

Connections



**Royal Star
& Garter**

Care with courage

Supporter newsletter
Winter 2022



About us



**Royal Star
& Garter**

Care with courage

We provide loving, compassionate care to veterans and their partners living with disability or dementia.

Our Homes in Solihull, Surbiton and High Wycombe offer outstanding residential care. We help those who have had the courage to serve our country to live happy, fulfilled lives.



In 2021, your support helped us to:

- offer over 8,000 physiotherapy opportunities to support residents' mobility and wellbeing;
- provide over 22,000 days of specialist dementia care;
- launch our new Wellbeing Programme which provides tailored activities and exercise to support each resident's needs.

Looking forward we will:

- launch a trial to provide support to people in the local community and in their own homes;
- restart our Day Care service in Solihull and High Wycombe and launch it in Surbiton, in 2023;
- develop and roll out a veteran-friendly framework that will help provide additional support to veterans living in care homes across the country.



Welcome to Connections...

...our Winter newsletter, keeping you in touch with life in our Homes.

In September, the nation was brought together by the death of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. Our residents, staff and families shared this time of reflection and thanksgiving for The late Queen's long life of dedicated service.

We were grateful that we were able to celebrate her Platinum Jubilee this summer. Residents enjoyed sharing their stories of The Queen over afternoon tea and street parties (see left).

Looking forward to May, we will come together again to celebrate the coronation of our new King, Charles III.

Meanwhile, thanks to your support, friendship and generosity, our staff are able to keep our residents comfortable and happy. We are all looking forward to bringing some festive joy and cheer to our Homes.

From all the residents, staff and volunteers at Royal Star & Garter, we send you best wishes for a merry Christmas and a happy New Year.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Cally".

Cally Madden, Editor



Queen Elizabeth II

On behalf of our residents, staff and volunteers, our Chair, Major General Tim Tyler, paid tribute to our late Queen and Patron:

Her Majesty The Queen's role as our Patron was just one aspect of a reign characterised by support for good causes and devotion to public service.

Queen Elizabeth II became our Patron in 1953, following the death of her grandmother, Queen Mary.

Her Majesty made her first visit as Queen and Patron to our former Richmond Home in 1958, and went on to make several more, demonstrating her genuine support and enthusiasm for the veteran community and our important work. As a veteran herself, Queen Elizabeth had a natural affinity with our residents.

Always a proud advocate of the Armed Forces community, The late Queen's support for Royal Star & Garter never wavered. It was an honour and privilege to have had Her Majesty's patronage.

– Major General Tim Tyler, Chair

Tributes to Queen Elizabeth II



The late Queen became our Patron in 1953 and paid several visits to Royal Star & Garter.



Above, left to right:

Queen Elizabeth's first visit to our Richmond Home in 1958

Talking to a resident in 1978

Below, left to right:

Meeting Wally Barrett, a resident for over 50 years, in 1978

The official opening of The Queen's Room, 1989





“

She was so dedicated. I can't imagine a world without her, and it's very sad that she's gone.

Phyllis, Resident

1926



2022

Residents' tributes

Paying their tributes, residents spoke of their admiration for The late Queen.



Monica, (left) whose husband was in the Navy, said: "Her service was amazing, and she went on for so many years. We were very proud to have her as our Queen."

RAF veteran **Michael** (right) was awarded his MBE by The Queen in 2012. He said: "It was often said when she spoke to somebody it was like there was nobody else around, and I found that during the brief time I was in front of Her Majesty."



WWII Women's Auxiliary Air Force (WAAF) veteran **Elsie** (left) said: "She meant a great deal to me. She was someone we could always look up to and admire for her hard work and hope we could do just as well."

WAAF veteran **Phyllis**, (right) who received a card from The Queen in June to mark her 100th birthday, said: "I was born three years before she was, so she's been part of my life."



Army veteran **Ken** (left) said: "She was a very dutiful lady. When she made that speech when she was aged 21, that she would devote her life be it short or long, she stuck to it."

Discussing Her Majesty's lifetime of service, RAF veteran **Vera** (right) said: "There wasn't anything more she could possibly have done for us."



Stories from our Homes



Climbers' fundraising challenge

The Forces Wives Challenge group raised over £1,000 for us by climbing Pen y Fan in Wales.

Before setting off, two of the group of military wives and girlfriends, Steph and Heather, met resident Sue (right), who scaled the mountain more than 70 years ago. She reached the summit with a rambling group that included her then fiancé, WWII Navy veteran Harry. The couple now live together at our Solihull Home.

Recalling the ascent, Sue said: "In 1949 we went to Pen y Fan (Sue's photo top right). The going was easy to begin with but as we progressed it was steep, and occasionally we had to watch our feet."

“

It was my first real steep climb.

Sue, resident



Armed Forces Community Garden

Solihull residents attended the official opening of the Armed Forces Community Garden.

Our veterans, Harry, Fred and Brian, joined military personnel, local dignitaries, a school choir and community groups. Solihull Home Manager Jamie and Driver Kevin, who are also ex-Services, escorted our residents.

Solihull Council and the local Royal British Legion branch, who created the garden, had identified the need for a place of relaxation for Armed Forces personnel and their families, which could also be used by the local community. Kevin commented, "I can see residents getting lots of benefit from it for many years to come."

“

I really enjoyed the day and being back at Wycombe Wanderers.

John, resident, served in the Navy



Back with the Wanderers



Wycombe Wanderers' oldest surviving member was given the VIP treatment when he made an emotional return to the club.

High Wycombe resident John was one of a group of residents to visit the home ground, Adams Park. The 94-year-old was met by club dignitaries and presented with a commemorative tie. He was also made an honorary member of the Wycombe Wanderers Ex-Players Association (WWEPA).

John enjoyed two spells with the club in the 1940s, either side of his National Service in the Navy. He commented: "I really enjoyed the day and being back at Wycombe Wanderers." WWEPA Chair Alan Hutchinson said: "It was a special day for us and him."



Remembrance art with Lucy Freud

Celebrated artist Lucy Freud led painting sessions in Surbiton.

The theme was Remembrance, and a group of residents painted fields of poppies and silhouettes of soldiers using acrylics. Lucy, who teaches art for people living with disabilities, found out about Royal Star & Garter through a friend, whose mother is one of our residents.

Lucy is the daughter of famous artist Lucian Freud, and great granddaughter of eminent psychoanalyst Sigmund Freud. She enjoyed teaching the residents and admiring the results.

“

I was amazed at just how talented some residents are, their paintings were beautiful. Painting focusses the mind and is very meditative, and I could see that with the residents during the sessions.

Lucy, artist, painting poppies (above)

Celebrating 100!



We are delighted to care for so many centenarians and enjoy supporting their special celebrations.



Pat

In High Wycombe, RAF veteran Pat tucked into birthday cake during a party with other residents and staff. Her family also spent time with her as she marked her special day.



Peter

Ex-soldier Peter, a Burma Star recipient, enjoyed a family party in our Surbiton Home's new garden room, before further celebrations with fellow residents.



Phyllis

Fellow Surbiton resident Phyllis, who served in the WAAF during WWII, also had a family party in the garden room, attended by her children, grandchildren and friends.

“

I don't think there's a better place for her to celebrate. She loves the Home and we are grateful for everything that staff do for her.

Jill, Phyllis' daughter



Celebrating long service

Emrys Owen, a Lead Healthcare Assistant in Surbiton, has celebrated 40 years with us.

Emrys (above) began working at our Richmond Home in 1982, aged 23, before moving to Surbiton in 2013. He was one of four staff members recognised at our long service awards in October. He said: "To me it's not just a job, I believe it's what I was led to do with my life. When I think of all the people I have looked after over the years I feel very lucky."

Other staff members recognised at the long service ceremony were Nurses Charlie Idemne and Marilyn Marquina, and Housekeeper Khalifa Shehe, who were each celebrating 20 years.

In 2021, Emrys received a British Empire Medal for services to veterans during Covid-19 in The Queen's New Year's Honours List.



Janet

Surbiton resident Janet, who worked as a nurse in WWII helping RAF aircrew and civilians recover from major burns injuries, celebrated with a party attended by her family and our residents.



Joyce

Joyce, an Army spouse who lives in Solihull, was joined by her family on a surprise minibus drive around her childhood haunts, including her old school.



Friends forever

Two Solihull residents have been friends for over 40 years.

Fred's and Stan's close friendship is able to continue now that they're both residents at our Solihull Home.

The Army veterans met through their children in 1980 – Fred's son Pete married Stan's daughter Jayne – and they have been great friends ever since. They regularly went on family holidays together, and shared a love of fishing, DIY and gardening. Fred moved to the Home in 2020. Stan and his wife Maureen joined him there the following year.

Jayne said her dad and father-in-law are thrilled to be together: "Our parents met 42 years ago and have been friends ever since."

Solihull Wellbeing Coordinator Mary described it as an "absolute joy" to see the two together. She said: "You can see there's a genuine friendship there, they're more like brothers. They share a close bond and it's lovely to watch."

“

It's great that this long and beautiful friendship is carrying on – they're so happy at the Home.

Jayne, Stan's daughter



Fred (below left) joined the Army in 1944, and served in the Royal Pioneer Corps until 1954. Stan (below right) was in the Army for two years to complete his National Service between 1949-1951, serving in the Royal Signals.



The value of a gift

Every gift we receive in a Will makes a difference to the people we care for.



Gifts in Wills are essential to fund our exceptional care and we are grateful to our legacy pledgers, like Yvette Doughty.

Yvette was a loyal supporter and generously decided to include a gift to us in her Will. She sadly died in 2020, aged 101.

Yvette was born in Birmingham and specified that her gift was to be used to benefit our Solihull Home. Her mother began supporting us after Yvette's father, Fred, died in the 1930s, when she was just 18 years old. A civil engineer, Fred was involved in building the Manchester Ship Canal, something she was immensely proud of.

She had a successful career as a school bursar. A keen golfer and dog lover, she was very sociable with a packed diary until her final days.



Did you know?

It's recommended that you review your Will every five years and update it after any significant life changes. We offer our supporters the opportunity to write or update a simple Will for free.

If you'd like to find out more about leaving a gift in your Will to Royal Star & Garter, or our free Wills offer, please get in touch with our Legacy Manager, Jackie Worsfold on 07881 018187.

After taking care of her loved ones in her Will, she chose to remember causes close to her heart, including our Solihull Home. Yvette's cousin and executor, Russ Williams, said, "She was a truly inspirational woman and fiercely independent. She was emphatic that Royal Star & Garter should get a generous bequest."

Gifts in Wills are vital to our work and our supporters' gifts help us adapt to veterans' needs. Yvette's gift of £5,000 is enough to fund the refurbishment of a specialist dementia kitchenette to promote residents' independence and stimulate their interest in food.

Every gift, large or small, really makes a difference. We are deeply grateful to Yvette for her wonderful and impactful legacy.

Our laundry experts

Behind the scenes in our comfortable Homes, staff work hard to keep life running smoothly for our residents.

Our laundry team takes pride in its work, and the care it gives the residents is sweetly scented!

“Without laundry there would be no clean bedding, no towels to dry the residents, and no clean clothes for them to wear, so I think what I do is very important – I think of laundry as the heart of the Home,” Sharon, part of the team in High Wycombe, explained.

Every day across our Homes, hundreds of items of clothing are collected, washed, dried, ironed and returned to residents. This job falls to the Housekeeping Teams, and specifically to staff working in the laundry. They launder many other items daily, including bedding, towels, tablecloths and napkins.

In Surbiton, Zac says he is dedicated to doing the best for residents. “They like the clothes that they wear,” he said. “They expect their laundry to be washed properly, and we return it to them the same day. I put my heart into doing that. We do everything we can.”

“

I remember how hard it was to do the washing for my own family – they do an amazing job getting everyone’s clothes washed the very same day. Amy, WAAF veteran

Sharon agrees: “We all like to take pride in ourselves and how we look, and what we wear is a big part of that. I think this is especially so in our Homes. Residents’ military links mean they take special pride in being well presented, and wearing clothes which are cleaned and ironed. I know that being smart makes them happy. It’s all part of the person-centred care we provide.”

Like all of our staff, the laundry team puts the individual’s needs at the heart of its work. Our Homes are also geared to meet the needs of residents who have allergies, or preferences about how their clothes are washed.

In Solihull, a member of the Housekeeping Team repairs and alters clothes, which is very much appreciated by residents.

All clothes are given a tag which is unique to the resident, to make sure every item of clothing gets back to the correct owner. Lead Housekeeper Carmel said: “I don’t want missing clothes. It does happen occasionally because all of us are human, but we want to avoid it.”

Janine, in Solihull, said: “Some residents get anxious about not having their clothes with them. It’s important to them and to me that we get them back to their owners the same day.”



“

I know I'm playing an important role in the running of the Home and keeping residents happy.

Sharon



How you can help

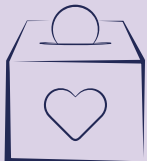


Fundraise for us

In July, our team of rowers and a local group of Sea Cadets took to the Thames for the Kingston Rotary Dragon Boat Race. They raised an incredible £1,200. Ana, a staff member on the team, said, "I have been reminded of how much I still enjoy rowing."

A sunny day in Hyde Park saw our three runners (above right) taking part in the Royal Parks Half Marathon. They made it to the finish line in under two hours. Joe, an Aviation Communications Specialist with the Army Air Corps, finished in the top 500 for his group.

If you would like to take on a challenge or want to discuss how we can support you to raise funds, contact Lauren Baker, Senior Community Fundraiser on 07443 112317.



When you join us on an event, you'll receive fundraising support from our dedicated team and we'll be there to cheer you on.

Thank you

So far in 2022, our local community has helped to raise over £41,000. Thank you to everyone for supporting us and taking on some amazing challenges and events.

Support us this winter

If you are doing a spot of online shopping this winter, you can easily support us at no extra cost. Visit smile.amazon.co.uk or activate AmazonSmile in the shopping app on your phone, select us as your charity, and we will then receive a portion of your shopping spend.





Birmingham International Tattoo

Join us next year! Postponed from September, as a mark of respect for Queen Elizabeth II, the spectacular military event will now take place on Sunday 12 February 2023 at Resorts World Arena at the NEC.

We are looking for volunteers to help us throughout the day, selling programmes (of which we receive a £1 donation for each sale) and for a collection at the end of the event. **For further details call Lauren on 07443 112317 or email community@starandgarter.org**

Join our Starlight service

We are delighted that the Starlight 2022 service will be back on our screens from Sunday 4 December, as we come together to celebrate loved ones.

Visit starandgarter.org/starlight, where you can also download a star decoration template and dedicate a message to a loved one. **You do not need to make a donation to watch the video but if you are able to do so, please go to starandgarter.org/donate or call 020 8481 7676.**

“

I would like all of the prize money to remain with Royal Star & Garter to enable them to continue with their support of the veterans.

Our Spring Raffle winner

Spring Raffle winner

One of our loyal raffle players won £4,000 in our Spring Raffle but very kindly donated the prize back to us. Thank you to everyone who took part and raised valuable funds for the veterans in our care.

If you would like to find out more about next Spring's raffle, please call 020 8481 7676.

Connections newsletter cost

Thank you for all your feedback in our recent Supporter survey. We use Connections to show how your generosity helps our residents. We always make sure that we produce the newsletter as economically as possible and it costs just £1.30 each to produce and mail.



Here to help

Thank you to everyone who responded to our supporter survey in Spring Connections. The survey showed that 81% of you like getting to know our residents, while 71% enjoy features on our Homes and outings. Your opinions are important to us, so we've tried to include more of these in this edition.

Please let us know what you think. Email cally.madden@starandgarter.org or write to the address below.

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

020 8481 7676

Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm

www.starandgarter.org/contact-us
supportercare@starandgarter.org



To help our planet and reduce costs, we'd love to be in touch by email. If you would like to receive our Connections newsletters in this way, please email us at supportercare@starandgarter.org

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