Help put the new church here!
... by making a monthly debit order or credit card gift of R40 – R1 for each year of LITTLE EDEN's existence.
Please use the enclosed form to join the campaign – or visit our website www.littleeden.org.za to donate online.

Building Faith

Spiritual wellbeing is fundamental to the work at LITTLE EDEN. It gives our staff the strength and patience to always respond to the children with love ... helps parents understand and accept the special role they have been asked to play ... and brings joy and serenity to children who lack so many physical and mental abilities.

Central to our spiritual wellbeing is a church in which to worship, to give thanks to God for His many blessings, seek His guidance and find solace in quiet prayer.

With over 200 children, together with their caregivers, now living at Elvira Rota Village, the time is right to build a church here. We've marked out the spot where it will stand, on slightly higher ground in front of the main buildings, and chosen the 40th anniversary of the day of Domitilla Hyams' vision of Mary – June 6 – to turn the first sod.

Now all we need is the funding to turn this dream into reality. Please help if you can, with a generous donation towards the building of the new church.

Down on the farm ...

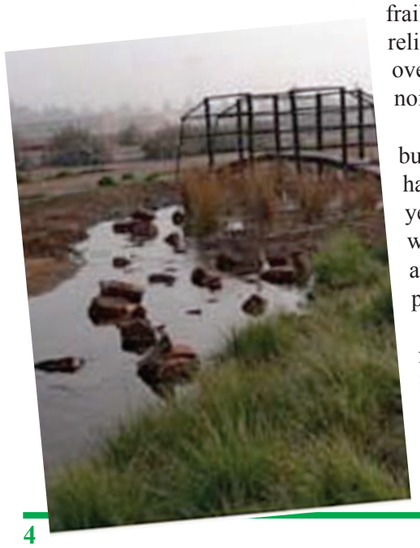
What with Manager of Facilities, Peter Rohrbeck's spectacular somersault over the handlebars of his bicycle [and subsequent trip to the hospital to have injured shoulder ligaments repaired!], Joe's 12th birthday party, the arrival of a pair of white-faced ducks and their babies at the wetlands and the re-organisation of the children into smaller 'family' groups, it's been a busy time at Elvira Rota Village!

The Autumn colours are lovely, but everyone is still praying for rain – the prolonged drought has pretty much ruined the mielie crop this season.

At Pino's Place, we're hoping to open up a new frail care unit to relieve the current overcrowding, as well as to separate the noisy residents from those who are quieter.

And we're proceeding with plans to build a church at the village – despite not having all the necessary funds available yet – trusting in Divine intervention, which has always played such a major and mysterious role in LITTLE EDEN's progress.

In between, there are animals to be fed, pecan nuts to be picked, meals to be cooked, laundry to be folded, prayers to be said and puzzles to be built – all aimed at keeping our residents happy and busy.



CELEBRATING 40 YEARS 1967-2007
Little Eden
Society for the Care of Persons with Mental Handicap

in touch

JUNE 2007

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Power to be warm!

A power cut at Little Eden in the middle of winter could spell disaster.

Not only would it mean freezing fingers and toes for those little ones who are unable to move about, it would shut down vital suction machines and nebulisers needed by children with chest ailments and asthma.

With increases in electricity outages predicted for the months ahead, we are extremely grateful to Barloworld for offering to donate a generator for the Edenvale Home.

To be installed in a specially constructed hut and ready for action, the generator will take a load off our minds. Whether or not there is electricity, we will be able to continue heating the home, running medical equipment, cooking over a thousand meals a day and washing three tons of laundry every day!

The generator will help keep the children warm on the outside – but it is the caring support of people like Barloworld, and so many other wonderful friends, that warms us all on the inside!

There is simply no better feeling in the world than knowing you matter to others ... that people understand and are willing to help you when you need it.

To all those wonderfully kind and generous people who have opened their hearts in so many ways to the children at LITTLE EDEN – thank you, and may God shower you with His richest blessings.

Words of love

Visitors often comment on the joyful and loving atmosphere at LITTLE EDEN, and wonder where it comes from.

To understand, you only have to listen to what is being said everyday: the Lord's Prayer in the morning; gentle words of encouragement during physio or occupational therapy; cheering and celebrating each achievement by our children; never forgetting to sing Happy Birthday.

Imagine how the world could be, if everyone took care to let only kind and encouraging words come out of their mouths!

During the offertory procession, Mary and Jason (above) laid a rose at the altar. Some of the residents made their First Holy Communion (top right) before the celebratory cake was cut by our founders, Domitilla and Danny Hyams.

It's a celebration!

Around 500 friends, benefactors, parents and guests from overseas gathered at the Edenvale Home on Sunday 28 January for the official launch of our 40th Anniversary.

The day began with Holy Mass, giving thanks to God for His guidance and protection of the children over the years. As always, the children participated fully. Some took part in the offertory procession, bringing gifts representing the different aspects of care at LITTLE EDEN, while others made their first Holy Communion.

The celebrations continued with the presentation of a gold medal to our founder, Domitilla Hyams, by the mayor of Almenno San Bartolomeo, Italy, in recognition of her 40 years of dedication to LITTLE EDEN ... the turning of the first sod for a new development at the home by Ms Gina Lepora of the Anglo American Chairman's Fund ... and the cutting of an enormous birthday cake – then enjoyed by all.

Domitilla said, 'The journey from 1967 was never easy and yet exceedingly fulfilling. To be here, on this day, is truly wonderful.'

Looking ahead, Domitilla said, 'My greatest wish is that more will be done to ensure the comfort and safety of persons with intellectual disability. And that more communities, families and individuals will come to understand the value of these special people and reach out to them, instead of choosing to look the other way.'

The challenge remains to continue the specialised nursing care and individual attention given to each child at LITTLE EDEN. For this, we rely on the goodwill and generosity of friends like you!

From our mailbag ...

To EVERYBODY at Little Eden – the nursing staff, caregivers, doctors, etc.

We as a family don't know how to thank you all for being so good to Jan all these years.

I can't believe that it has already been a month that he is gone. I often find myself dialling your number to find out how he is doing, before I realise that for him, the suffering is over.

It was such a blessing to have Jan all these years. He taught us what unconditional love means. How to expect nothing and appreciate everything. And I know that he knew how much he was loved by us all.

Thank you again for all the care, hugs and kisses he got from you all, and thank you for never getting impatient and tired, because I realise that it is a very difficult task that takes sometimes more than you have to give.

May God Bless you all.

SAD GOODBYE TO OUR YOUNGEST ANGEL

At 8.30 on the morning of 12 April 2007, five-year old Mxolisi slipped away to be with Jesus – freed from the pain and frustrations of the imperfect body he occupied here on earth.

Although he spent only two years with us at LITTLE EDEN, Mxolisi found a way into everyone's heart. He was always smiling, and really blossomed with all the extra attention he got from the staff. If anyone ever had any spare time, they would spend it with him.

When it became clear that Mxolisi was dying, Sister couldn't bear to send him to hospital where he would be alone among strangers. Instead, he remained at home with us until the end, kept comfortable and warm and surrounded by people who knew and loved him.

Death is a part of life at LITTLE EDEN. We feel great sorrow when young children die, but find consolation in the hope that we were able to give them some measure of comfort and relief. Their memories live on through our *Wall of Remembrance* outside the chapel.

Diary Dates

Wed 22 Aug:	Book launch of *A Little Paradise*
Sat 8 Sep:	Ruby and Diamond black tie gala event
Sun 9 Sep:	Concert of the past 40 years at Elvira Rota Village
Sat 6 Oct:	Ladies' Breakfast
Sat 17 Nov:	Carols by candlelight at Elvira Rota Village
Fri 23 Nov:	Christmas concert – Edenvale Home
Sat 24 Nov:	Christmas concert – Edenvale Home

Please visit our website for more information on forthcoming events: www.littleeden.org.za

Autumn Shades

A wonderful performance by Melanie Lowe [pictured above with some of the children], tasty burgers, ribs and other treats from Spur Steak Ranch, face painting, colouring in and the arrival of the Phantom Riders on their gleaming motorcycles – what a great time we had at our annual Autumn Shades Community Day on Sunday 20 May at Elvira Rota Village!

A big 'thank you' to everyone who showed an interest in our children by attending.

Watching the children singing and dancing their hearts out, or relaxing with family and friends under the pecan nut trees, was a heartwarming reminder of their ability to find joy in life, despite their disabilities.