

Facelift for Mercury home

Colleen Dardagan

WITH seven years' experience in the construction industry, Bevan Jordan, who owns and manages BMJ Services, said he had jumped at the chance to complete the renovations – at a massive discount – at the historic Mercury Hibberdeen Children's Holiday Home.

He said the services it offered to poor children were "important".

The company also offers services and supply in the CCTV, alarms, networking and computer hardware sector in addition to construction and supplies.

Since the 1960s and under the management of The Mercury newspaper, the home has offered holidays for poor children, particularly those from Gauteng.

In most instances the time spent at the home is the first time the children have seen the sea or had a holiday.

The building, which can accommodate 120 children, was in desperate need of waterproofing, many of the windows needed replacing and the home needed a general facelift. Jordan said the job had taken two months.

"I didn't anticipate such a big job here. But after some homework we were able to get to the root of the problems on the roof. In the end it turned out to be a really good project for us. The building now looks amazing," he said.

However, more important is the legacy left behind by the company's project manager on site, Randell Adams. "Randell spent time teaching the grounds staff here how to



Sitting on the swings are, from left, Ricardo Balkisson and Bevan Jordan and at the back is Percy Spalding. The team from BMJ Services has recently completed a R60 000 refurbishment at the Mercury Hibberdene Children's Holiday Home. PICTURE: COLLEEN DARDAGAN

maintain the building. How to prepare to paint and plaster. When a building is so close to the sea ongoing maintenance is very important," he said.

Jordan said the relationship he had now built with the staff and

management of the Hibberdene Children's Home was one he was looking forward to continuing into the future.

For further information on BMJ Services, Jordan can be telephoned at 076-743 6654.

FACELIFT PLANNED

New owners for Midlands fuel station

Peta Lee

DEVELOPMENT in the Midlands appears to be non-stop. There's constant movement of properties and land, and new businesses keep popping up all over the place.

That this "hub of the Midlands" has good investment prospects is no longer a secret. In fact, a pair of Midlands farmers has long known that. John Foster and Peter Hayter own Zevoli Properties, and have been quietly and selectively eyeing and investing in Howick property for a while.

Their latest acquisition is a popular 2 500m² fuel station, slap bang in the centre of town (in Main Street) – and right next door to another of their investments, The Falls Shopping Centre, boasting the only Woolworths in this neck of the woods.

Locals

The BP garage has been filling the tanks of locals for some 25 years, and being one of only three in the immediate Howick area, has more than its fair share of regular and faithful customers.

The purchase of the fuel site and business from Gregg and Pat Cornell was concluded on June 1, and Foster and Hayter are as pleased as punch with their new business.

"We're thoroughly enjoying meeting our customers on the forecourt, and look forward to welcoming even more motorists," said

Foster. He added that they would be instituting several changes at their newly named The Falls BP Garage to "provide valued customers with the superior service they deserve".

These include, among others, opening a convenience store and repositioning the pumps and facilities to make the area more customer-friendly.

"The garage has a long history in Howick," said former owner Pat Cornell. "When I first bought it, it was on the Standard Bank site down the road, with the bowsers right on the street."

Then, it was known as the Norton and Smithers Shell Garage, owned by a transport firm which ran local school buses.

Those were the days of gallons and pints, and he remembers the monthly sales being around 17 000 gallons (77 284 litres) a month.

The Shell logo disappeared in 1971. "The government felt Shell had a monopoly, so they financially persuaded many fuel retailers to change to BP. In 1998, BP entered into a new deal with us and built the station as it is today."

The garage employs 24 staff. Some, like administrative "boss" Renu Raghu have been there for nearly a quarter of a century.

"We have a great team here," added Foster, "and plan to make The Falls Garage the best in town."

In the future, the garage will be integrated with The Falls Shopping Centre and possibly expanding further. This can only spell good news for this busy section of town.

Social media innovative or disruptive?

IT COULD be said that social media was born on campus or that social media trends were a natural outcome of many centuries of social media development.

Most people have become experts at using LinkedIn, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and YouTube. A revolutionary innovation, social media networking sites have become a powerful means to communicate and collaborate, particularly with the younger generation.

Organisations have increasingly begun using social media to enhance their visibility, to reach their customers, their own employees, competitors and global markets.

But the existence of social media within organisations carries significant potential risks. Some examples of these include:

- Damaging leaks to news media outlets.
- Potential loss of data, including personally identifiable information and intellectual property through employees participating in social media channels.
- Online postings that may compromise the organisation's security.
- Online harassment/cyberstalking.
- Impact to network, resulting in increased use of bandwidth by individual users.
- Increased risk of malware exposure on the computer network.

In recent years, many organisations have considered mitigating social media

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risks through the design of robust social media policies, procedures and systems to ensure employees and the organisation would be safeguarded against reputational damage.

But design and implementation of social media governance are not sufficient; organisations should actively monitor social media networks to ensure effective management. Active monitoring also requires organisations to find the right balance between monitoring and respecting the privacy of their employees, which could undermine trust.

As part of an organisation's enterprise risk management, social media should be included as an area of focus. Innovation, continuous improvement and technology are changing the traditional business landscape; but this transformation should drive IT risk steadily higher on audit committee agendas.

Such audit committees should broaden their focus from the core oversight responsibilities to considering the game changing

technologies such as the use of social media, E-learning, cloud solutions and the use of Artificial Intelligence in decision-making.

KPMG assists organisations in developing tailored governance models for effectively managing social media investment. We work with organisations in addressing specific risks within an evolving social media programme, which includes:

Strategic advice on implementing social media programs for connecting with various stakeholders;

- Social media policy/guideline development.
- Assessment and implementation assistance of social media governance.
- Utilisation of social media to enhance organisation competitiveness in existing and emerging markets.
- Using online learning collaboration tools to enhance the training experience provided to employees.

● Kara is a senior manager in KPMG's IT advisory business unit. He can be telephoned at 031 327 6000 or 082 719 1402.



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