

# Ron Smith Care Centre @ Elphin Lodge



MARCH 2026 No. 221



## Love in action



Residents and staff's spirits were raised throughout February at Rand Aid's Ron Smith Care Centre (RSCC), culminating in an inspiring performance of *You Raise Me Up* that brought everyone together in a moment of shared joy.

The month of love saw residents crafting Valentine's cards to decorate for décor and to share with loved ones, while music bingo – a game where players mark off familiar songs as they are played – and a Valentine's quiz added fun and engagement in the weeks leading up to the main event.

"These activities give residents opportunities to be creative, socialise and enjoy meaningful moments together," says Simoné Botha, the care centre's occupational therapy and recreation manager.

The highlight was the Valentine's Day Tea on Friday, February 13. The hall, adorned in red and white, set the perfect scene for connection and celebration. Singer Chris Coetzer captivated the audience with beloved love songs, while staff joined in for dancing and singing to classics such as *Shosholozo* and *Jikele Maweni*. The performance concluded with a moving rendition of *You Raise Me Up*, during which residents and staff held hands, sharing a powerful moment of connection.

The morning ended with tea, coffee, and cupcakes lovingly baked by Tracey O'Donoghue from Crazy for Cakes.

Simoné adds, "Valentine's at RSCC is more than just a celebration; it's about appreciating the love, memories and community that make our care centre feel like home."



## Get to know me

### ELISABETTA MORGIA: RIVER LODGE 3 RESIDENT

I was born in 1938 in the Italian village of Montefranco. My childhood was shaped by World War II, with my family being forced to feed German soldiers. I lost my father at a young age, and while my sisters were sent to a monastery to learn a trade, I stayed home to support my mother. One of my treasured memories is receiving weekly coaching from an opera teacher. Although my mother could not afford lessons, the teacher heard me sing and offered to train me, nurturing my love for music. At 19, I moved to Rome, initially working as an au pair. Soon after, I found work in knitwear, eventually working for Benetton. During this time, I would walk past Rino's barber shop every afternoon. He would wait outside and call me "Signorina" until eventually we began our love story. We married in 1964 and were blessed with two children, our son Fabrizio and daughter Simona. We later moved to Joburg, where our third daughter, Roberta, was born. Although we returned to Italy twice, South Africa became our home. I am deeply grateful for my family and for the wonderful people my children have become. Sadly, Rino passed away in 2025 after 60 years of marriage. Today, I feel blessed to have a close-knit family, including two granddaughters and four grandsons.



**Favourites:**  
Dressing elegantly. My independent spirit, which has influenced my taste in décor and literature. Reading and watching Italian television. Opera and classical music. Flowers, particularly orchids and cyclamen. Baking – I am known for my crostata (jam tarts) and éclairs. Simple pleasures – a perfect espresso, Opium perfume and Swarovski crystals. Travel – visits to Israel, Greece and Spain – and Italy at least every two years.

### ESTHER MAYO: RIVER LODGE 3 RESIDENT

I was born on the Island of Rhodes in 1932. At the time, the island was under Italian rule. Today it is one of the Greek islands. At the age of 7, we moved to Israel. We travelled via Tangier, Morocco, where we stayed for around six years. We attended school where we learnt French. We arrived in Israel by boat at the Port of Haifa on the day the war ended. It was a joyous occasion with bands playing, celebrating the end of the war. I lived in a suburb of Tel Aviv called Givatayim with my parents and five siblings. I still remember the day in 1948 when the state of Israel was declared – we were very emotional and joined in the celebrations. I got married in 1952 to Avraham Mayo. We left Israel a few months later for Salisbury, South Rhodesia (now Harare, Zimbabwe). Avraham was living and working there at the time. We had two daughters: Rosy and Rifca. I am blessed to have seven grandchildren and 13 great grandchildren. I have lived in Zimbabwe and South Africa for 73 years, although I have been back to Israel on numerous occasions to visit family. Avraham sadly passed away in 1996. I went to live with Rosy in Cape Town for several years and then with Rifca in Bulawayo for three years before coming to RSCC after an operation.



**Favourites:**  
Socialising, reading, baking, cooking, sewing, knitting and crocheting – I used to make all the girls' clothes myself. Sephardic Jewish cuisine, including bourekas, pastelikos, chamali and travados. I adore gladioli. I have fond memories of family holidays and travels – we often visited Durban, Beira or Maputo in Mozambique, but most of all, I cherished the times when we could visit family in Israel.

### WINNIE MARINGA: RIVER LODGE 3 ENA

I was born in 1971 in Tweefontein, Mpumalanga, where I began my schooling. When I reached Grade 9, I moved to live with my aunt in Xikundu, where I matriculated. During my school years, I enjoyed being active and participating in sports such as netball and athletics. It was also in Xikundu, while at school, that I met my husband, Kenneth. Our relationship grew over time, and we were married in 1995. After our marriage, we moved to Johannesburg in search of work. We settled in Alexandra, where we have lived ever since. Our marriage has been blessed with three children – one daughter and two sons – who are a great source of joy. I began my working journey as a domestic worker, a role I dedicated myself to for 10 years. During this time, I developed a strong work ethic and a passion for caring for others. Wanting to grow and build a career in caregiving, I completed a care worker course at Empilweni in Randburg. I later worked as a locum caregiver at Wits Hospice, where I gained valuable experience while continuing my studies and completing my Enrolled Nursing Auxiliary course. In 2021, I started working as a reliever for Rand Aid, and I felt deeply grateful to be offered a permanent position in December 2024.



**Favourites:**  
Being around people. Gospel music. Flowers, although I do not enjoy gardening. Crocheting, cooking and baking – especially biscuits, cakes, and bread. Spending time with my family. Visiting my mother, to whom I am very close. My work – I feel happy and fulfilled in nursing and in caring for those who need assistance. My dreams – to become a registered nurse and own my own car. My philosophy – always be kind to others.

## Birthdays

### RESIDENTS

02 Mar	Marianne Kernes	(LS)	77
04 Mar	Marlene Freeman	(CP)	69
08 Mar	Jewel Gold	(RL3)	76
14 Mar	Denis John Hutchinson	(CP)	94
24 Mar	Salome Chinman	(RL2)	86
25 Mar	Francis Kok	(CP)	91

### STAFF

03 Mar	Julia Molotsi	LS
03 Mar	Kedibone Shongoane	CP
06 Mar	Flora Mthogoane	CP
06 Mar	Siphokazi Mzana	LS
06 Mar	Nosipho Mzana	Elphin
14 Mar	Thembi Kekana	RL2
15 Mar	China Matsane	WL
15 Mar	Tinyiko Nkwini	RL1
20 Mar	Portia Ngobeni	Office
29 Mar	Thabisile Ndoobe	CP

\* Staff members must please remember to collect their birthday chocolates from reception.

### FONDLY REMEMBERED

Ethne Tonnesen	CP
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### WELCOME TO...

Hu Kai Hong	RL2
Mary Loe	RL2
Willie van den Berg	RL2
Manfred Jacobs	RL3
Wolfgang Aberle	RL3
John Lerner	RL3
Esme Trollip	WL



HEARTS in Action



The winner of the HEARTS in Action monthly award is Merriam Motaung, who works on the Lakeside wing. She was chosen because she demonstrates excellence in maintaining exceptional standards of cleanliness and hygiene. She consistently goes above and beyond, and is always willing to assist where needed. By placing residents' needs first and offering unwavering support to her colleagues, she demonstrates dedication, compassion, and true professionalism.