



The Red Cross War Memorial Children's Hospital Newsletter

## From foundation stone to historical milestone - fifty years of dedicated service

In June 2006, Cape Town's Red Cross War Memorial Children's Hospital celebrates 50 years of dedicated service in caring for sick children. This important milestone in the history of the hospital provides a useful opportunity to reflect back on the significant role this public hospital has played in meeting the paediatric health care needs of the community which it serves.

Red Cross War Memorial Children's Hospital was established in 1956 as a living memorial to South African soldiers who contributed through service and sacrifice to the Allied victory in World War Two. Ten years in the planning, the hospital was founded in a post war era of optimism and social reform that was fuelled by rapid social and economic change. Furthermore, the poliomyelitis epidemic of 1944, exposed the critical shortage of hospital beds for children in the Western Cape, and in response, the demand for a separate children's hospital increased. Support and financial backing for the building of the hospital came from a number of concerned individuals, and organizations such as the South African Red Cross Society, (Cape Region), ex-servicemen's organizations, the Cape Hospitals Board, the Cape Provincial Administration (1950), the medical fraternity, as well as the broader public.

The foundation stone was laid by the governor general in 1953 and the hospital was officially handed over by the Red Cross Society to the Cape Province in February, 1956. The distinctive 6-storey, star-shaped building is located at the intersection of Klipfontein and Milner Roads, and overlooks Rondebosch Common. The first patients to be admitted in June, 1956 were 15 convalescent poliomyelitis patients, transferred from the City Hospital. Professor Findlay Ford was appointed Head of Paediatrics, and Prof J.H. Louw as Head of Surgery.

The Provincial of the Western Cape and the University of Cape Town are jointly responsible

for the provision of hospital services at Red Cross. The hospital offers specialised facilities and treatment for all sick children from the Western Cape, South Africa and the rest of Africa. Services are 'child-centred, complete, integrated and age-appropriate.' As an academic and teaching hospital providing undergraduate and advanced paediatric health care training, it is affiliated to the Faculty of Health Sciences at the University of Cape Town through the School of Child and Adolescent Health. The hospital has pioneered paediatric nursing education, and is a leading centre for postgraduate specialist paediatric training

Red Cross Children's Hospital has established a world class reputation in paediatrics and paediatric surgery, and the number of specialist units and innovative services available at the hospital attest to this. These include, the poison and accident prevention centre; allergy clinic; cardiology and cardiac surgery units; liver, heart and renal transplantation units; burns unit; haematology and child oncology services; neonatal surgical unit; paediatric trauma centre; repair of cleft lip and palate unit; ambulatory services. The gastroenterology service pioneered the first 'drip room' rehydration unit in South Africa which has subsequently been widely copied. The hospital has a proud record of achievements and 'firsts'- open heart surgery on a child; liver transplant; implantation of artificial trachea; separation of conjoined twins- since 1964, 33 sets of conjoined twins have been separated; skin transplant in a burns patient. Medical and nursing care is supported by a number of allied professional child health and clinical support services-physiotherapists, occupational therapists, school teachers, social workers, speech therapists, dieticians, psychologists, and pharmacists-who assist in the treatment and rehabilitation of sick children. The hospital draws support from the community itself, through volunteer organizations such as

the Friends of the Children's Hospital Association which was established in 1978. In 1994, the Red Cross Children's Hospital Trust was established in response to significant budget cuts which were introduced as part of the restructuring of South African Health Services in the post apartheid era.

**The Red Cross  
War Memorial  
Children's Hospital  
is celebrating  
50 years of caring  
1956 to 2006**

Today, Red Cross Children's Hospital is the only dedicated children's hospital in southern Africa. Over the past 50 years there has been an enormous increase in the number of patients treated at the hospital, both in-patient admissions and out-patient attendances. This is largely due to the significant growth in the population, and increases in diseases of poverty such as tuberculosis, malnutrition, gastro-intestinal disease and more recently, HIV/AIDS. In the words of Emeritus Professor Cywes, 'the story of the children's hospital from its conception to the present day has been one of battle-a battle not only for survival, but a battle to save children's lives against HIV/AIDS, trauma and malignant disease.' As the hospital celebrates its 50th anniversary, it is important to recognize and acknowledge the substantial contribution of so many members of staff. It is their dedication, loyalty and commitment towards the well-being and care of children and their parents that has sustained the hospital and allowed it to flourish over the years.



**Visit of Indian High Commissioner Ms Ruchira Kamboj accompanied by Hospital Facilities Board**

**20 YEARS OF EDUCATING & CARING FOR CHILDREN WITH DIABETES AT RED CROSS WAR MEMORIAL CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL**

The Diabetes Unit at the Red Cross War Memorial Children's Hospital celebrated twenty dedicated years of educating children living with diabetes on Friday, 26 May 2006 at the Hospital's Johnson & Johnson Hall.

Dr Philotheou, Head of the Ambulatory Children and Adolescence Diabetes Services says, "Type 1 Diabetes - insulin dependent is an increasingly common condition in youngsters that requires age appropriate education and expert care by a multidisciplinary team. The Red Cross Children's Hospital Diabetes Centre, provides such care to both the private and public sector, in order to ensure the health, school performance and social integration and above all a life without complications."

In recognition of their existence and service to children with diabetes, Bayer Healthcare - an international health care company which specializes in diabetes care, will be donating a machine which assists the management of children with diabetes - only 6 minutes for a result from a small finger prick blood sample, this machine gives an average percentage of glucose in the blood over a period of 6 - 8 weeks. "Bayer Healthcare, Diabetes Care, South Africa would like to congratulate the Red Cross Children's Hospital on their 50th birthday, and particularly the Paediatric Diabetic Centre on its 20th birthday, by donating a DCA 2000+

instrument. This instrument will be used to measure HbA1c's of all the children with diabetes. This immediate feedback of the HbA1c results allows for the improvement of therapeutic adjustments and ultimately a positive outcome for the children. Bayer Healthcare consists of Pharmaceuticals, Diagnostics and Consumer Care", says Cezelle Williams, Country Head of Bayer Healthcare Division South Africa.

Chief Professional Nurse Lynn Starck, of the Therapeutic and Diabetes Clinic, who has been working at the Clinic since 1982 says that, "the unit has approximately 600 children attending the clinic from 3 months to 16 years. Children from all over the country as well as Namibia, Seychelles and other neighbouring countries visit the clinic. Previously children were seen in the General Outpatients Unit in the endocrine, until 1986 when the centre was opened, and we receive approximately 4000 visits per year".

Storm Martin a 13 year old diabetes patient says, "I think that the Diabetic Clinic at the Red Cross Children's Hospital is a great clinic, because of its friendly atmosphere and caring staff. All of the staff try to help you as much as they can, and make you feel welcome. The doctors and nurses are very understanding and always try to make you feel at home. I felt very anxious at first, but then realized that there was nothing to be nervous about, as they never judged me and accepted that I try to do my best even though it is very difficult at times".

Mrs Trish Thurtell was the first support group co-ordinator at the unit when it started, and her daughter Nancy was the first child at the age of four years with diabetes to be educated at the centre. The second support group co-ordinator to join the

unit is Mrs Shaw, who's son Waldo now 20 years old, was one of the first patients to be educated at 14 months old.

**Information regarding Diabetes**

Diabetes is a non-contagious condition where the body is unable to produce the hormone insulin, thus not able to metabolise food correctly. There is no cure for this condition, but it is treatable. A combination of insulin given by injection, exercise and healthy eating (restricting the amount of sugar and fat consumed), will assist in controlling diabetes in children.

If a diabetic child's blood sugar is low, be aware of the symptoms indicating - paleness, shakiness, hunger, irritability, lack of concentration, confusion, drowsiness, dizziness and headaches. Immediately give him / her glucose and a sandwich and call the parents or doctor.

Symptoms displayed such as thirst, lethargy, drowsiness, irritability, fruity breath, heavy breathing, hot / dry skin and nausea may indicate that the child's blood sugar is high, and immediately test the child's blood sugar and call once again his / her parents or doctor. Common symptoms that show that there may be a problem with the diabetic child include:

Changes in behaviour, crying for no reason, shakiness, paleness and sweating.  
www.diabetes.co.za

**CALL FOR NEWS!**

This newsletter is published four times a year. Please send your news items for THE RED LETTER: email: rhlpro@rgwc.gov.za or fax: 021 636 5335. Hilda Ross - Hilda Ross - ph: 021 6585448

## WINNERS OF 50TH ANNIVERSARY FLAG COMPETITION

Pupil's name	School	Age	Grade	Contact no.
Ebrahim Abrahams	Parkfields Primary	10	5	692 1428
Robin-Lee Nero	Parkfields Primary	11	5	692 1428
Yaasien Abrahams	Parkfields Primary	9	5	692 1428
Liam Smit	Tygerberg Art Centre	10	4	939 9293
Hanaan Booley	Islamia Primary	12	6	696 5600

**Congratulations to the above winners of the flag competition.**

The total of 127 schools from surrounding communities in the Western Cape participated in the competition. The Flag Raising Ceremony will take place on Monday, 19 June 2006 at the Red Cross War Memorial Children's Hospital from 14h30 onwards. Management and staff of the Hospital would like to thank all schools for participating in this exciting project; Labiance Primary, Tygerberg Art Centre, Groote Schuur Hospital school, Red Cross Children's Hospital primary school & Therapeutic Learning Centre, Parkfields primary, Islamia primary, Rylands primary, Vista Nova primary, Sea Point primary, Pnehurst primary and Greyton primary school.

We have received many impressive drawings from talented and artistic pupils. We congratulate them all.

# A Successful Stocktaking Day was had by all...



Early one sunny Saturday morning, on the 1 April 2006, hospital stocktaking took place leading to great success, by generating a total inventory value in the stores of R2 340 617, 24. An entire day was spent taking stock of the main kitchen and CSSD for the first time, including compliance with the treasury regulation, and in the presence of representatives from the office of the Auditor General, and team leaders Mrs Rifka van Haagt and Mr Vincent Rossouw.

Twenty Eight helpful staff members from the Finance Fees, Supplies, Management, Stores and Workshop

departments, showed their support by assisting with stocktaking.  
Great sunny weather, good team work and a braai for staff, contributed towards this successful day. Mr Vincent Rossouw says "Thank you to everybody and all departments that heeded the call, no problems were experienced from end users while taking stock".

### The Team

- Anton Botha
- Clive Stoffels
- Conan Bryley
- Danny Ndaleni
- Debbie Paulse
- Eugene Furter
- Frank van der Vent

- Geraldien Petersen
- Gerry Stubbs
- Jared Becker
- Jenny Knobel
- Lee Ferred
- Lison Hoffmeester
- Margaret Naidoo
- Mark Meldon
- Megan Thys
- Melanie Coetzee
- Najwa Vjoen
- Nicky Brenner
- Peter Albertyn
- Ronnie Rankie
- Sharief Kamaldien
- Sollie Alendse
- Sonny Zimdal
- Thamba Xaba
- Ursula Paul
- Vincent Rossouw



Layout & DTP donated by Sally Smart Graphic Design (021) 6749617



Mark Rowsthorne





## A message for the Red Cross 50th Anniversary

I was diagnosed with cystic fibrosis at the young age of 6 months, by Red Cross Children's ward. Since that day, until I was 15, I was afforded the most wonderful care, compassion and specialist medical advice I could

have hoped for. Between Joe Ireland, Prof Bowie, and their team, I was given the strength to cope with my disease, the knowledge to understanding and living with my disease, and the encouragement to face all obstacles head-on, to know I would not let the disease define who I was, or what I would be. Today, I have a successful career, fantastic health, and a positive outlook on both life and my health. This attitude I owe to those wonderful staff at Red Cross. Thank you, all, for making my Cystic Fibrosis, a minor detail in my life, and for giving me the ability to live my life always to the fullest. Regards, and a big thank you  
*Claire Butterfield*

## Forever grateful to all the staff

Thank you for affording us, Albert and Marie Kleintjies, the opportunity to your invitation of expressing our appreciation and gratitude to the staff and principle members of the Red Cross Hospital.

Our first born Delmain, was delivered on 30th April at Groote Schuur Hospital and immediately afterwards suffered breathing problems. After stabilization he remained in the LCU at GSH until being transferred to Red Cross on 11 June 1976.

It was determined that he had a narrowing of the wind pipe. Delmain subsequently underwent tracheal surgery several times over a period of close to 3 years, the first few months was a harrowing experience to us as young parents. Most supporting was the ward staff of 'E' and 'F' Floors, throughout our ordeal. Special

## The Twelve Days of Christmas

It was in December 1963 and schools had just broken up for the Christmas holidays. I was seven and a half years old and I had just completed what was then called Sub A.

My parents were planning a family holiday, when I suddenly fell ill. I was diagnosed with Clandular Fever and duly received treatment. However, my condition deteriorated to the point of delirium and against our house-doctor's orders, my mother bundled me up and got a friend to drive us to the Red Cross Children's Hospital. A lumbar puncture was performed and I was diagnosed with very advanced meningitis. I was

and could no longer "scrub" in SOPD, he died and was followed by Dr Anseem Mohr as Assistant MS.

I went back to OPD and Staff Surgery – in the Nurses Home, as space in hospital was at premium. I was involved in early plans for new OPD, saw the Physio and Photographic extension and also Filing Section. Space was always too "few".

I introduced the lunchtime Xhosa classes, a teacher from Guguletu, Grace?, taught for at least 6 or 7 years before I left.

I took "early retirement" at 62 on 31 August 1986, as my husband was due to retire early '87.

In spite of patient load/space at premium/continuous inability to reduce patients "after hours", the overflow drip room etc etc. I have fond memories.

Just writing all this brings back so many memories, the staff, from porters/filing clerks etc to consultants, the Poison Centre, the many efforts to control numbers, etc. etc. The Father Christmas visits etc. etc.

I have a few Christmas cards we sold then, a copy of the Painting book to prepare surgical "cold" admissions, to what to expect in hospital.

Yes, I would love to visit the hospital during your planned anniversary.

Sincerely  
Hederg Meyer

with a passion, giving their best and striving to save and sustain life.

On occasions, through the years our other 3 sons received the same engrossed care from your staff.

Presently Delmain is married, with 2 healthy daughters and is an avid sportsman, actively playing soccer, showing no signs of those anxious year, he was hospitalized at your renowned institute.

Our God be praised for the dedicated and committed staff and sponsors of Red Cross War Memorial Children's Hospital.

May He grant each of you, His blessings and sustain you with His richest of Goodness.

Thank you – Forever Grateful  
ALBERT AND MARIE KLEINTJIES

flying colours. My road to recovery in hospital was slow and painful, but very meaningful as all this took place over twelve days at Christmas. I was returned to complete health and I attribute my survival to the fantastic treatment and care I received from a highly professional and dedicated medical staff at that time.

My story > Carol Ritschewald (nee Rodney)  
Born > 26.7.1956  
Patient > Christmas December 1963  
Age > 7

## International Nurses' Day 12 May 2006

The RXH nurses celebrated Florence Nightingale's 186th Birthday on Friday 12 May. She would have approved.

Sr Johanna Lucas welcomed us all, Mrs Dyesbana and Dr M Ramiah thanked the assembled nurses for their huge contribution and commitment to the success of patient care at RXH. Mrs Tselaidis, on behalf of the Friends RXH, thanked the nurses for their contribution to patient care and gave chocolates.



Sr Charmaine Binocur led the Prayers, and Sr Linda Jonker led the Nurse's Pledge. We all sang Happy Birthday, and enjoyed a special tea. Excellent entertainment was provided by two of Cape Town Opera's, Three Tenors with their accompanist. Many of us, under the guidance of Sr Johanna Lucas helped with the organisation of this successful and enjoyable celebration.



Nurses Day, 12 May 2006 at the hospital: Two of the THREE TENORS - Frankie Sawyer, Rommie Thys and accompanist Reginald Buuricks, entertaining the nurses.



## World Health Day 7 April 2006 "working together for health".



The HR department distributing information brochures in the main foyer of the Hospital & answering staff enquiries .



3 teams seen competing in information session / HW/Aids quiz - congratulations to the blue team



## Red Cross will always be my home

I, the under mentioned hereby refer to the advert in a local newspaper in connection with the hospital's anniversary.

**The Metabolic Unit in B2 - 1965**  
S/R: Doris Shroding (deceased) S/R in charge B2  
S/R G Marckel S/R K Martin

**Metabolic Staff**  
Prof John Hansen  
Dr. Barbogott  
Dr Bob Wood-Walker  
Miss Frazierman  
Mrs Hutchinson (née Blond)

**Nursing Staff in Metabolic Unit**  
S/N H Williams  
E/N/A E Sopaz (deceased)  
E/N/A M Larry  
E/N/A M Leonard (née Lemmejies)  
E/N/A C Engelbrecht (née Buzzman)  
E/N/A M Marais  
E/N/A E Jacobs (née Erasmus)  
E/N/A A P Dinns (deceased)

- Patients were admitted to the unit to monitor and to do Social Welfare

## 35 years: a life of dedication to the hospital

### MY EMPLOYMENT AT RED CROSS HOSPITAL

My name is Mariam Jacobs (nee Goliath) alias Golly. I did nursing for 35 years at Red Cross Hospital. Through the years I worked in various wards. I will start giving examples of the wards and the duties we performed there since the time I started until I ended my career.

- D1 • Sister Edmeds was in charge; in that ward there was different patients as the hospital was not as big as it is today.  
e.g. Eyes, cardiac, osteolysis.
- C2 • Burns
- F2 • Premature babies
- E2 • First cubicle: Icterus patients were treated with curate to sedate them. They were also treated on the old Racliff pump balanced with weights.

Inner ward: Jaundice was treated with blood transfusion, we had to strap them on a cross so that we can do the exchange blood transfusion on the patient. Scridor patients was treated in a steam tent; it was a man-made equipment.

Epileptic  
In the 1960's there was one physio for the whole hospital, we addressed her as Tanie.  
In the 1970's the first cubicle in the E2 ward was converted into an intensive care unit. Trachyomy patients were in the 8th cubicle.

# NURSING NEWS

## Welcome to new Nursing Staff appointed during February and March 2006

Nursing Management extends a warm welcome to six new members of Red Cross Hospital Nursing Staff

**CPN L Jonker**  
Head of Nurse Education Department  
**CPN A Ndyenga**  
Dermatology Clinic  
**CPN B Booysen**  
E1 Ward  
**SPN S Allman**  
C2 Ward  
**PN C van Heerden**  
Theatre  
**PN Z Nohashe**  
S11/12

studies. A balance bed was prepared, this includes weighing of stools passed within 24 hours.

- Special feeds were given
- Patients were put on a nutrition diet
- Special Studies were done in the laboratory at the hospital.
- Intake and output were observed and reported.
- Then we met Dr Heinz Rhode (now Professor) a medical houseman. It was really a great privilege to work at such a dedicated hospital, serving the community, especially the patients. I retired in 1993, but still today I do encourage families to send their children to Red Cross Hospital. To me today, I feel this is the best hospital in Sub-Sahara.

God Bless all at the hospital, and may you grow from strength to strength. Red Cross will always be my home.

### "HAPPY BIRTHDAY"

Rosse N Leonard  
47 3rd Avenue, Sherwood Park, Manenberg 7764

The Matrons from 1960 – 1997:  
Miss Kaptein, Miss Williams, Miss Joubert, Miss Hensen and Miss Hoogenhout  
Nursing was my hobby but due to ill health in 1997, I could not continue.  
PS I attached some photos, hoping they will be of good use.

Kind regards  
Mariam Jacobs  
177 Lawrence Road, Athlone 7764  
Friday, 24 March 2006

## OT Department news

We were very pleased at the appointment of our new **HOD, Annerie Coosen, a chief OT who transferred from Tygerberg hospital in January. She has worked there for many years and has a wealth of experience in paediatrics.**

Other new staff are:

**Nafesa Dalwai** - senior OT who transferred from Alexandra Hospital in December.

Our 2 community service OTs,

**Fairooz Sedick and Nafisah Abdullah**

**Jane Durham** will be resigning at the end of March. She will be working privately and at the Michael Oak Warldorf School.

## Senior Auxiliary Nurse Diana Cupido

B1 ward staff were shocked and saddened by the sudden death of their colleague and friend Diana Cupido on 27 April 2006. She was on her way to work.

Nurse Cupido has worked at RXH since July 1984. We will especially remember her for her kindness to the patients and their parents, and for being a good team player. Many of Diana's colleagues attended her funeral in Grassy Park and the Memorial Service at RXH.

Nurse Cupido enriched our lives and she will be sadly missed by all who knew her at RXH.

Our sincere sympathy is extended to Nurse Diana Cupido's husband and family.  
CPN M Weakley Unit Manager B1 Ward

## UPDATE FROM THE CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL TRUST

### 50 things we love about the Hospital...

♥ The warmth that the nurses show the Children. ↑ The way the Hospital treats only Children. ✦ The Hospital is a training centre for international doctors. ☺ The Child friendly wards and colourful staff uniforms. ☆ Dedicated doctors who take care of our special patients. ☺ Open grassy spaces to sit in the sun. ↑ The Hospital treats everything from teeth to kidneys. 🌐 Research done at the Hospital impacts the rest of Africa and the World. 🍷 Cleaning staff who keep the Hospital clean and tidy. → The ICU – it's always so busy and there are always miracles taking place. ♣ Our save lives. ↓ Operating Theatres – it's always so busy and there are always miracles taking place. ♣ Our Hospital treats Children as Children and not as small adults. ♥ Watching all the little babies in the incubators.

☞ Attending ward rounds and watching the professors teaching. ☺ Hearing the nurses speak to the moms in Xhosa. ☺ The milk room with its little bottles of nourishment. ♡ Volunteers who spend time playing with the Children. ☺ Seeing the Lodox in the Trauma Unit. 🏠 Seeing buildings and renovations happening in the Hospital. ↑ The way the nurses care for the Children like they are their own. ✦ Rene Moolman and her extremely enthusiastic teachers running the Primary school. 🐣 Visiting C2 when the physiotherapists are there. ♣ The porter who makes a noise like an ambulance siren when he pushes the beds. ↓ Visiting the Pharmacy to see the chemists handing out meds. ♥ Friends of the Children's Hospital Association who comfort the patients and parents. ☺ Eeyore on Dr Mignon McCulloch's stethoscope. ♣ Benji the small dog who visits the Children. ✓ The Management team that ensures that the Hospital runs smoothly. ☺ The way the doctors find time to play with the Children and make them smile. ♡ The Hospital offers first world care irrespective of the circumstances. ♣ The toy room. 🖼 The bright pictures on the walls. ♣ The fact that the Hospital treats all Children regardless of who they are. → Colourful duvets that brighten the new National Lottery Oncology unit. ✦ Dr Jenny Thomas's bright chili pants. ✦ Security staff who greet all our visitors at the front gate and entrance. ☺ Prof Rode's passion and the tomato plants he grows in his spare time. ✦ Our very own Hospital choir. ☺ Clowns who visit the Children.

☞ Our very own pastoral team. ♣ The Hospital has its own inhouse PRO that works with the Trust and the Hospital. 🏠 The Hospital is a living War Memorial. ☺ Dedicated staff who work behind the scenes on admin and finance. → Our Doctors travel to other countries to share their expertise. 🍷 Kitchen staff who work hard to make sure that no Child goes to bed with an empty tummy. ✦ Happy, caring anaesthetists. ✦ Our impressive new Helipad. ✦ The way nurses sometimes sing in the wards. 🏠 The Hospital makes sure Children go home where they belong. ♣ That the Hospital is turning 50.

### HAPPY BIRTHDAY

### RED CROSS CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL

Here's to the next 50 years of caring for our Children!



### 50/50: A Golden Anniversary song for the Red Cross War Memorial Children's Hospital

From a Co-eval

Happy birthday to the Hospital  
Happy birthday to you:  
This year you're turning 50,  
And I'm turning 50, too.

I'm delighted for this hospital,  
But for me there's much less thrill:  
As the hospital reaches upwards,  
I am going downhill.

While the Red Cross Children's Hospital  
Stays as young as Peter Pan,  
As I reach my half century,  
I'm a greying, balding old man.  
Oh great and golden hospital,  
Happy birthday, hear them shout:  
But as you ring in the next half century,  
I am nearly wrung out.

So here's to you, Oh Red Cross Hospital  
Raise a toast; Hip hip hooray!  
Look towards your rosy future  
As I head for senile decay – hooray...  
As I head for senile decay – OK?  
Yes, I head for senile decay.

DR TONY WESTWOOD April 2006

# 50 YEARS OF CARING

## Red Cross Children's Hospital – 50 years old

I enrolled at Carinus Training College for nurses in 1956, Ms. Loopuyt ran the college. We studied in the very old building opposite St. George's Cathedral and the Strand new Bellville hospital. We were given the opportunity to go to Groote Schuur Hospital or the newly built Red Cross Hospital in Rondebosch to do our practical.

Some of us chose Red Cross Hospital being brand new and a friend of mine, Rona Buchanan (now Ms. Wimbley), as we were both Rondebosch residents. We nurses worked for six weeks marking all the linen for the wards. Nurse Elizabeth Sewell read to us during this time.

We were designated to work in the children's ward which was a mixed age of patients. There were cleft palate patients, patients with heart

defects who needed vary careful nursing plus numerous other sick children patients. In the short time that we were with these children patients they became quite attached to the nurses and gave little letters or drawings to them.

Being at the bottom of the nursing fraternity, we were kept very busy with the various duties that were delegated to us. All that we had learnt at college we put into practice. It was indeed an honour to work at the Red Cross Children's Hospital which is now celebrating it's fifty years of existence. A very fine record it has built up not only in South Africa but in Africa and worldwide.

The nurses accommodation had a fantastic view of Devil's Peak, etc some of Table Mountain and the Rondebosch Common. Dr. David Davies dealt with many cleft palates and at a much later date he operated on my daughter in-law as well as my grandchild. So he covered a span of years

in this regard and did wonderful operations on both my granddaughter and her mother.

May the Red Cross Hospital continue to go from strength to strength now and in the future.

Yours sincerely  
Mollie Paice

PS:

- I have been unable to locate Rona Buchanan (now Mrs. Wimbley).
- I have written the above letter under my maiden name. For many years I have written under my married name and first name – i.e. Pamela Taylor, but in this case it would not be relevant to the above letter.

## To the benefit of all the people

During World War 2 my father J.J van den Bergh was head of the Governor General's War Fund. After the war there was considerable money left over. My father being a lawyer went to court about how to utilize the money. The court granted permission for the money to be used to the benefit of all the people.

Endless discussions took place and they came up with the Children's Red Cross Hospital where the money went. My father was on the Building Commission while the hospital was built. He died in 1967.

Yours sincerely  
Betty Schabot

## Exceptional & supportive

I read in the Argus recently about patients at Red Cross some time ago. I heard that you wanted true stories about patient care.

In about August 1980, my son Lance Brinders, was admitted to Red Cross Hospital in a semi-coma after having Encephalitis after mumps. He had a tracheotomy as he could not breathe and was on life-support system. I was told that they could only keep him alive with the machines and if he survive he would be a vegetable.

Dr Klein was his doctor and gave me much hope. Lance was in a complete coma for one week and then started to regain consciousness and after 2 weeks he was released. The doctors had a report and photos put in the Medical Journal. It took him ± 2 months to fully recover. He caught up with his school work and was back to normal through the grace of God and also with the care of the doctors and nurses. They were exceptional and gave me much support. I truly want to recommend Red Cross Staff for their caring and support.

Lance is 30 yrs old and is a qualified Chartered Accountant working at BP at the Waterfront. Thank you, Red Cross Hospital, God Bless you. (Mrs) Pamela Brinders



## Built for (a mere) £2 Million in 1956

It was so interesting to read your article on the Red Cross Hospital. I would like to congratulate all of those responsible for the hard work which they must have put in to raise the sum of R20m to cover the initial phase of revamping the facilities.

As a family we have been involved with this wonderful facility in varying ways – Initially my father, Mr. A. van Dam of Van Dam and Noffki was a founder of the Company which originally built the Hospital. I have been told by Mr. Gibson, who emigrated from England to assist with the Q.S. work on the building, that the original cost was in the region of 2 million pounds.

Construction commenced in 1953 with the foundation stone being laid by the then Governor General, Dr. E.G. Jansen in October of that year, with the entire building being completed in 1956.

Together with other members of our family I regularly visited the site to view progress. After my marriage and the birth of our son I was so glad that this wonderful facility was available in Cape Town as in a period of some 16 months, our son was treated as an inpatient on 20 occasions for allergic asthma.

If this facility had not been available there is no doubt that our son would not have survived. I therefore wish to thank all doctors and nursing staff a huge thank you for all past services and to wish further success in the future of the hospital, it's Staff and Administrators.

Yours sincerely,  
E Cummock/Van Dam (Mrs)