

THEMBALAMI & MODA

CARE CENTRE

RAND AID
assist. alleviate. accompany.

Place of hope

AUGUST 2025



Patricia Maki
enjoys a
cupcake.



Happy dancers snake their way around the room.



Second-year Arwyp student Gugu Bophele with resident Pieter Faugust and Thembalami deputy manager Elize Raath.

YUMMY CAKE AND DANCING FEET:

The sweet life at Thembalami

Dancing and laughter rang out when a team from the Arwyp Training Institute visited Thembalami Care Centre and the Max Ordman Deaf Association (MODA) on Mandela Day, bringing with them cupcakes and scarves for everyone, as well as a healthy dose of fun.

The visitors spent time interacting with the residents in Thembalami's dining hall, and as always the Thembalami staff members and a few residents were on their feet as soon as the music started.

■ **INSIDE THIS ISSUE: MORE MANDELA DAY NEWS**



MATRON RETIRES AFTER 41 YEARS

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Next month: Meet the new nursing services manager, Violet Ngobeni

AUGUST BIRTHDAYS

Residents:

1st	Joey de Souza	96
3rd	Annette Verskin	78
8th	Frederich Konig	82
8th	Dorah Mapekula	75
9th	Marion Oliphant	79
10th	Merle Townsend	85
10th	Lesley Nuyten	61
11th	Hugh Hutton	90
17th	Rachel Lasker	97
22nd	Coenraad Steenkamer	89
28th	Regina Ratshosana	82

Staff:

5th	Busi Binda
8th	Pinky Lebello
11th	Meriam Makhwiting
11th	Lorraine Mohale
13th	Jerry Mofokeng
22nd	Thanyani Nevani
23rd	Nomalanga Mthembu
30th	Ntswaki Radebe

WELCOME TO:

Peter Faugust Amanda Brown

REST IN PEACE:

Eira Kennedy
Judith McLaren
Blaise September

DONATIONS

We would appreciate any donations or fundraising ideas. Should you wish to chat with Thembalami's manager Esme van der Walt about your ideas, contact her at:

Email: evanderwalt@randaid.co.za
Phone: 010 534 8771

LEAVE A LEGACY of compassion and hope by including us in your will, ensuring continued care for those in need.

Should you wish to make a once-off or regular donation, see details below:

MODA

Standard Bank
Account no: 420279571
Branch code: 051001
Reference: MODA Supts Fund

Thembalami Care Centre
c/o Rand Aid Association
Standard Bank, Greenstone
Branch code: 051001
Acc no: 001788701
Reference: TH Supts Fund

Wrapped in love on Mandela Day

Stoneridge Centre in Greenstone Park arrived with a gift of cuddly blankets on Mandela Day. Nearby Tarentaal retirement village, also run by Rand Aid, received a pile of blankets too.



ABOVE: Jo-Anne Weyermans-Noble, Michelle van Staden and Murial Erdis.

LEFT: MODA resident Han-sie Griesel and Thembalami deputy manager Elize Raath.

RIGHT: Kevan Harris receives a blanket from Michelle Hurley. Looking on is Nellie Green.



Mini-manicures leave ladies feeling pampered

Sorbet Morningside marked Mandela Day in style, treating 16 ladies from Thembalami Care Centre and the Max Ordman Deaf Association to a pampering session of buffing, polishing and care.

The generous gift left the residents not only with beautiful nails but also with big

smiles and a sense of being truly spoilt.

The talented Sorbet nail techs who volunteered their time and skills were Nokuthula Ndhlovu, Sekai Riva, Acacia Hlako, Rilita Ramasanya, Neo Tiba and Reitumetsi Sereko.



CLOCKWISE, FROM ABOVE LEFT:

Pretty nails for Amanda Brown. MODA resident Jane Schwikkard. Daphne Paetzold. TLC for resident Lena Woolf.

Gogos return to Thembalami for Mandela Day joy

In the spirit of Mandela Day, Thembalami Care Centre and the Max Ordman Deaf Association (MODA) welcomed back a group of cherished older women from Alexandra, affectionately known as the 'gogos', who were previously part of Thembalami's Zamokuhle outreach programme.

Although the 14-year-long Zamokuhle programme came to a close in June 2023 due to budget cuts by the Department of Social Development, the bond between Thembalami and the gogos remains strong. The reunion, held on July 16, marked a heartwarming return for the women to the centre that had supported them for over a decade.

During the 67-minute Mandela Day celebration, the gogos joined residents and staff for a day of joyful activities.

The programme included light exercises, singing, and a creative session making pom-pom dolls. These handmade dolls, as well as bibs that were made by Thembalami housemother Jane Mogwale and resident Jo-Ann Weyerman-Noble, were later donated to Sithandiwe Disabled Care Centre in Lombardy East, extending the day's goodwill even further.

Tsakani Shihlomule, Thembalami's occupational therapist, noted: "This initiative was our way of giving back to the community and reconnecting with the gogos who remain close to our hearts."

The event ended with warm conversations over tea and scones.



ABOVE: The Zamokuhle gogos with Thembalami and MODA staff members.

RIGHT, TOP: Thembalami manager Esme van der Walt with Victoria Smith, the oldest and longest serving member of the Zamokuhle Service Centre.

RIGHT: Jenny Fraser, the daughter of Thembalami Care Centre resident Doreen Calder (99), donated the wool for the centre's Mandela Day initiative



ABOVE, LEFT: Shirley Sibeko plays games with residents and gogos.



ABOVE, RIGHT: Housemother Jane Mogwale and Thembalami resident Jo-Ann Weyerman-Noble make bibs for the Sithandiwe Disabled Care Centre, as part of Thembalami's outreach initiative.

Paulina retires after a lifetime of service

After 41 years of unwavering service to the elderly, Paulina Namo, the head of nursing services at Thembalami Care Centre, hung up her nurse's cap at the end of July.

Her retirement marks the end of a remarkable chapter not just for Rand Aid Association, but for every life she touched along the way.

With well over 14 000 days of care, leadership, and dedication behind her, Paulina's story is as inspirational as it is humbling. From her early years navigating political unrest to becoming a cornerstone of elder care, she has walked a path guided by faith, resilience and service.

A journey that began in turmoil

Born in Alexandra township, Paulina grew up in a family rooted in education, community and faith. Her father, Ranthite Namo, was the youngest of 13 children, who educated himself through sheer determination. He became a teacher and later a respected Anglican priest, known for his work in prison education and social justice. Her mother, too, quietly championed the vulnerable, often sheltering women fleeing domestic violence.

When the 1976 Soweto uprising brought schooling to a halt, Paulina's uncle, Canon Leo Rakale, saw her potential and acted. Through his connections with the Community of the Resurrection in Rosettenville and the UK, Paulina was offered an educational opportunity in England that would change her life.

"I was just 17 and had to leave everything I knew behind," recalls Paulina. "I initially stayed with Hannah Stanton, a remarkable woman who had been deported from South Africa for her activism. When British immigration tried to interrogate me alone after I arrived from South Africa, she stormed in and said, 'How dare you treat this child like that!' She made sure I was safe."

At the Anglican Convent in Norwich, Paulina started again from Grade 10, despite having been in matric in South Africa. "I had never done science, but a teacher motivated me to take physics, chemistry and maths. I ended up writing my O-levels through the Oxford and Cambridge Schools Examination Board."

Paulina dreamt of studying medicine but, due to financial constraints, pursued nursing instead. She trained at the Norfolk and Norwich Hospital and returned to South Africa in 1984, determined to serve. But her homecoming was jarring.

"I went to Johannesburg Hospital to apply for a job and was told, 'Blacks are not allowed here.' They said I could work as a cleaner," she recalls. "I had the qualification but no opportunity."

Then she heard about Rand Aid Association, and so began a four-decade journey of dedication.



Paulina Namo (right) with Mahlatse Isabel Mokoana, a former care worker who went on to train as a paramedic and firefighter.

A matron in a million

Paulina started at the Bramley Complex in November 1984. "The grounds were beautiful and the atmosphere with colleagues was serene," she remembers. "Dr Paul Wright, our house doctor, told me: 'You are not alone; I'm just a call away.' That spirit of care inspired me."

She quickly rose through the ranks, becoming night superintendent, where her innovative and compassionate approach left a lasting impact. "I created a schedule to visit all residents every evening. Continuity of care mattered. I wanted residents to feel safe and respected, no matter the time of day."

Paulina was instrumental in mentoring staff and conducting in-service training. Two carers under her guidance became enrolled nursing assistants. She also worked in Rand Aid's detoxification unit at Wedge Gardens, gaining skills that would serve her well in primary health care.

Throughout her career, she made sure no one died alone. "Even today, at Thembalami, if a resident is dying and has no family, staff take turns to sit with them, hold their hand and talk

to them until the end. That is non-negotiable."

Wisdom from the elders

Paulina has always seen her work as a calling. "You learn so much from older people. Their wisdom is not something to be thrown away," she says. She fondly remembers residents who became family, and moments of quiet dignity that reinforced her life's purpose.

Her leadership helped shape Thembalami's warm and caring environment, where residents are treated with deep respect. "Rand Aid gives elders a life of dignity. They are cared for until the Lord calls them."

Family, loss and new beginnings

Paulina's later years were marked by personal sorrow. During the Covid pandemic, she lost both her parents, just days apart. She was unable to bury her mother due to being ill herself, and her father, grief-stricken after 63 years of marriage, passed away 12 days later.

Despite these losses, she has remained a pillar of strength, never allowing her grief to overshadow her commitment to her residents.

A well-earned rest

Now, after 'running the race' for Rand Aid, Paulina is ready to spend more time with her family, especially her nine-year-old grandson. She is moving to Highlands North and looks forward to indulging her love of reading, gardening, and watching news channels.

"I have a passion for biographies – Barack Obama, George Bizos – and I love feeling the earth between my fingers."

She is also deeply proud of those she has mentored, including Mahlatse Isabel Mokoana, a former care worker who trained as a paramedic and firefighter. "I am so proud of her. She is proof that we rise by lifting others."

A farewell function was held on July 25, at which tribute was paid to the outstanding contribution Paulina made to Thembalami and Rand Aid. At the event, Rand Aid GM care and human resources Ayanda Matthews said: "Paulina has always stayed true to her calling – firm yet compassionate. She disciplined fairly, encouraged growth and supported her team through challenges. I'm glad you'll now have time to enjoy your grandson and the activities you love. Wishing you all the best in your next chapter."



The Christian Family Church visitors brought good cheer to Thembalami Care Centre.

Some music, a meal and an uplifting message

Acts of kindness took centre stage on Saturday, July 26, when a team from Christian Family Church Johannesburg visited Thembalami Care Centre and Max Ordman Deaf Association (MODA) in Lombardy East as part of the church's annual Serve Our City initiative.

The project mobilises church members to make a tangible difference in their communities, with more than 70 initiatives running this year – from repairing potholes to feeding the homeless.

For this team, the mission was simple: To share love, hope and encouragement with the elderly. "They may

be older, but they are not forgotten," says team leader Ps Logan Munsamy. "There is still a purpose for them. Some may feel like this is the end, but we brought a message of hope that I believe uplifted their spirits."

The group consisted of pastors Logan and Charlotte Munsamy; Runean, Urasha and Faith Govender; Rennie, Nerosh and Leavail Pillay; and Altana Kyakutala.

"They served us a wonderful meal, did some spiritual upliftment and shared beautiful music. It was a fantastic day – all the residents enjoyed it," said Thembalami manager Esme van der Walt.



Altana Kyakutala and Donald Cochrane.

Heartfelt performance at Thembalami birthday bash



Julius Koen, who had a special song sung to him by his daughter Sonja Cilliers.

Emotions ran high at the Thembalami Care Centre and Max Ordman Deaf Association as residents gathered to celebrate the monthly birthday bash, highlighted by a special musical performance from Sonja Cilliers and her husband, Leon.

The occasion held particular significance for Sonja, as one of the birthday celebrants was her father, Julius Koen, a Thembalami resident who turned 78 on July 30. In a touching coincidence, Sonja's birthday was a day before his.

"Sonja and Leon sang so beautifully that I was in tears," says Thembalami deputy manager Elize Raath.

In total, six July birthdays were celebrated. Johannes Naude, at 86, was the oldest honouree, while Allan Wasserfall, 74, was the youngest.

The event brought joy, music and a sense of family to the residents, with Sonja's heartfelt tribute to her father making it a memorable celebration.



Sonja Cilliers.