

Connections



**Royal Star
& Garter**

Care with courage

Supporter newsletter
Autumn 2019

Music in our Homes – Honouring local heroes – Community news – Hints, tips and treasures



About Royal Star & Garter



**Royal Star
& Garter**

Care with courage

Royal Star & Garter provides award-winning care for veterans and their partners who live with disability or dementia, in state-of-the-art Homes.

The Charity was founded in 1916 to care for the severely injured men returning from the battlegrounds of the First World War. Today, we provide specialist nursing, dementia and therapeutic care, together with a varied and engaging programme of activities, which enable residents to remain independent and enjoy life.



Thanks to you, we can:

197

provide residential care for 197 residents, including 71 people living with dementia

1,500

run a day care service, the Star & Garter Club, at our Solihull Home which can provide over 1,500 sessions each year



develop new services to support veterans in the community and younger veterans who require care

50+

offer over 50 activities and outings per week

Welcome to Connections...



...the autumn newsletter of Royal Star & Garter and our first opportunity to show you our new look.

We wanted to find a way of capturing the love, courage and compassion that define the care we offer to our residents and we hope you agree that the stories featured here encapsulate our values: With Love, Living Positively, As a Family, Standing in their Shoes and Take Courage.

Our logo has been refreshed and our name has changed to reflect the fact that we now offer even more to the military community through our Homes, day care and the services we are developing for home care and younger veterans.

From last issue's survey we have learned a lot about what you like to read about and I hope you find that reflected here. Please do let me know what you think.



Cally Madden, Editor

Highlights



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Connections survey results and the difference your support makes



Honouring local heroes



Above: Malcolm Chapple (Governor), Major General Tim Tyler (Chairman), the High Sheriff of Buckinghamshire Julia Upton, Mrs Tyler, Andy Cole (Chief Executive)

Our High Wycombe Home welcomed relatives of four local military veterans to a special floor-naming ceremony in May.

Their relatives and VIPs, including HM Lord-Lieutenant for Buckinghamshire, Sir Henry Aubrey-Fletcher Bt JP KCVO, and the High Sheriff of Buckinghamshire, Julia Upton MBE, toured the £25m Home. Each family visited the floor named after their hero and read a framed citation before joining residents for afternoon tea.

“

It is a privilege to name our floors after people who served their country with courage and distinction. Their names and deeds will always be remembered here, and we are delighted to pay them this tribute.

Major General Tim Tyler, Chairman



Frank Adams

Frank Adams served in the Army, Royal Flying Corps and RAF in both World Wars. He played for Wycombe Wanderers Football Club and purchased Adams Park.

Anthony Bendell AFC OBE

Wing Commander Anthony 'Bugs' Bendell was ranked among the RAF's most talented pilots of the Cold War period. Bugs was a well-loved resident at the Homes.



Edward Brooks VC

Edward Brooks was awarded the Victoria Cross for "most conspicuous bravery" under enemy fire when he single-handedly captured a German machine gun post in France in 1917.

Lettice Curtis

During the Second World War, Lettice served with the Air Transport Auxiliary (ATA) and ferried an astonishing 1,467 aircraft. She is widely regarded as the first woman to qualify to fly a four-engined bomber in the UK.



Memory walk

Residents at Solihull took part in a Memory Walk as part of Dementia Action Week to raise awareness for the condition.

In May, residents from the Home living with dementia took part in the memory walk in Henley-in-Arden, and later enjoyed a well-earned ice cream. During the rest of the week they took part in a sensory reminiscing group, a tea party and baking. Music was an important feature of the week too, with sing-alongs and concerts to help residents reconnect with others.

“

The walk is stimulating and really good for residents. It allows them to reminisce and connect with something familiar. Dementia Action Week is important to us because we are passionate about providing specialist dementia care.

Charlie Wilson,
Activities & Volunteers Manager



Above: Staff and residents together at Henley-in-Arden
Below: Taking a break



Excellence in Solihull



Left: Siobhan is off on her travels

Right: Welcome to Kate

Our Solihull Home is now a Teaching Care Home. This means that the knowledge we have gained by providing exceptional care can be shared with the wider community.

The aim of the Teaching Care Homes programme, run by Care England, is to develop a network of homes that showcase person-centred care and excellence in nursing. These homes should also show commitment to sharing best practice and advice with other care homes.

“

We pride ourselves in providing the best care to our residents, and that is reflected in our ‘Outstanding’ CQC rating and our Level 1 Accreditation by Dementia Care Matters. We think it is important to share our knowledge and experience with others.

Cheryl Harbourne, Solihull Home Manager

Our people

We are sorry to say goodbye to our Director of Human Resources, Siobhan Creighton but delighted to welcome Kate Silver to the role.

Siobhan, who has retired after 17 years, oversaw our transition from one Home to three and looked after hundreds of staff. She is looking forward to travelling with her husband and Snowy the dog.

Welcome to Kate Silver, Director of People, who previously held roles at the Ministry of Defence.

“

I share a sense of duty and pride in service with my military colleagues present and former and I look forward to maintaining that connection.

Kate Silver,
Director of People

Surbiton Summer Fete



Surbiton resident Jean with Director of Supporter Engagement, Caley, and friends

Hundreds of visitors enjoyed our Surbiton Home's Summer Fete held on 29 June to celebrate Armed Forces Day.

Despite the tropical temperatures, the event was hugely popular and raised over £2,000. The Home's many volunteers and the Kingston Sea Cadets gave their time to support the event. Highlights included a tombola, residents' crafts, Second World War Jeeps, and a spirited performance from The Star & Garter Singers – a choir made up of residents, relatives, staff and volunteers.



The Mayor with Kingston and Malden Scout and Guide Band

“
The Home is wonderful and the fete looks lovely with lots of items made by the residents. I'm very proud to see our community here supporting our veterans on Armed Forces Day, as they support us.

Margaret Thompson,
Kingston-Upon-Thames Mayor Councillor

Residents and visitors were entertained by live music from local bands Baz and Dave, The Woodbury Bell Ringers and the Kingston and Malden Scout and Guide Band. Residents, staff and visitors took to the floor for a dance!

The Fete was the final event in a week of activities to mark Armed Forces Week which included the presentation of HM Armed Forces Veterans Badges in recognition of residents' military service.

Music in our Homes

We all know the feeling of pleasure when we hear a well-loved tune. Sharing songs forms a connection between people. Melodies light up pathways in our brains to bring back powerful memories and emotions.

Music is the lifeblood of our Homes: every day they ring with musical events, choirs, sing-alongs and concerts or gentle music from speakers. The music is carefully chosen, wide-ranging and reflects residents' choices. Music Clubs ensure that everyone gets to share their favourite music and many a great conversation – or debate – is borne out of these requests. Key events such as Remembrance are marked with traditional pieces and what would Christmas be without a carol?

Sadly, not all care homes recognise how music can enhance residents' lives and educated estimates state that only five per cent of UK care homes provide quality musical activities.¹



In dementia care, music helps to lessen anxiety and depression and can become a communication lifeline when a resident's speech fails. Research suggests that regions of the brain involved in musical memory may overlap with parts that are relatively spared from the damage caused by Alzheimer's. It is also thought that people living with dementia retain the clearest memories of the songs they enjoyed up to their thirties.²

Music can prompt an individual's recall, just as mnemonics do. Breathing and speech are stimulated by singing, and of course, the resulting toe-tapping, clapping and dancing make our Physiotherapists very happy.

5% 

Royal Star & Garter is one of only five per cent of UK care homes that provide quality musical activities.¹

Margaret's music

Resident Margaret, who is 87, says that one of her favourite activities is music and she loves Big Band and Glenn Miller. She was key in getting live Big Band music played in the Home and says the positive impact it had on residents was immediate.

"It brought them alive, they were back in the world, tapping their feet and nodding their heads. They hadn't gone for a walkabout anywhere; they were back in the world. It was a real shot in the arm."



The music we share can be poignant as well as cheering. People singing lyrics that are emotionally taxing find a tension release in verbalising issues in a safe, unchallenging environment and communicating sentiments that otherwise go unsaid. Relatives too find it helpful to join in a sing-along and rekindle the shared love of a song when communication fails.

Magical moments happen in our Homes when a carer picks up a tambourine or a resident digs out a trusty harmonica. We value the effect of music on everyone at every stage of life and it is no less impactful at the end. We use music as therapy in end-of-life care where qualitative indicators show that it can help to lessen anxiety and discomfort.³ When a resident dies, we celebrate their life by playing their favourite song as they leave the Home for the last time.

1 Statistic taken from a presentation by David Cutler, Director, Baring Foundation, to the conference Local Government – The Arts and Older People, Nottingham, 5.09.2017

2, 3 ILCUK, 2018: <https://ilcuk.org.uk/commission-brings-evidence-based-research-and-recommendations-for-effective-dementia-care-using-music-based-interventions/>

Meet Jackie



Relative. Receptionist.
Legacy Administrator.
Jackie Worsfold's many
roles with us have given
her an insight into the
impact gifts in Wills have
on our residents.

I started as Receptionist at Surbiton two weeks after my Dad became a resident. It was wonderful to see Dad every day while at work. Being on reception was a great experience. Our Homes have large reception areas where many of the residents' activities take place, so I was right at the heart of things.

There was always so much going on: music, quizzes, visiting animals and performers – and I had a ringside seat! I don't think there are many jobs where you show a visitor to the lift and, when the doors open, a miniature pony steps out with its handler!

“

I don't think there are many jobs where you show a visitor to the lift and, when the doors open, a miniature pony steps out with its handler!

Jackie Worsfold, Legacy Administrator





Jackie with her father, Mike, and a visiting frog!

Dad received exemplary care. He could do very little for himself but he developed a wonderful rapport with his carers. It's hard to see a loved one decline but when nursing care becomes a necessity it was comforting to the family to see him so well looked after. Dad always said he was thoroughly happy in the Home.

Dad briefly spent some time in another care home but when he moved to the Surbiton Home, we realised how much more was available for him. Physiotherapy, speech therapy, activities and outings, which are often charged as extras in care homes, are free to our residents because they are funded by legacy gifts and fundraising. The bedrooms are spacious, the staff are wonderful and there's a warm, homely atmosphere. As a family, we always felt welcome, involved and included.



I joined the Legacy team two years ago. It is a privilege to help anyone considering leaving us a legacy and provide them with information about our work and our free Will-writing service.

Our legacy income is vital for providing all those extras that my Dad benefitted from. Any gift helps us to continue providing the outstanding care that veterans – like my Dad – deserve.

To find out more about leaving a gift in your Will or our free Will-writing service, email: legacies@starandgarter.org



“Physiotherapy, speech therapy, activities and outings, which are often charged as extras in care homes, are free to our residents because they are funded by legacy gifts and fundraising.

Jackie Worsfold, Legacy Administrator

Hints, tips and treasures



Bet worked in a munitions factory in WW2

We love to share the stories, ideas, recipes and tips of our residents, volunteers, staff and supporters.

Resident Bet's treasure

Bet writes: Every clock should have a home, the right home, the clock should fit the house. Ours was a big, old Victorian house and it homed a lovely old Swiss grandfather clock. This beautiful clock was handed down to me from my parents, so it was part of the family. It sat in our living room and that lovely 'tick tock' sound became part of the noise of the house.

For 30 years, every Sunday night without fail, my husband opened the front glass to make sure the hands were exact. Then he wound up the lovely Swiss clock. Sadly, when my husband died no one wound the clock, as it was his job. It seemed sad for anyone else to open the glass and wind up the clock. I think it went to a new home to keep time for them.

I will never forget the lovely old Swiss clock and I remember fondly my husband and family when I recall those Sunday nights and the 'tick tock' sound.



You have a pair of hands, so you use them.

Resident Joan's advice reflects the fact that she likes to keep busy. In the past, she enjoyed gardening and dress-making: she made her daughter's wedding dress.



As a volunteer I say keep a smile on your face. Because if you do that, people respond and it creates a happy atmosphere.

Volunteer Ken's top tip for brightening up our Solihull residents' days.

If you would like to share your stories or tips, please email cally.madden@starandgarter.org or write to Cally at the address on the back cover.

Daughters' thanks

Our amazing supporters have many different reasons for supporting us – and they raise funds in many different ways.

The daughters of resident Julie wanted to raise funds as “...a way of thanking the charity for the excellent and compassionate care that they give to our mother.” Erica and her husband Tim walked 86km in Italy, raising over £3,000. Alison held a prosecco lunch and plant sale, raising over £600.

Their father served in the Navy on HMS Daedalus and Victorious during the Second World War, while their mother Julie, who was briefly evacuated in the war, recalls hiding in a bomb shelter in her garden. She later worked at the Commonwealth Institute and at London University. Julie came to the home in 2015 when she was diagnosed with dementia.

“

We come to the Home regularly and see all the fantastic work they do. My mum has benefited hugely from being there, and we felt as a family we should do more to support the Charity.

Alison Ukleja, Julie's daughter



Erica, Julie and Alison



Erica's Italian hike and Alison's prosecco lunch

Why not join one of our events or hold your own to support us? Contact lauren.baker@starandgarter.org if you'd like to find out more.

Minibus appeal



We are raising funds for new minibuses at each of the Homes.

Thanks to your generosity, we have raised funds for two minibuses at £40k each. We are now fundraising for larger, £100k buses for Solihull and Surbiton. We are still fundraising for the £40k High Wycombe minibus, helped along by pupils from High Wycombe C of E School, whose sponsored run in front of families and friends raised nearly £700.

The new minibuses will be used to take residents on outings, such as pub lunches, theatre and museum visits and sporting events, as part of the 50 activities we offer each week. It will also be used to help residents attend medical appointments.

“

The children really loved the sponsored run. We are hoping to visit the Home soon and look forward to organising more events and creating stronger links in the future.

Nicola Jones, Teacher, High Wycombe CofE School



Teacher Miss Anthony with some of the runners

If you would like to do something amazing to support our veterans, please visit:
www.starandgarter.org/how-you-can-help/events

Birmingham International Tattoo

We are so grateful that funds from this spectacular event will be supporting our residents for the twelfth year.

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Connections survey

Our supporters are at the heart of the Star & Garter family and your opinions matter to us. We ran a survey in Spring Connections and here's what we discovered.

For 83% of respondents, your main reason for supporting us was to help veterans. 76% of you read Connections to understand our work and 63% of you wanted to gain insight into our Homes. In terms of what you enjoy reading about, 80% of you like stories and features on our residents, 61% like military connections, 61% enjoy finding out about volunteers and staff and 50% enjoy care stories.

Thanks to all those who took part.



Spring Appeal

A big thank you to everyone who donated to our Spring Appeal this year, featuring Jeremy, one of our dedicated volunteers in the Surbiton Home, whose green fingers bring our gardens to life and great joy to the residents.

The appeal raised over £40,000 which goes directly to support residents' well-being through activities, therapies and outings, keeping them connected with the outside world. Once again, thank you for your continued support, it means so much to our residents.

Raffles

Our Armed Forces Day Raffle winners are now online. Look out for your Christmas Raffle Tickets in the post. If you would like to order some tickets, please call the Hotline on **0330 002 0036** or visit: www.starandgarter.org/raffle

Here to help



There are several ways to keep in touch. Our friendly Supporter Care Team are always on hand to help.

020 8481 7676 Monday to Friday 8.30am to 5pm
www.starandgarter.org/contact-us
supportercare@starandgarter.org

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