of.....

- Mrs. Tine van der Steege who's mother passed away in Holland
 - Mrs. Johanna Banks who passed away recently
 - Dr. Paul Koch from Germany who passed away on 16 June 1997
- May they rest in peace.

Farewell and best wishes

for the future to.....

Mrs. Linda Neethling, Mrs. Megan Woolridge, Miss Tanzin van Moerkerken and their families, who have all moved away from the Mandeni area.

Congratulations to.....

- Mr. William Yeo & Lientjie on the birth of baby, Emily Nadine
- Mrs. Reena Cassim & her husband on the birth of their baby.
- Mrs. Joy Fynn and Mr. Fynn on the wedding of their daughter, Eleanor.

Best Wishes for your recovery to.....

- Mr. Christoffel Tait after his kidney transplant
- Mrs. Penelope Greening and Mrs. Loshini Naicker after her operation

We wish a wonderful holiday and rest to.....

- Fr. Severin Pschorn O.S.B. & Mrs. Phyllis Cunningham who are both overseas.
- Fr. Gérard, who will be leaving for a fundraising tour (called home leave) shortly.

Donation received

Malteser-Hilfsdienst Munich kindly donated a vacuum splint set to us for use in our ambulance. Your continued support and encouragement is highly appreciated! Thank you, Dr. Count Rechberg!

Welcome to all our new members:

Mr Ray Rimgaudas Bagdonas, Mrs Nancy L.Bartell, Hwst. Herrn Abt Bertrand Baumann, Ehrw Sr. M. Valeria Baumeister, Miss Aine Beausang, Mr Joseph Beausang, Mr Liam Beausang, Br Raymond Berchtenbreiter, Miss Geraldine Brady, Mrs Barbara Braun, Rev. Br. Alexis Bugnolo, Miss Cebile Mavis Buthelezi, Mr Grant Clark, Ehrw. M. Claudia Damm, Mr Adrian Dempsey, Mr Paul Dempsey, Herrn Christoph Deutsch, Mrs Amy Dunn, Mr Ashley Sean Dunn, Frau Heidi Eisner, Frau Heike Elster, Herrn Stephan Elster, Herrn Hubertus Flegel, W M Frazier, Ehrw.Br. Wolfgang Frieser OSB, Herrn Michael Gowin, Rev. Sr Agnes Grasböck, Mrs Penelope Jane Greening, Herrn Thomas Hertlein, Frau Hildegard Hochberger, Frau Resi Huber, Frau Cäcilia Jäger, Mr Daithao Kamei, Abt Dr Emmeram Kränkl, Herrn Alfons Kurz, Frau Ilse Lang, Mr Brian Lehto, Frau Margarete Leibold, Miss Eunice Edith Luthuli, Ehrw Sr M. Winarda Maier, Frau Barbara Manner, Mr Wiseman Mathonsi, Mrs Leela Mayelall, Rev Sr. Regina Mbambo O.S.B., Mrs Thangithini Temperance Mhlongo, Mrs Mavis Phindile Mthembu, Miss Joslyn Myles, Mrs Gugu Thandie Mzimela, Rev Sr Romualda Mzizi, Frau Anna Nast, Frau Hedwig Neckermann, Herrn Günter Neuner, Mr Richard Gordon Num, Mr John C Palmer, Mr Herman A Peterson, Mr John Leslie Pieters, Mrs Lorraine Ragaven, Frau Christine Rieder, Mr Reon Seth Peter Rorke, Miss Christine Scanlon, Frau Maria Theresia Schick, Ehrw Sr. M. Aurelia Senser, Frau Anna Stegerer, Herrn Dr. Rainer Tichy, Mr Peter John Vere, Herrn Ingo Volk, Mr Edward Walsh, Mr J. Marc Wheat, Mr Nkosinathi Israel Zulu, Mr Qinisani Wiseman Zulu, Mr Daniel Bhekinkosi Zungu.

Membership statistics on 22.8.97	Active Members	Donors	Spiritual Supporters	Total
South Africa	148	75	16	239
Tanzania	0	0	1	1
Austria	0	1	3	4
Belgium	0	0	1	1
Germany	10	144	62	216
Denmark	0	0	11	11
Great Britain	0	0	1	1
Hungary	0	0	1	1
Italy	2	5	0	7
Ireland	2	6	1	9
USA	6	9	6	21
Canada	0	1	0	1
El Salvador	0	0	2	2
Chile	0	0	1	1
UAE	0	0	1	1
Japan	0	0	1	1
Australia	0	2	2	4
Total	168	243	110	521

Thank you - once again - to Clare Kalkwarf for writing and to Caroline Beaumont for printing and mailing this newsletter!

The "Brotherhood of Blessed Gérard Newsletter" is the official mouthpiece of the Brotherhood of Blessed Gérard and is edited by the Management Committee of the Brotherhood of Blessed Gérard.

Our address is: 61 Anderson Road
P O Box 440
Mandeni
4490 Republic of South Africa

Phone 032-4562743 (national) +27-32-4562743 (international)

Fax 032-4567962 (national) +27-32-4567962 (international)

e-mail bbg@iafrica.com

URL <http://www.shaka.iafrica.com/~gtl/bbg.htm>

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