

St. Dominics Residential Home

March 2018 Newsletter



March is the first month of spring and is often the time when we look forward to daffodils, baby ducklings and warm sun out in our garden. Instead we have had snow, wind and rain! Hopefully it will warm up a little as the month goes on. Despite the weather we have had lots of fun things going on in the warmth of the home. Have you ever heard the saying mad as a March hare? Well, we certainly haven't seen any hares in our garden...

LET'S REVIEW LAST MONTH

February was filled with loved-themed activities including our arts and crafts sessions, where we encouraged the residents to share their 'first love' stories. It was very touching to hear the difficulties they overcame during the war years to follow their path to true love. We made a Valentines Day tree by painting branches from our garden bright red, and adorned it with our love hearts and cupids with the residents stories of love written on them. Some hearts were made using red tissue paper and cut out card, and this activity was particularly enjoyed by our dementia club which is back up and running weekly. A small group also enjoyed making shortbread hearts, and much fun was had using baking skills from their youth, with the residents taking a full part in the weighing, mixing and cutting out. The shortbread was delicious, and was enjoyed with the morning cuppa on Valentines Day, so much nicer to eat something you have made yourself!



KIDDLEY DIVEY

Gunnis made a welcome return in February, and her infectious energy has the residents' joining in with gusto! Familiar songs from the past had many residents singing along, and it is always a pleasure when the residents family member's take part too. Jean Larner's daughter Carol didn't hesitate to bang a tambourine and join in with the fun!

PHYSIOTHERAPY SESSIONS

We now have a qualified physiotherapist called Cameron coming in twice a month to work with a small group of residents, doing exercises to maintain suppleness and strength. Cameron is very friendly and encouraging, and his first session went down really well. Requests to join in are coming in thick and fast.

1940's TEA DANCE AT KELVEDON LABOUR CLUB

It is always a pleasure to support a local activity and this opportunity proved to be a real winner. We took several residents down and were treated to a lovely buffet which included jam sandwiches and a variety of cakes all washed down with cups of tea and coffee. Mary Hart belted out a song on the microphone encouraged by a handsome chap in uniform! Nana was quick to get up and take a turn round the dance floor with friends that we made there, and no-one was slow to wave flags and join in with the singing. Lots of people were dressed in their 40's outfits which made it a really special trip down memory lane.



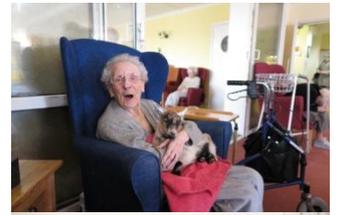
EXERCISE CLASSES

We are still doing our exercise classes but one week we had a break by having Andrea from the local dance school practicing her new skills which the residents joined in with. This is the first time Andrea had done an exercise class and it went down a treat, we were all happy to have practice on us. Andrea will be coming back later on in the year with the students from her dance school to perform a show for us.



PYGMY GOATS AND BABY CHICKS

A first for St Dominics was a visit from the animals from Blackwater farm. The residents loved cuddling the 6 weeks old goats on their laps. They brought a smile to



everyone's face on a cold winter day. We were all amazed at how well behaved the animals were, especially watching one of the goats being bottle fed by Jean Warner. Not only did the residents cuddle the goats, but also held baby chicks in their hands. Madge even posed with one on her head! Doris had such a gentle touch, the chick fell asleep in her hands. I'm sure many of the staff would have happily taken a goat or chick home with them.



JOANNA LEE

We had a new performer on Valentines day. Joanna came to sing lots of love songs and songs from West End shows. This was Joanna's first visit at St Dominics and she blew the crowd away with her amazing voice. All of the residents enjoyed the show and we would be happy to have her back at St Dominics to perform again.



ACTIVITES - WHAT A BUSY MONTH WE'VE HAD!



Here are a selection of photographs showing what has been going on in St Dominics this month! Jean has been busy, making snowflakes, knitting and sewing. Doris was making bird food for Sue to hang on the tree and Kathleen was making delicious shortbread hearts



WINTER SNOW DIDN'T BEAT US

Staff at St Dominics showed their grit and determination when it came to the sever snowy weather. They were determined to make it into work. Katie was worried she wouldn't make it but after confiding in her neighbour, he offered to drive her into work by tractor, much to the delight of her daughter who was allowed to ride with her. The neighbour then took her daughter safely home. Deborah and Hayley were looking forward to having a day off work, but when they saw the terrible weather conditions, they decided to come into work in case others couldn't safely make it in. However, they didn't jump in a car. They set off from Witham at 6.15 am to walk the 4 or 5 miles to St Dominics, finally arriving at 8.45 am! Tracy came in with extra changes of clothes in case she had to stay overnight to ensure the home was fully staffed. Other staff walked in the snow, or managed to get in using trains or busses which were running at reduced capacity due to the difficult weather. The home was fully staffed for the whole of the bad weather period.

LIFE STORIES – THIS MONTH. LET'S MEET OUR RESIDENT, JESSIE

Jessie was born in 1929 at her family-run farm on the Ipswich Road in Colchester. The farm was next to the Lion and Lamb public house. Jessie was the second born, having an older brother as well as two younger brothers. Jessie has fond memories of growing up on the farm. She remembers being told at a young age by her father that she had better learn to milk the cows. She says she mastered the task but was never the fastest milker in the world. There were four particular cows which had a habit of kicking the bucket with their hooves, upsetting the milk. Jessie attended St John's Church of England School until she was 11, when she moved on to East Ward Senior School. At the age of 14, Jessie left school. She took a job with Fenn Wright, the Estate Agents. This job lasted for 9 months as the farm was short-handed and her help was needed at home. When war broke out, the family farm was taken over by the military and the family moved on to another farm in West Bergholt, consisting of 146 acres. Jessie met her future husband, Tom, at the local village hop, when she was 18. The couple married when she was 21. They moved to Tom's family farm in Copford. Tom eventually took over the farm, working hard until they had a herd of 50 cows and, to Jessie's delight, they also had a milking machine! They kept sheep too and grew wheat, oats and barley. Jessie and Tom were blessed with four daughters, Margaret, Marian, Ann and Christine.

Jessie loved life as a farmer's wife, helping around the farm and during the summer months, after the children had gone to school, she would be outside all day picking fruit. Tom sadly passed away after suffering with cancer. Jessie moved into St Dominics a few months ago. She says she is very happy being here. She loves a chat with the other residents, staff and frequent visitors. Jessie's eyesight is not so good now, but she still enjoys a good quiz and being involved in all the activities.

Interviewed by Margaret Clover

WHAT'S ON IN MARCH?

1 March	2.30pm - 3.30pm	Holy Communion
10 March	9.45pm - 10.30pm	Cameron Physiotherapy Fun
23 March	2.30pm - 3.30pm	Tanya Honey Sings to us
24 March	9.45pm - 10.30pm	Cameron Physiotherapy Fun
31 March		Easter Egg Hunt

BIRTHDAYS IN MARCH

Just one birthday this month.....

JUNE - 3 March



A SPRINGTIME JOKE

A man in hospital wrote a letter to his friend:



Just letting you all know I'm in hospital. Don't panic, I just poisoned myself. I ate what I thought was an onion but it turned out to be a daffodil bulb. I should be out by spring...