



*Marian Villa
Centenary Celebration*



In The Beginning...

2014 Marks the centenary of **Coneth-Moar**, the house built by Dr Conrad Akerman in Alexandra Road which forms the nucleus of Marian Villa. The date 1914 over the portico was probably when building commenced. Dr Akerman would have moved in in 1915.

In 1920 Clement Stott bought the property as a family home and renamed it **Lansdowne**.

In 1925 John Barker purchased the property. He was a plumber, and became a successful businessman, and subsequently a Town Councillor. He lived in the house, now renamed **Whittingham**, with his wife Annie and four children until his death in 1948. He was a keen gardener, and there was a greenhouse where the Centre is now, with a pergola running from it to the driveway. One of John's daughters, Doreen, had married Eric Smith (1943), the son of A P Smith, a civil servant and they moved in with Annie. The Barkers were Anglicans, but Eric Smith was Catholic, and perhaps it was that connection that led to the purchase of the property for the 3rd Order of St Dominic.

A double-storied building was built parallel to the main house on the south side and connected to it by a passageway. A Chapel was also added, with an adjoining "apartment" for a resident priest. On 7 March 1965 the new structure was dedicated to St Martin de Porres and blessed by the Most Reverend Denis Hurley, OMI, Archbishop of Durban. The property was called Villa Aquinas and was occupied by a priest and the Dominican sisters.



Villa Aquinas In The 'Seventies

The nuns gathered for meals, study and conversation in the main house, and several elderly ones had bedrooms there. The priest said Mass, but otherwise his were parish duties. Most of the nuns lived in the new building, the ground floor of which was used for a nursery school and for catechism.

The Marian Home For The Aged

Unfortunately, the Dominican Sisters were compelled to close the school because of “a lack of vocations”, and, animated by a wish “to leave something for the community”, offered to sell Villa Aquinas for R 116 000 to the Marian Home for the Aged, a registered Welfare Organization operating under the aegis of the St Mary’s Knights of Da Gama. St Mary’s parish had been working towards the establishment of a home for the elderly since 1960.

The home began its life in July 1979 assisted by a loan of R 980 000 from the Department of Community Development. In March 1982 it was opened officially by Archbishop Hurley.

Since then extensive building has taken place. Some of the most important developments have been;

- the conversion of the main house into a Senior Citizens’ Centre;
- the construction of the double cottages;
- the construction of the Bedsitters Complex and Frail Aged Unit; and
- the acquisition of John Barker House.

In 2014 Marian Villa has a variety of accommodation to offer: cottages for independent living for singles and couples, board and lodging, and mid-care and frail care facilities. In order to ensure Marian Villa’s ongoing financial viability, the Executive Committee recently decided to convert the cottages from rental to life-rights.

Much has been said about the property but it is true to say our home is nothing without its people. Marian Villa has evolved into a vibrant and caring community of 130 residents supported by a staff complement of about 50 with a reputation for excellent service to the elderly. We intend to build on this in the years to come.

We Are Truly Grateful...

The Chairman, Committee, staff and residents would like to thank the following donors:

- Victor Daitz Foundation
- Baumann Trusts
- Community Chest
- JLS Trust
- Ken Collins Trust
- National Lottery Distribution Trust Fund
- Department of Social Development

Every donation, no matter how large or small is greatly appreciated. Whether it's time, donations in kind or financial support, they will all be put to good use. Please contact us. We'd love to hear from you.

Contact Details

Office Tel. 033 386 8240

Fax. 033 386 8005

Frail Care Tel. 033 386 1229

Email. info@marianvilla.co.za

Marian Villa, 282 Alexandra Road, Pietermaritzburg, 3201

MARIAN HOME FOR THE AGED

NPO. 002-268 NPO

VAT. 4640117554

www.marianvilla.co.za

