



# JUNE 2017 NEWSLETTER

Edited by Vanessa Avery - Activities

At last, summer is here and what a scorcher we've had over the past week. After staying inside most of the winter, it has been great to see many of our residents relaxing in the beautiful grounds of St. Dominics, lapping up the fresh air, sitting by our pond listening to the water feature, and admiring the pots of stunning colourful flowers and plants scattered around. There was something else in our grounds last weekend – sheep, goats, ducks, pony, and much more! Read about this later on in this newsletter, but first; did you know that the flower for the month for June is a Rose? Roses are undoubtedly the most popular and favourite flower of all, and there are so many to choose from to suit your garden such as Climbers, Ramblers, Patio Climbers, Shrub Roses, Modern Shrub Roses, Old Fashioned Shrub Roses, English Roses etc. I have been looking at what each rose colour means and as we all know, the red rose means 'I love you' or 'Be mine', and white roses means purity. I also learned that yellow roses are an expression of exuberance, giving sunny feelings of joy, warmth and welcome and while a yellow rose reminds us of the sun, an orange rose is the colour of a fiery blaze, signifying passion and energy. Pink roses signify elegance and grace. Blue roses cannot be achieved naturally so they represent the unattainable or the mysterious, therefore saying "I can't have you but I can't stop thinking about you" and last of all, the lavender colour rose –meaning enchantment, it also expresses 'Love at first sight'. I certainly will be looking at roses in a different way from now on!



## Could you make a good prime minister?

The past few weeks has been focused on the forthcoming General Election campaign and like many of you, I will be glad when it is all over. There has been a lot of bad news regarding the government in recent years, and I am sure that you are wondering, as I am, about whether we can trust our politicians nowadays! What I would like to know is this: If YOU were Prime Minister right now, what would be the first policy you make? What do you feel that is important that needs changing in this country? If you met the Prime Minister today, what would say to him/her about running this country? And of course, thinking back, who do you think had been the best Prime Minister in your time? I will be very interested to hear your views.

## Remembering VE Day

There was no better way to celebrate the anniversary of VE Day than having a great singalong with singer Tania Honey last month. Tania brought along Union Jack flags for us to wave throughout the entertainment, and we got to sing to all our favourite songs of the forties. Once more, I had a lovely waltz with our resident Dennis and then a 'boogie' with Margaret B and a nice relaxing dance around the lounge with June. Tania always gives our residents plenty to sing along to, but also lets us relax by listening to her beautiful warm voice when she sings melodies such as 'All Of Me', 'I'm Losing You', and many more. There are always shouts of "Come Again", "That was lovely", "Beautiful" etc., at the end. Tania will be coming back very soon.



## Brownies Visit

We stayed up late when 25 girls from the local Brownie pack turned up with their leaders, to entertain us one evening last month. The girls had us laughing, singing along and joining in the actions to some of their favourite Brownie songs. Afterwards, they enjoyed crisps, sweets and cold drinks before chatting to our residents. We always look forward to the Brownies coming to St. Dominics and as always, we very much enjoyed the evening.



## Enjoying our outing

Our residents June, Doreen S, Dennis, Cecil, Helga, Brenda, Maiwen, Jean L, and Dorothy enjoyed our first outing of the year to Perrywoods Nursery last month. We had a nice walk around the shop first before going into the cafe for a nice cup of tea and cake. As I was walking around the shop, I heard Cecil, Dennis and Maiwen laughing



along with their wheelchair pushers Sandy and Canada, I looked round and there they all were trying on Trilby Hats!! I thought "Gosh, I can't take 'em anywhere!!" (I must admit though, that they all looked very smart!) As for June with a fluffy long legged 'bird' on her shoulder, there was no stopping the laughs and we had only just arrived!

## Happy Days Are Here



When Gunni from Kiddley Divey comes along with her props for an afternoon of exercises to music, we never know what we are going to let ourselves in for! Last month, Gunni got us all dressed up 'glamorous' with boas, glittery bowler hats, and waving plume feathers around which Gunni brought along for an afternoon of Broadway Musicals. It was a fantastic lively hour of non-stop singalong, dancing, fun and laughter and even the carers joined in. Kiddly Divey will be back next



month and you are all invited to a 'Beach Party' with Gunni and her 'beach props' in the garden if it is a nice sunny day. Please come and join us on Friday 30th June at 2.30pm.

## Meeting the animals

It was fantastic to see many families and children come along to join our residents to meet Gemma's farm animals last weekend. The weather was sunny and warm which enabled our residents to walk around outside to stroke the sheep and goats. Gemma also brought along rabbits and chicks that enjoyed being cuddled by the residents, and Gemma took around her duck for the residents to make a fuss of. Have you ever touched a duck's beak? I was so fascinated to feel that their beak felt 'velvety'. I was showing our resident Margaret round to meet the animals and after making a little fuss of Ruby the pony, Margaret and I turned round to move on, and Ruby 'nudged' my bottom with her nose!! Our resident Doreen burst out laughing saying she saw that coming! Very funny Doreen!!! I would like to thank families who came along to support the afternoon. I hope that you all enjoyed meeting Gemma's family of animals. Check out our website for photographs of this event.





## Summer Fete

St. Dominics wouldn't be able to give our residents the fantastic activities and events that they deserve without the generous help of funds and our biggest fund-raiser of the year is, of course, our annual Summer Fete which is coming up very soon. I am now appealing for good quality bric a brac, new items for our tombola stall, good quality toys, etc., If anybody could help us on the day, it would also be appreciated. Please do not hesitate to speak to Tracy, our Manager, if you need any more information. (I would sincerely like to thank those who have given to our summer fete already). The Summer Fete will be held on Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> August and starts at 2.00pm.



## Every little helps!

We have just emptied our little 'piggy bank' by our books for sale at the front foyer and counted an amazing £20.63! This money goes straight into our residents' amenities fund. Thank you for your wonderful support.

## Our shop is now open

Tracy, our Home Manager has initiated a small shop within the home which our residents have named 'The General Store'. This shop is to enable our residents to purchase small items, enjoying the activity of shopping. This is a new venture for us and will be trial and error for the first couple of months. The shop will be open between 10a.m and 4p.m for residents to shop with the assistance of staff and family members. Residents with petty cash accounts will be able to purchase "on account". For those able to purchase of their own volition, we suggest families provide a purse or wallet with a small amount of change to enable them to enjoy this activity assisted by staff or families.

Please be advised that for family members there is no change to the current system whereby toiletries must continue to be brought and provided by families to ensure that Residents have toiletries that are personal to them.

Toiletries should only be brought from the shop as a last resort.

## Silly me!

I know that many of you have done silly things in your lifetime and I am no exception! Yesterday, after styling my hair, I sprayed my hair with hairspray and thought "That doesn't smell like my usual hairspray". I looked and realised that it was Mr. Sheen polish that I sprayed on my hair!! My husband said to me "You've never smelt nicer!!" Cheeky! Tell me, what silly things have you done? I would love to hear *your* funny stories.

## You've gotta laugh

I am always surprised at the quick 'wit' that some of our residents come out with that makes me laugh. One morning, I asked our residents: "What would you take to the moon with you?" I got replies such as "a good book!" "my cardigan, because it's cold up there!" but I didn't expect the following answer: "Something I can pee in!!". I asked if she meant a chamber pot, and she said "Well, any pot will do!" It's never a dull moment here in St. Dominics.



Happy Birthday Lily. Lily, our 'pets as therapy' furry friend who regularly comes in to visit would like to share her birthday photo with you all! What a poser! Our thanks go to Anne, Lily's owner, who sent me the photograph.

## Life Stories with Margaret – this month, let's meet Helga

Our resident Helga has a slightly different story to tell of her childhood. Helga was born in Dusseldorf (the garden city!) in West Germany. Helga was an only child. She says her mother was a lovely 'little lady' like herself. Their house was not large, Helga and her parents lived upstairs and her grandfather and nan lived down below.

Helga started school at the age of 6 years. She had a blissful life until war broke out. Helga went to middle school when she was 14 until the age of 17, between this time the schools were bombed. To enable the children to continue their education, the authorities used any empty rooms or shops as school rooms.

Helga's family had a bunker in the garden to shelter from the air raids, some families would use the cellars of other families homes for shelter. She remembers seeing small bombs, several at a time, landing in the garden and one time losing the roof of their house!

When Helga first left school, she worked in a cafe. After this, she trained to work in an office. Much later, after she was married, Helga worked as a supervisor in a clothing factory, a job she says she loved.

Helga met her husband William when he was stationed with the British Army in Dusseldorf. Helga was 18 and William four years older. William was in the regular army and a staff sergeant when they met. William was sent back to England and it was a year before they would see each other again. Helga came to England to marry William when she was 21. They were married at Leyton Registry office and moved in with Williams' family in Walthamstow.

Helga and William travelled all over the world, on holidays as well as regularly visiting her family in West Germany.

Helga and William were blessed with one child, a boy Gordon. Helga and William moved to Billericay when Gordon was 10 years old. William left the army after 15 years service. From then on, William worked for the Gas Board until he retired. Sadly, Helga lost Gordon 4 years ago and a few months later William passed away too.

Helga told me about her four lovely grandchildren of whom she is very proud. She says "They care for me", she also has four great grandchildren.

## Redecorating

Paul, our painter is returning on the 12 June and will be redecorating the lounge. This will mean that the room will be out of use for a few days. This will be followed by the conservatory where we shall also be renewing the roof blinds. He will then move outside to repaint the rendering and revarnish the main entrance doors and windows.

We hope that you do not suffer too much inconvenience or get covered in paint!



## Sad Loss

It is with great sadness that we advise you of residents who passed away last month.

Ivan was a truly lovely gentleman, who enjoyed a chat and was always interested in other people. Ivan loved to talk about his travels, especially to New York and his experiences there.

Eric came to us as a palliative care resident. This was at the request of Eric's family who were keen he came to us as soon as he was well enough to travel. Eric had a lovely sense of humour and formed some great relationships with the carers in the time he spent with us.

Ken had been at St Dominics for some time and was a kind and gentle man who always had a smile for everyone and made so many friends here. Ken enjoyed our weekly men's club with fellow residents John, Cecil and Ray playing dominoes and having a pint.

These residents will be sadly missed and our condolences go to their families and friends.

## Welcome

St. Dominics would like to welcome our new residents Alan, Pam, Joyce M and Marjorie to our home. We hope they will enjoy their stay here and make many new friends.



## Reviewing St Dominics

You may have recently noticed on the front desk, slips asking for reviews of St Dominics on the Carehomes website. We would welcome your good feedback on this website. For example if a staff member has perhaps gone above and beyond your expectations or you would just like to put a general comment. Your good experiences will help others when viewing the home on this website. If you have any queries, please do not hesitate to ask us.

## What's coming up in June

We welcome back singer and entertainer Susie M. this month. Susie had us all in awe of her lovely voice and also her bouncy personality. Your ever favourite Martyn is returning to give us an afternoon of music and fun, and saxophonist Richard Catchpole will be coming along to give us all an afternoon of tunes from well known musicals and composers. We also have our trip to Maldon Prom on Monday 19<sup>th</sup> June for a fish and chips lunch. Please let Kelly or myself know if you wish to come along on this trip, and if any family member could come along and help, it would be appreciated.

## Dates for your diary

Thursday 1 <sup>st</sup> June	2.30 - 3.30	Holy Communion/Service with Ken Thom
Friday 9 <sup>th</sup> June	3.00 - 4.00	Entertainment with Suzie M
Monday 12 <sup>th</sup> June	2.15 - 3.15	Tess Entertains
Monday 19 <sup>th</sup> June	11.30 onwards	Outing to Maldon Prom for Fish and Chips
Wednesday 21 <sup>st</sup> June	2.30 - 3.30	Music with saxophonist Richard Catchpole
Friday 30 <sup>th</sup> June	2.30 - 3.30	'On The Beach' with Kiddley Divey

## Birthdays in June

Friday 30<sup>th</sup> June **Doreen D.**



Joke: "I can't believe I got fired from the calendar factory - All I did was take a day off!!"