



Royal Star & Garter

Care with courage

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

National Volunteers' Week: New volunteers helping veterans at Royal Star & Garter

A new cohort of volunteers at Royal Star & Garter has explained why they choose to give up their free time to support veterans.

Flight Sergeant Martin, Sally Arnold and Christine Mitchell help with activities, outings and companionship at Royal Star & Garter's Homes in Solihull, Surbiton and High Wycombe.

The charity provides loving, compassionate care to veterans and their partners living with disability or dementia in its three Homes.

The volunteers were speaking during National Volunteers' Week, which runs from June 1-7.



Flt Sgt Martin chatting with resident Carolyn in the High Wycombe garden

Flight Sergeant Martin is an RAF musician who is currently working in the RAF Inclusion Team, and he has just started volunteering at the Home. He is based at nearby RAF High Wycombe, and said: "Being a military person, I've always known about Royal Star & Garter and the amazing work they do for this country's veterans." As a member of RAF Halton Area Voluntary Band, which is a mixture of civilian and military musicians, he performed Christmas carols in the Home in 2019. He said: "I saw then what a great facility it was, and how much residents enjoyed live music. I also saw how great the staff were at looking after them and getting them involved with activities."

Flight Sergeant Martin started by shadowing the Home's Wellbeing Team as part of his induction before he started in earnest. He said: "I'm really looking forward to spending time in the Home, I've always been aware that volunteering is good for your own wellbeing. It's also a chance to give back - I had two grandparents who



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lived with dementia, and they were really well looked after in their care home, so in a way this is an opportunity for me to help someone else's family."

Sally Arnold's first involvement supporting residents at Royal Star & Garter in Surbiton was for a local Platinum Jubilee street party in June 2022. Sally spent the afternoon assisting residents to and from the party and spending time with them there. Looking back on that day, she said: "It was joyful, I absolutely loved it."



Sally enjoys spending time with residents at Royal Star & Garter in Surbiton, and "listening to their stories"

Sally has volunteered throughout her life and more recently spent four years as a Special Constable for the Met Police. At Royal Star & Garter, she spends time chatting with residents, playing Scrabble, helping to host evening music events, and visiting the residents living with dementia. Sally said: "My paid job is really busy and full-on, but volunteering at Royal Star & Garter allows me to slow down and take the time to form connections with the residents. I just enjoy spending time with them and listening to their stories. Older people tend to be forgotten or overlooked sometimes when they have led such interesting lives. My boss is really supportive of my volunteering and along with making donations, I am also given time off from work to help out at midweek events."

She added: "I give up my time, but I get so much back in return. I come away feeling elated, nourished and always glad I went."



Christine with resident Lilian at the Solihull Home

lovely Home to come to."

In Solihull, Christine Mitchell has been a volunteer since 2021, but her history with Royal Star & Garter goes back further. "I joined the Home as a Healthcare Assistant in 2009, and began volunteering after I retired in 2021," she said. She now helps out with outings, or at the Home, assisting with activities and chatting to residents. She said: "I enjoy coming in and I enjoy the residents' and the staff's company. Before I retired I knew I would come back as a volunteer – it's such a



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National Volunteers' Week is a chance to recognise the fantastic contribution volunteers make to our communities and say thank you.

Anyone interested in volunteering at Royal Star & Garter can go to:
www.starandgarter.org/how-you-can-help/volunteer/

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About Royal Star & Garter

Our charity provides loving, compassionate care to veterans and their partners living with disability or dementia.

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Website: www.starandgarter.org



Royal Star & Garter
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