

society news

555 Years of Long Service Celebrated

new year

10



Abbeyfield Kent has been busy celebrating and recognising staff's commitment and dedication to the Society through its annual **Long Service Awards**.

In total there have been **555 years** of hard work dedicated towards helping older people across the Society— this is over half a millennium and a tremendous achievement!

There were 11 awards ceremonies in November which took place across the homes and Head Office to mark the achievements of staff.

Staff were formally thanked by **Leon Steer, Chief Executive** or **Felicity Somerville, Director of Care** at the award ceremonies and presented with their Long Service Certificates and monetary gift. Those who were camera shy weren't so keen on the next part as staff had their photos taken proudly displaying their certificates. The awards were then either followed by a light buffet lunch, or tea with delicious cakes.

Sharon Hawes, Sheltered Housing Officer received an award for 5 years' Long Service to the charity. Sharon says: "I am pleased to have received this award; it is nice to have your work recognised in this way and over long periods of time."

Leon Steer received a 10 year Long Service Award having been with the Society since 1999. Leon received a £40.00 monetary reward and donated it to the 'Who Cares?' campaign.

Leon Steer commented:

I am one of 55 members of staff recognised through the Long Service Awards this year. However, with over 550 total members of staff within the The Abbeyfield Kent Society we aim to thank and honour our staff for the hard work and dedication they have to older people in Kent and I personally want to thank our staff for their continuing devotion and commitment.

More awards are due to take place in 2010 so congratulations to those who have not yet been commended.

continued

Long Service Awards 2009

We wanted to officially congratulate everyone who has received a Long Service Award. Keep up the good work!

Location	Staff Invited	Years Service
Headquarters	Leon Steer	10 years
Headquarters	Mrs Sharon Hawes	5 years
Headquarters	Mrs Clare Michel	5 years
Headquarters	Mr Alan Small	5 years
Connors House	Mrs Glynis Brockman	5 years
Connors House	Mrs Tina Galloway	5 years
Connors House	Miss Claire Bailey	5 years
Connors House	Mrs Barbara Wright	20 years
Connors House	Mrs Peggy Turner	25 years
Connors House	Mrs Teresa Stannard	25 years
Rogers House	Mrs Deborah Gorman	5 years
Rogers House	Mrs Lynsey Burton	5 years
Rogers House	Mrs Carlie Ranger	5 years
Rogers House	Mrs Margaret Roberts	10 years
Rogers House	Mrs Maddy Towes	15 years
Northwood Road	Mrs Beckie Holgate	5 years
Northwood Road	Mrs Kath Haines	5 years
Stangrove Lodge	Mrs Sorrell Brazenell	5 years
Stangrove Lodge	Mrs Lisa Clark	20 years
Stangrove Lodge	Mrs Gwen Drake	30 years
The Dynes	Mrs Kate Colebrook	5 years
The Dynes	Mrs Peg Richards	5 years
The Dynes	Mrs Maria Bailey	20 years
Woodgate	Mrs Tricia Croucher	5 years
Woodgate	Miss Emma Croucher	5 years
Woodgate	Ms Emma Austen	5 years
Woodgate	Mrs Jackie Simmonds	5 years
Woodgate	Mr Dave Harlin	15 years
Woodgate	Mrs Mary Richardson	30 years
Greensted	Mrs Mandy Deeble	5 years
Greensted	Mr Jay Kendall	5 years
Greensted	Mrs Andrea Ragsdell	5 years
Greensted	Mrs Janet Constable	5 years
Greensted	Mrs Hayley Denton	10 years
Greensted	Mrs Kathy Goodwin	15 years
Greensted	Mrs Maggie Town	20 years
Dene Holm	Mrs Colleen Matthews	5 years
Dene Holm	Mrs Sue Ferry	5 years
Dene Holm	Mrs Biro Shoker	5 years
Dene Holm	Miss Claire Deadman	5 years
Dene Holm	Mrs Yvonne Cornthwaite	5 years
Dene Holm	Mrs Lisa Brooker	20 years
Edward Moore	Mrs Ingrid Lampert	5 years
Edward Moore	Mrs Linda Parsonson	5 years
Edward Moore	Mrs Harmesh Kaur	5 years
Edward Moore	Mrs Pam Devi	5 years
Edward Moore	Mrs Pj Thind	5 years
Edward Moore	Mrs Jackie Wardle	5 years
Edward Moore	Mrs Jilly Lipscombe	15 years
St Martins	Mrs Julie Nelson	5 years
St Martins	Mrs Sharon Driscoll	5 years
St Martins	Mrs Marcia Clarke	15 years
St Martins	Miss Sue Haskins	20 years
St Martins	Mrs Debbie Watson	20 years
St Martins	Mrs Heather Sargent	25 years

Christmases Gone By – Fading Memories



As our recent memories of Christmas begin to fade our historical recollections probably remain the same for most of us which will include indulgent food, drink, gifts, family, friends, laughter, an inner sense of fulfilment and above all happiness.

For some of us these happy Christmases will continue all our life. However, sadly for a rapidly increasing number of people this will be a very difficult time of the year which would be more enjoyable if it was shared with friends and family.

With age it can be increasingly difficult to spend Christmas in the company of friends and family or afford rich food, drink, sweets and gifts. Instead of looking forward to Christmas each year a growing number of older people dread it, as I found again in the weeks leading up to Christmas when I visited two voluntary organisations in Medway who provide day care. At both centres I met older people who would be going home days before Christmas and would not see a single person until they returned after Christmas.

Tragically almost every Christmas the Society is contacted either by organisations, or on occasions directly by an older person urging us to take them in because they cannot face another Christmas alone.

Christmas at an Abbeyfield Kent Society home includes staff and volunteers creating a festive environment where residents enjoy Christmas food, laughter, the companionship of other residents (friends) and above all happiness – What a contrast! So regardless of your position in the Society, whether as a paid employee or as a volunteer, you have helped to produce one of the best Christmas presents we could have given our residents.

For all of you who worked over the Christmas/New Year period - Thank you for creating this very special atmosphere that an increasing number of older people outside of our homes desperately desire. What we may regard as mundane as we go about our daily duties in the Society is becoming increasingly attractive to a rising number of older people who are being forced to live alone.

Older people are not looking to be showered with gifts, most of them are seeking companionship which is why the Abbeyfield movement was established over fifty years ago.

Whatever you did for our residents in 2009, however big or small, the Trustees along with the executive team are enormously grateful.

May I wish all of you a very content and prosperous 2010.

Leon

Leon Steer
Chief Executive



A Right Royal Treat...

It's not every day you receive royal treatment and get invited to have lunch with the Queen, but for Ivy Warren at Stangrove Lodge that dream came true.

Ivy used to work in the Lands Army in Peshurst and was invited, along with other Lands Army Veterans to meet the Royal Family and enjoy a lavish lunch as a celebration and thank you.

Ivy's daughter Brenda accompanied her on the special day which started out in true style with a wartime lunch at the **Royal Opera House in Covent Garden**. This was no ordinary lunch and included food which the WLA girls would have eaten during the war. On the menu were sausages, swirls of mashed potato, sautéed root vegetables followed by apple crumble with custard, truly nostalgic food. MP, Hilary Benn was very interested to chat to Ivy and learn about her wartime activities on the farm.

The group then travelled by taxi through the main gates and under the arch right up to the doors of **Buckingham Palace**.

It's clear that Ivy must have been the envy of the crowd as everyone wants to see what goes on inside the Palace, but very few people are fortunate enough to have the chance!

Ivy said:
"I loved watching everyone through the gates of Buckingham Palace waving."



Ivy in the Lands Army



Greeted by Footmen, Ivy was led in to the Palace along beautifully bright and grand corridors with gold and pink upholstered furniture and historic portraits on the walls. In the Ballroom the tables were immaculately laid with flower decorations and a decadent cream tea was waiting for them, consisting of dainty sandwiches, sumptuous cakes, scones and biscuits and a variety of teas.

Members of the Royal Family including the **Queen, Duke of Edinburgh, Duchess of Cornwall, Duke and Duchess of Kent** and the **Duke and Duchess of Gloucester** joined the banquet. This was perhaps the bit everyone had been waiting for! Ivy says: "Camilla chose to sit next to me and she was so sweet and down to earth." Ivy was so excited by being in the presence of Royalty that she couldn't eat her tea! To set the mood the Coldstream Guards played wartime songs.

Brenda, Ivy's daughter said
It was a truly wonderful and special day made even better as we were able to share the day together at such a great occasion. Mum now has a large picture frame with all the souvenirs from the day including her medal, menu plans, invitation and itinerary as a reminder; but it's one I know she will never forget. As you can imagine she's quite a celebrity at Stangrove Lodge now!"



'Who Cares?' Hits the Road

The new Media Team, Kate Duddell and Sophie Balaam, took to the roads across Kent before Christmas to promote and raise awareness of the 'Who Cares?' campaign.

Visiting a variety of shopping centres in **Gravesend, Tunbridge Wells, Tonbridge, Sevenoaks** and **Maidstone** the team were equipped with an eye-catching branded 'Who Cares?' Vauxhall Zafira people carrier; kindly donated by **Pomphreys Car dealership**.

To fundraise for the 'Who Cares?' campaign **Louise Cook**, Hospitality Manager, lovingly prepared 140 homemade Christmas puddings which were hand wrapped in white muslin and red ribbon.

It was clear from the start that the weather wasn't on their side. Forecasters had issued severe weather warnings including gales of 100mph and heavy rain. The high winds and wet weather failed to dampen Kate and Sophie's spirit and the Tour was successful in talking with members of the public across Kent about 'Who Cares?' and getting older.

At St George's shopping centre in Gravesend, Trustee, **David Willis** made a surprise visit and also kindly donated money towards a Christmas Pudding. The campaign also caught the interest of the Gravesend Reporter and they came down to photograph **Kate, Sophie** and **Jill Redman**, Head of Compliance, championing 'Who Cares?'.

Saturday in Bligh's Meadow Sevenoaks was a particularly memorable day as the weather was so blustery that **Sophie** and **Kate** couldn't set-up the stand. However, it was still a worthwhile visit with members of the public admiring the branded car and people were particularly interested in taking part in questionnaires.

Over the five days the Christmas Puddings raised a grand total of £324, all of the funds will go towards the 'Who Cares?' campaign.



Highlights of the tour included The Dynes' residents **Dorothy Holroyd, Connie Warren, Marjorie Noble** along with Home Manager **Nicky Pett**, coming down to Royal Victoria Place in Tunbridge Wells to show their support.

The team also had the 'Who Cares?' branded vehicle on site and in the evening Royal Victoria Place had its annual Christmas Light Switch On.

Another highlight of the Tour was a visit from Trustee, **Richard Iddenden** who chatted to members of the public in Maidstone despite the cold!

Pomphreys Lends Charity Wheels!

We want to particularly thank **David Wakem, General Sales Manager**, at **Pomphreys Car Dealership** based in Sitingbourne for loaning the Society a Vauxhall Zafira for the Kent Tour. Without Pomphreys help the Tour wouldn't have had wheels! The car was branded with the 'Who Cares?' and Pomphreys logo and was really eye catching. Some members of the public admired the vehicle so much they asked if they could take it home!

Thanks again Pomphreys for all your support and helping make the Tour a huge success.



Who Cares? Kent Public Does

They also carried out vital research with the Kent public, giving them a voice to express their feelings about getting older and what concerns they may have. It is interesting that 83% of respondents wanted to see more measures taken in the local community to help older people combat loneliness and isolation.

This statistic has only enforced the campaign's purpose and message.

Fond Farewells

Eileen Leftley and Brian Boorer

It's always very sad when we have to say goodbye to familiar faces and valued members of staff who have dedicated their time and worked extremely hard for the Society.



On the **10th November** a leaving party was organised at **St Martins** for **Eileen Leftley, Deputy Director of Care**, who is retiring from the Society after **nine years'** commitment and hard work.

The party was an emotional affair as Eileen is a very dear friend and has contributed so much over the years and everyone is sad to see her go.

I'm sure you're all aware that it's been a tough year for Eileen and she's still recovering from her recent illness which happened in March 2009. We are all hoping that retiring will give Eileen some time to concentrate on rebuilding her strength and getting better. **We all wish Eileen the very best for the future and she will be sorely missed.**



Fond memories of Eileen by Felicity Somerville, Director of Care

“Oh how we will miss Eileen. Her happy, sweet natured disposition..... No, wait, hang on a minute. This is Eileen we are talking about. Sparky, opinionated, loyal and witty, Eileen was all of these and more. That is why we will miss her. She found a special place in your heart and lodged herself there.

Eileen was the first person I met when I applied to join the Society in **2003**. Her loyalty and respect for the Society was clear and infectious. Eileen had joined as the **Home Manager of St. Martins in October 2000**, following a long career in the NHS as a Clinical Nurse Manager responsible for quality assurance. She was promoted to **Support Manager in May 2003**, some months before I joined. She visited my home often, mainly I think, to eat all the biscuits and drink coffee – yes, some things never change!

In early **2006**, a new post was created as **Head of Quality** and Eileen was the successful applicant. This developed into **Head of Quality and Standards in October 2007** to reflect the expansion of the role.

In October (I think Eileen liked to change jobs in Octobers) 2008 Eileen joined me back in the Care Department as **Deputy Director of Care**. Unfortunately she was plagued by injury and illness after this time, firstly having to undergo major surgery on her back and then, shortly after recovering from that, suffering a sub-arachnoid haemorrhage in March 2009.

Eileen took the decision to retire on her **65th birthday in November 2009** and is still on the road to recovery. No worries there, though. We all know that the redoubtable Eileen will be back; we just don't know when!
Oh, how we will miss Eileen!”

Bye Bye Brian

In November **Brian Boorer** retired after having worked with the Society for four years as a **Responsive Repair Operative** across all of the homes. Brian's responsibilities were very varied and he could pretty much turn his hand to anything. One of his main responsibilities was working hard to maintain and improve the homes. **To thank Brian and give him the send off he deserved a party was held at St Martins with some delicious food and a selection of thank you presents.**



News from Greensted

Surprise Surprise!

On **Sunday 14th December** it was **Selina Smith's 100th birthday** and unbeknown to her Greensted and her family had been busy organising a surprise party.

It's quite a challenge keeping parties a complete secret but everyone involved did a fantastic job and Selina did not suspect a thing. So much so, that on Sunday Selina went for tea just like any other day, only to find the dining room packed full of her dearest friends and family.

Selina thoroughly enjoyed her party and was joined by her daughter, grandchildren, great-grandchildren and old friends. There were over **20 visitors** who all enjoyed the party in the dining room along with residents.

The party had an entertainer called **Doug Wake** who played and sang various old time songs as well as some Christmas carols.



Hilary (one of the Senior Carers) made a beautiful decorated cake and Selina had some lovely presents including photos, smellies and her favourite tipple... Guinness! Of course her **100th birthday** wouldn't have been complete without a special card from the Queen.

Selina was absolutely delighted that her friends and family were there to make it a special and memorable day. When asked what she enjoyed the most about the day she said:

“It was a total surprise and it was so wonderful to have everyone together and to have my family around me. I have been here at Greensted since 2001 and I have had the happiest time of my life whilst living here. I am very grateful to everyone who organised the party.”



News from Connors House

Lively Ripples at Connors House

A group of Master of Arts drama students, aptly named **Lively Ripples**, from the **University of Kent** have been bringing creativity and bounds of energy to Connors House residents using a variety of methods including drama, music and sensory interaction.

The students conducted a series of workshops with **Tina Galloway**, Home Manager, which were specifically aimed at residents with dementia because Lively Ripples wanted to give residents new and creative ways to express themselves and bring happiness and laughter.

Lively Ripples commented:

“We feel that it's particularly important for residents with dementia to creatively express themselves as dementia is often connected to a loss of self. Creativity has no limits so gives us the freedom to re-invent ourselves, dream, think, feel, laugh and play.”

Creativity was explored with residents through the theme of Imaginative Story Telling and participants were encouraged to interact and capture lucid moments which were then played back as stories. Each workshop explored a different theme. One was focused on the residents using puppets as this was very visual and helped them to communicate through animation. The puppets took on an almost life like form and this added another dimension to the group. Lively Ripples commented: “Residents really enjoyed puppetry and it encouraged play, laughter and fun.”

Another workshop focused on imagery to tell stories. Lively Ripples found that a selection of bright, colourful images were more effective than photos of people's faces. Residents were encouraged to explore how they felt about the different images and when talking about each image they were asked if they would like that to be included in their story. The residents' words were developed into short stories which were read back to them at the end of the discussion.



The objective of the workshops was to involve and include everyone so for residents who were less able to express themselves vocally a variety of sensory was used. Sensory is about using sound, feel and touch. For example when talking about the beach, Lively Ripples filled bags with pebbles and residents explored how the pebbles felt.

“Residents noticed how cold they were and how we should return them to the beach once we were finished. This really helped us interact with residents on a very personal level.”

Tina said:

“We're very lucky to have such a good relationship with the University of Kent. Lively Ripples were excellent at involving residents helping them feel very special.”

News from The Dynes

Residents from The Dynes have been extremely busy over the last few months.

They all enjoyed a **Fireworks** and **Quiz Night** which was organised by one of the resident's son and daughter. In total they managed to raise **£230** – an ample sum which will go a long way towards activities for everyone.

They had a **dog show**, (take a look at the photo). Some of the residents went to the **theatre** to watch shows while others explored their creative side with **flower arranging** and **cake making**, including Christmas cake.



Due to snow the residents' Christmas Party was postponed but celebrated at the **New Year's Party** with an entertainer.



The Dynes would like to thank Connors House, Dene Holm and Greensted for providing homes to our new brood of baby bunnies.



Christmas Festivities

Christmas was particularly busy. The **local Church** came to sing carols, and the local primary school also visited to sing to their heart's content and enjoyed mince pies with residents.

Everyone at The Dynes is looking forward to all of the activities and days out they'll be organising in 2010!

News from Stangrove Lodge

A Day in the Life of Betty



Betty Davies (aged 91) has a bit of a love for all things technological and regularly likes to visit **Stangrove Lodge's office** to admire and learn about modern gadgets like **fax machines, laminators** and **label writers**. Perhaps not surprising as Betty is a retired **Domestics Science Teacher** and has always been fascinated by science and technology.

On a recent visit Betty was particularly intrigued by the computer and its accompanying swivel chair which brought back vivid memories of her father's study which Betty describes as a 'strictly no go' area. It quickly became clear that Betty wanted to do more than just marvel at the desk top computer.

With only 2 hours of tuition Betty proved she is a whizz on the computer, not only learning how to use it but also typing a letter to her brother who lives on the other side of the world in Australia. **Betty has already mastered letter writing, next thing we know she'll be using email and facebook!**

News from Edward Moore House

Christmas Pantomime

Edward Moore House got into the Panto spirit when **SG Productions** performed **Jack and the Beanstalk** to residents on Christmas Eve.

It was a great way to start Christmas. Residents and staff all joined in on the action as Jack climbed his way up the beanstalk to seek his fortune.

The performance was thoroughly entertaining and included songs, comedy, dazzling costumes and audience participation with residents shouting **'oh yes he is'** in true pantomime style.

“oh yes he is!”



News from Rogers House

Christmas Came Early at Rogers House!

Residents at Rogers House held a **Christmas Bazaar** on **Saturday, 28 November** with a variety of craft and Bric and Brac stalls to get people in the festive mood before Christmas and raise money for residents.

The fair was a success and shoppers were tempted by Bric a Brac, arts and crafts and delicious homemade cakes and refreshments. There was also a raffle and tombola with prizes including vouchers from Marks & Spencers, Tescos and Wilkinsons. In fact there were so many prizes that it took quite a while to distribute them all to the lucky winners.

Lucy Dixon, Home Manager said:

“We've managed to raise over £500 pounds which will go a long way towards days out for residents.”

The Society Gets Happy Snappy

The Society is very lucky to receive so much support and generosity from its friends. Before Christmas, Peter Collins's daughter Jade very kindly donated a **Panasonic Lumix digital camera** to the Society. **We would like to thank them both for this very generous gift.**

Although unknown to Jade the donation couldn't have come at a better time as the Society had just appointed two Media Executives, Kate and Sophie, who have been getting happy snappy and have already put the camera to extremely good use. So far, the camera has been invaluable and been used to photograph parties and events in the homes, the 'Who Cares?' Kent Tour and the Long Service Awards.



In fact, a lot of the photos in this newsletter are thanks to Jade and Peter!

News from Stangrove Lodge

Christmas in full swing at Stangrove Lodge

Residents at Stangrove Lodge enjoyed their Christmas party with everyone getting in to the festive mood dancing to songs and even playing carer-assisted musical chairs.



Stangrove Lodge



Even Father Christmas made an appearance and joined in on the festive celebrations. Before the party residents had put their creativity to the test and made party hats which they wore in style, they also made a Christmas collage with its very own snowmen.



News from Barnsole Road

Residents get Spooked at Barnsole Road

Residents at Barnsole Road wanted to give each other the heebie-jeebies so on the 31st October they organised a Halloween themed party.



The party was a memorable occasion and each resident invited a guest to join in on the fun. After the home had been decorated it looked like something out of a scary movie with spiders webs, black bats and eerie carved pumpkins with candles lighting up the eyes. Some of the residents' great grandchildren joined in on the Halloween fun in fancy dress costumes.

Even the food looked the part and the cakes and party food were decorated with black cats, bats and pumpkins. The food may not have looked appealing but it went down trick or treat!

News from Old Tovil Road

Christmas and New Year Feast

Although heavy snow and ice made it very difficult for staff to get to Old Tovil Road it didn't stop them from celebrating **Christmas** and **New Year** with residents. On the **18th December** residents enjoyed a **three course indulgent Christmas dinner** with a choice of melon or soup for starter, turkey and all the trimmings for the main followed by Christmas puddings and mince pies for dessert. Housekeeper **Judith** also organised a **Christmas themed quiz** and a 'guess how many sweets are in a jar game'. Residents enjoyed the Christmas dinner so much that they had it all again on New Years Day to celebrate 2010!

Well done to Peggy Cadman who won some toiletries for correctly guessing the number of sweets in the jar.



Gwen's Shop



My name is Gwen Everett and I've lived in Dene Holm House for about 15 months. I moved there following a stroke that made it hard for me to cope alone. Unfortunately I had difficulty settling into the home and I started to get depressed. I felt lost and quite lonely even though my family visited regularly and the staff were very supportive. With time though I felt better especially as I got more involved with the home; I tried to help out as much as I could so I took on various little jobs like setting the tables and helping the other residents when I could.

At that time a shop trolley used to go round the home at various times selling sweets, drinks, cosmetics and what have you. Then someone came up with the idea of using an office, that wasn't being used, as a shop. I was interested in that so I was asked if I would manage it and I said I would.

The shop now opens most afternoons and sells a wide range of things including greetings cards, books, snacks, sweets, drinks, bric-a-brac and anything there's a demand for really. The important thing about the shop is that it's not just a place to buy things; it's also a place where people come to chat.

I get a lot of pleasure from running the shop; it makes me feel I'm doing something for other people instead of just being "looked after", I have a sense of purpose now.

Gwen.

News from Margaret Fisher House

Christmas Cheer at Margaret Fisher House

The residents at Margaret Fisher House had good reason to celebrate before Christmas after they received over **£500** from the **Waitrose Community Matters project** for the month of November.



Margaret Fisher House had stiff competition and was up against a seasonal **Christmas Lights Switch On** and a **Carol Singing** event but the home won over the public's hearts and their collection box in Waitrose's store was practically overflowing with tokens and had to be emptied twice. Take a look at the photo.



On **10 December** Waitrose joined **Margaret Fisher House** residents, friends and family for Christmas Carol Singing and a delicious buffet with festive mulled wine. This gave the residents a chance to thank Waitrose for their continuing support and make a toast to Christmas.

Carmel Belshaw, the home's House Keeper said: "We're so lucky to have the support from Waitrose, they are very dear friends to us."

Residents have been busy coming up with ideas on where they would like to spend the money, these include buying a flat screen TV in time for the digital age! A trip to the local Chinese restaurant, fish n'chips and a boat ride on the river Medway. Residents have been out on a boat ride before and really loved being on the water, taking in the picturesque scenery and steering the boat.

For those of you that aren't familiar with Waitrose's scheme, this is how it works. Every month Waitrose supports three projects local to the community. Every time members of the public shop in Waitrose they get given a green token and they decide which project they want to support by placing their token in the relevant project box. At the end of the trading month the tokens for each organisation are weighed and the beneficiaries receive a proportion of the cash.

News from Woodgate

Christmas Cheer at Woodgate

Before the Christmas Pudding was cooked all of the residents had a stir and made a wish. **Some residents just couldn't wait until it was cooked!!!!**

Six of the residents enjoyed a Christmas Lunch at the **Church Lunch Club**. Residents regularly attend this lunch club which is held every Tuesday.



On **16th December** the residents had their **Christmas party** with visitors and their favourite entertainer. As the pictures show everybody had a really good time. Thank you to Richard for providing enjoyable music and to all the visitors who attended. Woodgate would also like to thank the kitchen staff who provided a wonderful buffet.

Let it Snow, Let it Snow, Let it Snow

As the picture shows you're never too old to enjoy the snow!

Presents Galore

Father Christmas brought presents to all the residents at Woodgate on Christmas morning. This was followed by a superb traditional Christmas dinner which was enjoyed by all.



The Abbeyfield Kent Society Crowned KM Charity of the Year 2010

Not long after Sophie and Kate joined the Society they applied for **KM's Charity of the Year**. It has since been revealed that Abbeyfield Kent has been awarded **KM Charity of the Year for Gravesend and Dartford in 2010**.

Having won this prestigious title, out of over **200 Kent Charities**, this will help the Media Team fundraise for the **'Who Cares?'** campaign, raise the profile of the Society, its homes and the planned Extra Care Scheme in Gravesham.

Winning the title will keep both Kate and Sophie on their toes in 2010 as they will be organising and taking part in some of the KM's fundraising challenge events. Planned events include a Dragon Boat Race, Zip Wire and high rise Abseil. Where possible they would like to include the homes in the events to help fundraise for **'Who Cares?'**



Watch this space, we'll be in contact shortly.....

Fundraising Initiatives & Events planned for 2010 include:

- | | |
|---|---|
| ★ Annual Volunteer Thank You event on 23rd March 2010 at the Ramada Hotel near Maidstone | ★ Kent Messenger Quiz Night in Medway on 19th November 2010 – A night for intellectuals! |
| ★ Virgin London Marathon on 25th April 2010 we have our carer from Greensted, Helen, running on our behalf | ★ London Half Marathon on 10th October 2010. We have two confirmed runners taking on this gruelling challenge |
| ★ Kent Messenger Charity Challenge High Rise Abseil in June – Could you face the high rise scale? | ★ Kent Messenger Charity Challenge Zip Wire on 14th November at Maidstone Fire Station |
| ★ Picnic & Balloonathon for residents – TBC – A summer celebration for residents | ★ Lantern Parade & Carol Service in December 2010; an end of year celebration |
| ★ Kent Messenger Charity Challenge Dragon Boat Race on 4th July 2010 – We have 3 teams entered, could you face the drums and the speed in a Dragon Boat Race? | |

2010

Julia's Page

Sister Julia - Spiritual Advisor

I am writing this page during a spell of snowy, cold weather that has gripped the country several times this winter. These are times when getting around is more of a challenge and plans often have to be changed. Whatever changes are happening around us the one thing that never changes is God's love for each one of us.

Hopes and Dreams

January 1st 2010 marked the beginning of a new year and a new decade. What are your hopes and dreams for the future? At Christmas time in the churches we were celebrating the birth of God's Son, Jesus Christ, who came to show us what it means to love God's way. Just as babies learn to do things for themselves as they grow, so the love, joy and peace that we share at Christmas time can grow stronger day by day and not be forgotten until Christmas time 2010. New Year is often thought of as a time for resolutions; doing things differently in the coming year.

When I was at a New Year gathering we spent some time thinking about our hopes and dreams, going on to think about how we could work towards fulfilling them, rather than the idea of resolutions which so often are forgotten or broken a few days into January.

Have you ever thought of today as being the first day of the rest of your life? When we do that it makes us realise we can choose to start something new any day, not just the first of January. In the book of Joel in the Old Testament section of the Bible we read that when God pours out his Spirit on us 'Old men will dream dreams and young men shall see visions (Joel 2:28b)'. None of us are too young or too old to have hopes and dreams. Maybe life has been tough and many dreams have been shattered but today is a new day with new possibilities: a day in which hopes and dreams could come true. The past is gone, we can't change it: today is the day we can do something about.



A Prayer for Today

Heavenly Father thank you for the love we experience with those who share our lives: for the opportunities to give and receive. Help us to make the Christmas message of peace and goodwill a reality in our lives. Inspire and encourage us to keep our hopes and dreams alive as we begin each new day.

Amen.

Love Julia

New Faces Kate & Sophie



KATE DUDELL

Abbeyfield Kent has appointed two **Media Executives, Kate Duddell** and **Sophie Balaam** to help promote the Society, raise the profile of the homes and fundraise for the **'Who Cares?'** campaign.

Both have extensive experience in media, Kate's expertise lies in her fundraising and media skills, having joined from Kent Air Ambulance while Sophie's experience is more press and events orientated having joined from McCann Erickson.

With skills which complement one another the Media Team are already working in harmony planning events, promoting stories and fundraising.

Coincidentally Sophie and Kate have more in common than just media. Before joining the Society they were both travelling the world soaking up the culture, sunshine and outdoors life.

Kate visited a whopping 12 countries over a year and four months spending time in Australia working for a cancer charity. Highlights included being quarantined in New Zealand, eating crickets in Cambodia and swimming with elephants.

Sophie travelled to South America to try and extend her Spanish beyond the basics of 'hola' and 'adios'. When not practicing her language skills she could be found trekking at high altitude across the Andes, sand boarding and eating culinary delights like guinea pig.

Kate and Sophie are in the process of visiting all of the homes so soon they will be familiar faces around the Society.



SOPHIE BALAAM

The London Marathon – Who Cares? Helen Does



You may remember from Summer 09's newsletter that **Helen McGregor**, a carer from Greensted, is running this year's London marathon to raise money for the 'Who Cares?' campaign.

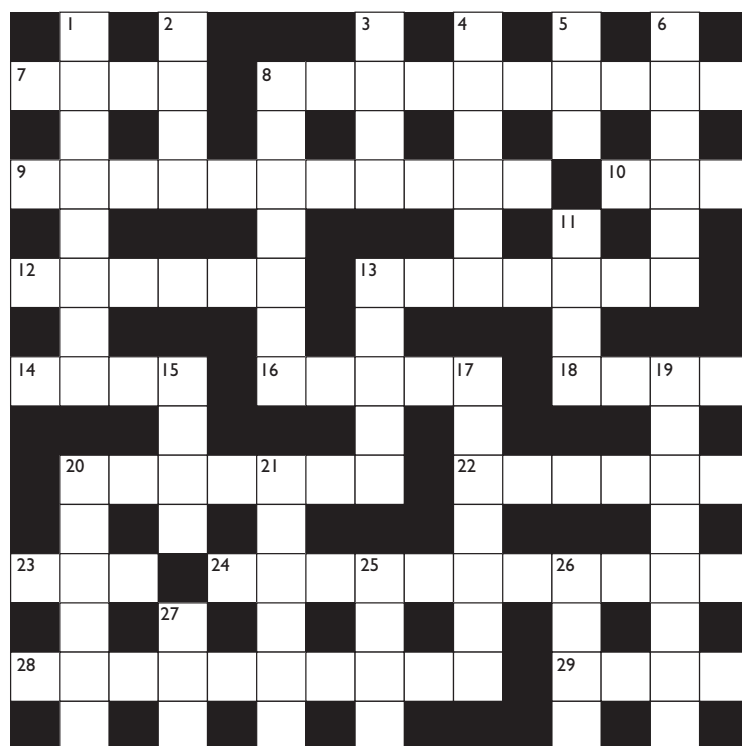
We wanted to give you an update on how Helen is getting on. It would be an understatement to say that Helen has been busy!! She's in the process of moving house, is a devoted mum, a carer at Greensted but still finds the time to train for the marathon. Helen has been limbering up by running from home to Greensted which takes her an hour and a half and if that's not enough she's also been doing circuit training – phew!

Helen is a bit of an expert when it comes to running and has already completed a whopping 8 London marathons. This year she will be wearing a Queen of Hearts costume so will stand out from the crowd as The Abbeyfield Kent Society cheers her on.

Further information on how to sponsor Helen will be sent to all of the homes shortly. Let's all get behind Helen and give her our support.



Coffee Corner Competition



Send your completed crossword to The Abbeyfield Kent Society, The Old Wharf, Station Road, Cuxton, Rochester, Kent ME2 1AB to arrive by **31st March 2010**. The first winning entry picked out of the hat on that day will win **£25** worth of gift vouchers.

Name: _____
 Address: _____

 Tel Number: _____

Clues:

Across

- 7. Group (4)
- 8 & 23a. Something for dessert (10,3)
- 9. Items to take you to the top! (11)
- 10a & 5d. Clock (3,3)
- 12. A walkway (6)
- 13. Deep dark places (7)
- 14. This is a help! (4)
- 16. Composer (5)
- 18. First-class (4)
- 20. Out-errs (Anagram, 7)
- 22. Capital (6)
- 24. Ocean (8,3)
- 28. Green stretch containing monastery, perhaps?! (10)
- 29. Ingredients of cakes (4)

Down

- 1d & 3d. Part of 28a (3,5,4)
- 2. Card game (4)
- 3. See 1d
- 4. Shakespeare play (5,1)
- 5. See 10a
- 6. You'll need these to solve this! (6)
- 8. Give a girl this? (4,3)
- 11. Variety of apple (4)
- 13. Could be a cheroot? (5)
- 15. God of love (4)
- 17. Gave account of (7)
- 19. Seat gone (Anagram, 5,3)
- 20. Hat (6)
- 21. Began journey (3,3)
- 25. The last word (4)
- 26. Gang (4)
- 27. A layer (3)

All the Homes

Residential Homes

Connors House
 Craddock Road
 Canterbury, Kent CT1 1YP
 Tel: 01227 769774

Dene Holm
 Deneholm Road
 Northfleet, Gravesend
 Kent DA11 8JZ
 Tel: 01474 567532

Edward Moore House
 Trinity Road
 Gravesend, Kent DA12 1LX
 Tel: 01474 321360

Greensted
 16 The Orpines
 Watlington, Maidstone
 Kent ME18 5BP
 Tel: 01622 813106

Rogers House
 Drewery Drive
 Wigmore, Gillingham
 Kent ME8 0NX
 Tel: 01634 262266

St Martins
 Martin Square, Larkfield
 Kent ME20 6QJ
 Tel: 01732 842628

Stangrove Lodge
 Manor House Gardens
 Edenbridge
 Kent TN8 5EG
 Tel: 01732 864975

The Dynes
 Nightingale Road, Kemsing,
 Sevenoaks, Kent TN15 6RU
 Tel: 01959 523834

Woodgate
 Tudeley Lane
 Tonbridge
 Kent TN11 0QJ
 Tel: 01732 350952

Sheltered Housing

159 Barnsole Road
 Gillingham, Kent ME7 4JH
 Tel: 01634 852298

Drewery Drive
 Wigmore, Gillingham
 Kent ME8 0NX
 Tel: 01634 364375

105 Old Tovil Road
 Maidstone, Kent ME15 6QE
 Tel: 01622 677793

Margaret Fisher House
 30 Old Kent Road
 Paddock Wood, Tonbridge
 Kent TN12 6JD
 Tel: 01892 834550

Northwood Road
 59 Northwood Road
 Tankerton, Whitstable
 Kent CT5 2HA
 Tel: 01227 771310

St Mary's
 15 The Glebefield
 Riverhead
 TN13 3DR
 Tel: 01732 460545

Congratulations to Margaret Evans of Room 16, St Martins who completed the crossword correctly from the last issue of the newsletter.

Margaret wins £25 worth of vouchers.



The Old Wharf,
Station Road, Cuxton
Rochester, Kent ME2 1AB

Tel: 01634 723007
Fax: 01634 724269
www.abbeyfieldkent.org

Abbeyfield
Where older people find care in housing
The Abbeyfield Kent Society

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