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HELLO-O-O ECHO

PORT ELIZABETH

VOLUME I

Editor: ELIZABETH FOSTER (Duncan Ferguson Park)

No. 1

I am delighted to have this opportunity of welcoming this first issue of "Hello-o-o Echo".

I have not seen the contents, so am greatly looking forward to reading the finished product. I am fully confident that the editorial committee under the able chairmanship of Mrs Elizabeth Foster, with her years of newspaper experience and journalistic flair, will produce a newsletter of great interest to the residents of the Echo complexes who will be looking forward to each issue of "Hello-o-o Echo".



Mr G S Walton

On behalf of the Echo board I wish to express our sincere thanks to all who have given freely of their time to produce this quarterly newsletter.

G S Walton
Chairman of the Board.

EDITORIAL

Gladness peppered with trepidation was my reaction on being invited to edit this communication.

For all of us living under an ECHO roof it should prove to be of interest to read about the doings of each other - hence gladness. Now that the first issue is ready, the trepidation has vanished. Members of the editorial committee have been most helpful and I trust that this little magazine will grow into an important part of our community.

The committee hopes it will give you pleasure, interest and stimulate you into becoming a contributor.

Editorial committee members will be glad to receive your comments and contributions for the next issue due to be published in November.

Here are their names in alphabetical order:

Molly Buchanan, Kruger Gardens; Joyce Cole, Laubscher Park West; Phyllis Elms, Laubscher Park Flats; Esther Krige, Lapa Munnik Park; Helen Melville, Caritas; Doreen Neville, Laubscher Park East; Mary Tudhope, Dunant Park; Hope van der Merwe, Walton Park Flats; Vida van Niekerk, Walton Park.

Lesley Bebington is an ex-officio member of the committee.

"Magazine" is really a courtesy title for this publication but this is what we called it during its

gestation period. It will, I'm sure, develop into a wonderful instrument of communication between all the various ECHO villages. A great deal depends on you the readers.

Please write and tell us about your particular interests and we will try our best to cater for them. Just address your letters to Hello-o-o Echo and leave them with your Manager for delivery to the ECHO office.

Dr JACK SKEAD

by Vida van Niekerk

It was as a widower that Dr Jack Skead moved to Kruger Gardens Retirement Village from where he came to live in Walton Park.

He and Christine (Maasdorp) had been married for 48 years and had two sons and a daughter.

The well respected and much loved member of the Walton Park community has possibly had more job satisfaction than many in his fascinating and long life.

Port Elizabeth-born Cuthbert John Skead is a fourth generation South African whose grand and great-grandfathers had been respectively pioneer merino sheep farmer, road builder, naval hydrographer and merchant in the Eastern Cape.

Educated at St Andrew's College, Grahamstown, Grootfontein School of Agriculture and at Reading in

England where he studied the Theory of Dairy, he settled in the Grahamstown district on the farm "Gameston".

Medical advice compelled Jack to sell his farm in 1949. No sooner had he taken up the post of secretary of the Kaffrarian Museum in King William's Town, that the Director resigned and Jack was appointed in his place.



Dr C J Skead

After 12 years and again for health reasons, he applied for a less arduous position. As Research Officer for the Eastern Cape with the University of Cape Town's world famous Fitzpatrick Institute of Ornithology his base remained King William's Town where his professional career came to a halt with retirement in 1972. The last five years he worked once again at the Kaffrarian Museum as biologist.

He describes these years as his most productive as he was able to put down on paper much of what he had learned and observed during his many years of research.

A host of publications are the fruit - volumes on birds, mammals and even on "Historical Mammal Incidence" and "Historical Place Names in South Africa". Many of his papers on Natural History have also been published.

Jack received the honorary degree of PhD from Rhodes University in 1982 - a fitting tribute to a man whose painstaking research, patient observation of the life around him

and sedulous perseverance in putting down on paper what he had learned, has so greatly enriched the knowledge of South African natural history.

A revealing anecdote about Jack told me by a mutual friend concerns a heavy snowfall in the Grahamstown area in 1976. While everyone was out looking at the snow or playing in it, Jack walked about trying to find out what the birds were doing. He found them scratching for food under the rugby stands in St Andrew's College grounds where hardly any snow had penetrated.

LAPA MUNNIK PARK

"A laugh a day keeps the doctor away" writes Esther Krige in her lively introduction to the above complex.

"There are 12 cottages, 23 flats and 86 rooms six of which are for the frail aged well looked after by Matron Swanepoel and her staff.

On June 15 we celebrated Munro Kirk's 12th birthday with a bring and buy.

Our main fund raising effort this year is towards our swimming pool. We would like to thank all those who worked so hard and also those who gave so generously. The pool and walls surrounding it are completed and only the two gates have to be installed. Now our project is to have solar heating so the water can be the right temperature for the most beneficial effect on therapeutic exercises.

Our cottages all have a view of the sea and we have an active Work Group. We meet once a month when everyone tries to bring an article for sale. We support a different charity each month.

We are very privileged to be here in our latter years so near to airport, railway station, Opera House, chemist and a good shopping centre."

John and Bert were rivals. So when John got a car telephone Bert had one installed in his. He phoned John.

"Hi, John, I'm calling from my car!"

"Hold on will you? My other phone is ringing."

LETTER FROM THE CHAIRMAN OF LAPA MUNNIK MANAGEMENT AND ENTERTAINMENT COMMITTEE:

Congratulations on your idea of having an Echo Newsletter. We have an active committee and endeavour to have a variety of entertainment each month. We assist in ironing out any complaints and implementing any constructive suggestions that are brought to our attention.

We have at least two video shows a month; Bingo every third Wednesday; Snooker every Wednesday afternoon; Sunday braais or other outings such as a visit to Wyndomayne; morning tea outings; visits to places of interest such as the Fire Station; tea and chat mornings sometimes with a speaker or demonstration, matinee shows at the Opera House, 6.30pm shows at PEMADS Ford Little Theatre.

There is the twice monthly Library Service to the Complex.

Chocolates are presented on Mothers' and Fathers' days.

The activities programme is distributed to each resident every month.

My best wishes to all
PEGGY RAAFF

ANOTHER DOOR WILL OPEN

by Marjory Ball

As one grows older and back and joints begin to creak, the wise Senior Citizens begin to look around for other less physical but equally absorbing interests. Most of them rise magnificently to the challenge.

When I was nearing that stage, my growing family used to shake their heads over my dreamy ways.

"Poor old Mum," they would say. "If she is as vague as this now what will she be in real old age?"

Well I must be a late developer because my first book, "Donkey Days in Old Walmer" was published when I was 90 and sold 1 500 copies. By that time another door had opened and I was spending hours a day trying to paint flowers in water colours. The families would be gathering soon in PE for my 90th birthday and I thought it would be fun if

each group could choose a picture to take home as a memento.

Miniatures came easily but larger pictures got worse instead of better. In despair I appealed to an artist friend who gave me eight invaluable lessons and with hours of practice I began to improve. What a thrill when someone actually asked to buy one of my pictures! I couldn't believe it!

Later there was a successful mini exhibition with half proceeds from sales to the Hospice Fund.

It was a wonderful feeling to know that God allowed me to develop a talent so late in life. It cannot last much longer but it has taught me what a miracle of nature is revealed even in a tiny flower, when you hold it in your hand.

That alone would make it all worthwhile.

ALL ABOUT AGE

Many of you living in the Dunant Park Lodge will remember that gallant gentleman, Mr James Gay.

After being a cottage resident he lived to the age of 104 in the Lodge where he was visited daily by his daughter Betty. It was near Christmas when the heat and crush of people in the shops exhausted her so that on arriving in her father's room she sank into a chair and sighing deeply exclaimed "I really feel a hundred".

Looking at his daughter with great interest Mr Gay remarked

"I've always wondered what it felt like."

A new young preacher was calling on all the old people of his congregation. He went to the local nursing home to look up toothless old Mrs Baker.

This being his first call, he was a little nervous and kept eating peanuts from a bowl beside her bed. When he got up to leave he found he'd eaten all the peanuts.

"Oh, I'm so sorry!" he exclaimed. "I've eaten all your peanuts."

"That's OK said Mrs Baker. "I've already eaten, off the chocolate coating."

CHANGING TIMES

by Joyce Cole

Living in a retirement village requires the same give and take that makes the most of living in any community. Sometimes, when through circumstances the residents change with newcomers suddenly in the majority, some old residents feel left out in the cold.

I came from another Province and moved into my cottage about 14 years ago. All of us were about the same age. Some were alone and others with their partners. It was a new way of living but we all melded and helped one another, busy planning and planting our gardens.

A committee was formed for entertainment and so the years rolled by. Eventually, the gardens became over-grown so it came to pruning and reducing the shrubs and greenery. Gradually too, some of our friends and acquaintances passed on, newcomers moved into the vacated cottages.

We older residents felt a little sad and maybe even a little resentful. The new residents were all couples and I for one felt a little more lonely. As we aged, our outings began to fall away but the newcomers in their enthusiasm took over.

Because I was asked to contribute to the first issue to this our first communal publication, I've thought about the changes that have taken place. I do realise that this is my opinion and perhaps I've been remiss in withdrawing and allowing life in our village to pass me by.

In closing I must say how very happy I have been and know that my choice in moving to Port Elizabeth and placing myself under the care of ECHO was the right one.

We have people all round us with many and varied talents and I hope as our magazine grows you will discover so much to contribute to the benefit of all of us.

A DWELLER OF LAUBSCHER PARK EAST PONDERS THE PAST

by George Brown

When I moved into my cottage in 1969 to retire quite graciously (as I imagined) from the ever-mounting tensions of modern

industrial life, I little realised that I would find myself in a new world of not only tensions, but of hilarious comedies, sinister intrigues and long-lasting vendettas.

To the wonderful folk of this world who have given me so much pleasure and amusement while I have lived amongst them, I can only say THANK YOU with all my heart.

Yes, indeed, we were a wonderfully talented and happy community in those early days. There was talent galore and soon many forms of entertainment were devised and put into action.

Then - and until 1974 - there was no hall and most of the entertainment had to be staged in the dining hall of the home, after supper.

The Hall of course, when it came, was a wonderful asset.

Remember there was no TV and every Saturday night we showed a selected film to a very appreciative audience all for the sum of 26 cents plus tea and sandwiches.

Then followed an almost cavalcade of mannequin parades, school choirs, plays and play reading, bridge evenings, bingo and whist evenings.

At Christmas we had a gift for every resident in the home and a fully lit Christmas tree with Father Christmas in attendance.

I personally staged three water-colour exhibitions and actually donated the proceeds of R1500 to Red Cross. Then of course I am an ex POW and really owe my life to this organisation.

The years have rolled by and there are very few of that wonderful band of folk still here.

I will always cherish memories of those happy years and now an old man, I am fortunate to still be in my original cottage No 20.

OUR DOG

by Marjory Ball

One of the best ways for newcomers to make friends at a senior citizens' complex is through their dog, especially if small and fluffy.

Most residents welcome a friendly little fellow like our black Maltese terrier, if he behaves himself.

But on our very first night in residence, at Cottage 84

Laubscher Park East in 1984, Louis broke every rule in the book. After the trauma of the move we longed for bed, and earlier than usual Louis was led out to a convenient Coral Tree. Unfortunately, fascinated by the variety of tree trunks available he somehow slipped his collar and made off into the rain to explore, barking loudly and ignoring whistles and commands to return.

"Leave the stupid dog and come to bed" said my husband furiously. It seemed only a minute at 2am when we woke to hear joyous barking nearby.

"I'll get him" I said, and went out to scout around in dressing gown and slippers, tripping over some obstacles and landing flat on my face in the wet grass, cursing the dark, the damp, and the dog.

"You'll have us thrown out" I said to Louis when he returned at dawn, "Off the leash AND disturbing the peace".

I should have had more faith, no one ever complained, not even a keen gardener when Louis buried a large bone under his favourite rose bush. "Just trying to help" he said warmly, "Jolly decent of him."

Soon Louis had the entrée to half a dozen cottages where he was petted and fed on delicious titbits.

Sometimes he returned with a note tied to his collar inviting us to drinks to meet the neighbours.

Life was sociable and happy but as the years passed Louis began to age, his coat flecked with grey and his eyesight and hearing deteriorating.

Still full of pluck he developed a curious gait, a side kick a la Charlie Chaplin.

He loved to lie on the grass next to where his beloved Master sat on a bench in the sun. But other problems arose and sadly one day we realised it was time to say goodbye.

The unselfish love dogs lavish so freely on their owners seems to me to have a quality of immortality.

Maybe if we make the grade Louis will be waiting to greet us with St Peter at the gate.

I hope so.

THOUGHT FOR TODAY

Faith is the conviction of realities I can not see or feel.

WALTONPARK AFTREE-OORD

deur Elise Smit

Weet u nie waar dit is nie? Kom kyk dan!

Dit is in Admiraliteitsweg, Somerstrand, Port Elizabeth en is slegs 'n hanetreetjie van die see. Vanaf die woonstelle is daar 'n pragtige uitsig oor die baai en die stad.

Daar heers 'n gemoedelike familie-gees in die een- en twee-slaapkamer "Cot" huise, asook in die vyf-verdieping woonstelgebou. In die woonstelgebou se algemene sitkamer kom inwoners op Maandae, Woensdae and Vrydae om tienuur bymekaar vir 'n koppie tee teen slegs tien sent uit 'n goed toegeruste kombuis.

Die dames brei en gesels terwyl die mans tafeltennis en snoeker speel in die ontspanningsaal. Een keer per week is daar ook 'n trim-gim byeenkoms. Soms word 'n vermaaklikheidsaand gereel of potjiekos gemaak. Op die vyfde vloer is daar ook 'n biblioteek en 'n wassery.

Daar word dikwels op die daktuin gebrui of soms ook langs die swembad.

Aan vermaaklikheid ontbreek dit nie, ook nie aan uitstappies nie.

Die kompleks beskik ook oor 'n geleentheidskamer waar daar kerk gehou word asook Bybelstudie en vergaderings.

Langs die woonstelblok is Oekie Oosthuizen-tehuis vir verswakke bejaardes. Die tehuis beskik oor uitstekende verpleeg personeel asook oor 'n maatskaplike werkster.

Twee-weekliks is vervoer beskikbaar na die besigheidsentrum. Elke Woensdag word die kompleks besoek deur 'n handelsbank. Vervoer na verskillende kerkgenootskappe se eredienste word ook verskaf.

In Port Elizabeth is daar nie nog so 'n kompleks nie.

GREENACRES CONCERT

Those of you who were at Greenacres during the ECHO promotion on June 26 and June 27 will have been much impressed by the exhibition of arts and crafts produced by gifted residents and also the various performances.

Special congratulations must go to Nico Muller, chairman of Caritas Service Centre and conductor and leader of the choir and to his wife Elsabe. Both choir and orchestra produced wonderful sounds with verve and enthusiasm much enjoyed by the audience. The Echo Song mentioned elsewhere is a great success.

TWO IS COMPANY

An abiding friendship developed between Bella Porter and Beth Joseph during the years they lived in Jansenville. They were young women then with husbands and children and there was always a great deal to do and to discuss.

Bella and her husband Mr Arthur Porter were in charge of the Royal Hotel and Mr Louis Joseph and Beth were the general dealers of Jansenville.

It was when the Porters moved to East London in 1948 that the friends had to part - and a big wrench it proved to be.

The years passed, the children grew to adulthood, there were moves from place to place and both Bella and Beth were widowed.

Then in 1991, a small miracle happened. Unbeknown to either of the two women, they came to live as close to each other as they had in Jansenville.

Beth had a few years earlier moved into a cottage in Lapa Munnik Park and Bella, having previously lived in Park Towers moved to Munro Kirk Home.

When Bella's daughter received confirmation that Beth was indeed living just round the corner, she arranged the surprise meeting. There were hugs and kisses and also floods of tears. But they were tears of joy and now hardly a day passes without the old friends meeting for a chat. As you may well imagine, much of it is devoted to those far off days in Jansenville.

UIT DIE WOORD

Die HERE bly altyd koning. Ps. 10:16.