

Excelcare Chef of the Year announced

Welcome

to the December 2013 issue of Excelcare News.

Keeping you informed on the latest Excelcare news as well as news on events from the homes in your region:

Aliwal Manor
Care Centre

Brook House
Care Centre

Buchan House
Care Centre

Etheldred House
Care Centre

Fitzwilliam House
Care Centre

Glennfield
Care Centre

Hunters Down
Care Centre

Primrose Croft
Care Centre

Rheola
Care Centre

St Georges Court
Care Centre

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On Wednesday 23rd October, 3663 held their annual Excelcare Chef of the Year competition whereby five staff members competed for the title. 3663 are very proud to support this competition and this year saw some fantastic creations that really confirmed the quality of cooking in our care industry – something that rarely gets praise in our media. The competition was very close and the quality and presentation of the finished dishes would not have looked out of place in a Michelin Star restaurant – a testament to each chef's dedication and effort.

Congratulations to the winner, Anthony Tilley from Excelcare's Milton Keynes region and finalists Velica Cozma (Cambridge region), Annett Tait (London region), Anna Seltersparra (Essex region) and Patricia Cannon (London Supporting People region). They have certainly raised the bar for next year's finalists.

Well Done to Brook House

A big Well Done to Brook House for getting into the final 5 for the Best Care Home Award in the UK by the Caring Times – National Care Awards. Staff members from Brook House, the Cambridge Region and three members of the Senior Management Team attended the National Care Awards 2013 Gala Night, which was held at the Hilton London Metropole Hotel on Friday 29th November. Although they didn't win this was a huge achievement to get down to the final 5 for this prestigious award.



A warm welcome to recent new members of the team...

Rheola:

- **Amy Taylor-Riseley**
- **Emma Sillett**
- **Sophie Azhar,**
- **We would also like to welcome Jodie-Leigh Clifton back from maternity leave!**



Aliwal

My, how time flies by! Autumn already here and clocks put back to welcome lovely snuggly evenings when it's cold and frosty outside. Just six weeks to Christmas!

Well we've had a lovely summer at Aliwal - lots of sunshine and ice creams.

Mid to late August and the first part of September, we arranged three separate trips to Hamerton Zoo which is just off the A1, where our residents could see all the animals and enjoy a picnic lunch in the grounds. Everyone said they enjoyed themselves so much



that they want to go again next year!

In the same month, we were entertained by Mike Gee, a comedy and singing act, who is always popular.

Also in September, some of our residents were at the finishing line of a charity wheelbarrow race called whacky races which was organised by Whittlesey people for Whittlesey people. Aliwal Manor was this year's chosen charity. They raced from pub to pub ending at the Straw Bear pub. Our residents were there to cheer them on. They managed to raise in excess of £400 for our comforts fund. Our thanks to everyone involved with this fund raising event.

October saw the return of Juke Box Legends - back by popular demand, plus a very clever balloon modeller called Dan, who is part of KJ Entertainments.

UPCOMING EVENTS

- **December**
Three Carol Services, two pantomimes, Christmas Bingo for residents, Arnold Lane Christmas Lights and our Christmas Raffle..
- **January**
New Year Christmas Party for residents with Juke Box Legends performing.



Finally the Home was decorated for Halloween plus lit pumpkins and sweets at the ready for the local Trick or Treaters' that called.



Hunters

UPCOMING EVENTS

- **9th November**
Quiz Night



Buchan House

Here at Buchan House we have had some great entertainment recently from Vivienne Young and the Cambridge Buskers. The residents were Delighted when they came to perform for us once again. They brought along a variety of different musical instruments to perform a wide range of pieces for us to enjoy. The residents also got involved in having a go at playing the instruments and joining in with shakers, tambourines, cymbals and drums. It was an afternoon enjoyed by all. We also enjoyed a brilliant afternoon filled with music, sing-alongs and dancing from Stewart who the residents love to see perform!

In September we had our second yearly trip to the seaside where we all enjoyed having fish and chips followed by desert at a sea view restaurant which was delightful. It was a bit chilly so we wrapped up warm and

ditched the ice cream for some hot doughnuts! The residents thoroughly enjoyed having pictures in front of the sea and having a look around the shops. Later on this month we are having a Lunch and shopping trip to the Grafton Centre. We are lucky enough to have been invited to two schools for Christmas parties this year. One at the St Johns College School and the North Academy which we are all very much looking forward to as they are one of our most loved yearly trips.

We have upcoming entertainment from Beatrix which the residents are looking forward too. On the 29th of November we will be having a Pauline may clothing party so the residents can get some lovely new clothes in time for the Christmas period. We have recently decorated our reception area with giant poppies which we made

UPCOMING EVENTS

- **December 15th**
Buchan House Christmas Party
- **December 18th**
Neil Collidge Christmas songs and Poetry



and painted out of paper plates ready for Remembrance Sunday. Both residents and staff were very generous with our poppy donation box.

This year we will be holding our Christmas Party on the 15th of December 2-4pm for our residents, relative's, staff and friends. We will be having a raffle, guess the name of the teddy bear, guess how many sweets are in the jar, stalls and some lovely Christmas food! We hope to see you there!



Etheldred

Harvest Festival

We welcomed in the Autumn Season with a very festive atmosphere reminiscing about life in the Fens. The activity was started with a ribbon cutting to open the exhibition room. A very colourful display of our harvest produce and some donated fruit adorned the centre table. We had a display of various farm implements and gadgets that brought back memories of life on the farm. We enjoyed playing the farming quiz and tasting the lovely purple yam cake!

Autumn Tea Dance

We were treated to a lovely afternoon of music and dance moves initiated by the staff. The pretty tea cakes and special flavoured tea were heavenly!

Halloween Party

It was a day for us guessing who's behind the mask or the spooky make up and costume! We had prizes for: Best dressed unit, best Jack o lantern and most spooky make up and costume. We were entertained by Mr Peter Webb - aka Elvis! We applauded everybody for their efforts in making their costumes and their spirit of



competition, making this day very festive and entertaining!

Remembrance Day

We wore our handcrafted poppy flowers with great pride and honour and observed two minutes of silence before we were entertained by Bryan Roy. Leslie and Bridget read the poems 'In Flanders Field' and 'For the Fallen' respectively.

Activities

'My First Home' and 'Home in the Attic' are two separate reminiscence boxes we loaned from The Farm Land Museum. We appreciated every item we found in the boxes as it touches our lives and made us realize how easy life would have been then if we had the technology of today! Our Chef treated us with a sumptuous 'Roast Dinner Week' crowning the Roast Lamb in Peach curry sauce as the winner! We loved our baking sessions especially our latest recipe of Cherry Cup Cakes. Our game of Pass the Parcel with a twist was unforgettable as we're asked a question before we unwrapped the next layer of the parcel.

Outings

Farm Land Museum and Denny Abbey reminded us of farming days and we had a lovely picnic too! We also had a fun day at the Huntingdon Garden Centre looking at gift items, talking to a parrot, looking at Christmas displays and enjoying the lovely cup of tea and some lemon cakes! We've been to the Botanical Garden and also watched people punt by the river from the garden at Clare's College. We had a Gentlemen's Trip to the Whipple Museum of scientific instruments and a pub drink!



Primrose



We've had an eventful time here at Primrose Croft the last couple of months.

Although we didn't have our summer party until the 29th August we were blessed with a fantastic turnout and glorious weather. Residents, relatives and friends had a great time, enjoying a sunny BBQ and entertainment. A raffle was held to raise money for the residents comforts fund, once again a huge amount of generosity from residents, relatives, friends and staff that donated prizes for the event, helping to raise £160.

Having been blessed with a wonderful summer, we have enjoyed lots of activities outside including sing-a-longs and music therapy. The summer classic "horse racing" also made an appearance and a good old game of skittles got everyone together for afternoons of fun in the sun.



opinions. World Food Day continued well into the afternoon with quizzes, music and plenty of wine!

We had James Le Bec come in for a morning of entertainment, including his popular Music Quiz. Our residents adore James and are always ready to join in the singing and have a dance!

For Halloween our Chef arranged and



Stuart Clements has been in singing our old favourites!

Our new activities co-ordinator Jen has started and is working at getting to know the residents.

The animal experience returned where residents were shown some unusual animals! We have trips out to Notcuts and Scottsdale's garden centres for afternoon tea and lunch in Ely with a trip to the cathedral.

Marilyn Driscoll continues to get the blood pumping every other Friday afternoon with some entertaining exercise classes

Our Halloween party was a great success. Bonfire night we wrapped up and had sparklers and hot dogs whilst watching a fire work display we could see for the garden.

We have trips to the local café in Cottenham each week as it is only a



afternoon of "Spooky Snacks", music and another chance to break out the sherry!

Coming up we have our clothes party, where our residents are able to choose and buy clothes at a reasonable price.

We will also be having afternoon tea when Unilever will be on hand to make it a special event.

We're all getting excited waiting for Christmas, we are going to be having an "Arts and Crafts" week, where we shall be designing and making our decorations.



Fitzwilliam

short walk away.

We have had the PAT dogs' visit us during the last couple of months and Topaz the golden retriever was a great success. Jean organised an afternoon of waffle making and the Christmas cake is in the process of being made!



UPCOMING EVENTS

■ 13th December residents Christmas party



St Georges Court



Residents also rolled up their sleeves and made paper and real pumpkin face making as part of the Halloween decorations throughout the care home, and further collaborated with Halloween stories, poems and pottery.

Some residents also had fun with their families on this month's group outing Coton Garden Centre and Milton Arms Pub.

St. George's is also taking part in commemorating Remembrance Day with a Poppy Table at the foyer. Some residents specially took part by sharing their service duty stories during WWII. Visitors and Friends of St. George's may be able to view these stories at the foyer.

The home once more had the benefit of Cambridge University students volunteering their time and getting involved during term time. Volunteers

We are having a make-over! Watch this space.

St. George's had recently been very busy with regulators and local authority inspectors with their annual visits and checks. We are proud to share that we have been marked compliant with the matters they checked on us, and we only aim to sustain our very good and glowing reports! St. George's remain grateful to the dedicated staff and a very supportive and loving regional team.

The residents enjoyed the sunny autumn days in the garden and the seasonal events and activities. Residents completed an autumn arts and crafts project for the dementia unit. During Halloween, Susanna, dressed up as a witch. Head Chef James took the residents Cooking Around the World dressed as a Vampire.



join in during bingo, chair exercise classes, musical fun and fruity Friday activities - one of the many other activities innovated by Susanna.

Dance Moves Company, Ltd. provided a taster-movement activity, too.

Most recently, "Elvis" came to sing and dance for the residents. Duty staff could not get enough of our professional impersonator! Most of all, who celebrated her birthday that day!!

The residents and their loved ones are all looking forward to this month's trips and entertainment to the: Cambridge Polar Scott's Institute, Cambridge Botanic Gardens with special educator's talk on sensory plants, a presentation from the Betty Stubbins amateur theatre group, a visit from the Heritage primary school and some Juke Box entertainment.



Glennfield

As we have finally said goodbye to the summer we have started up some different activities for the autumn and winter. Some of the residents have been enjoying our knit and natter sessions in the reception area on a Thursday. It is lovely to watch the ladies chatting and knitting away, they help us youngsters out when we get stuck as well, so we all learn a thing or two.

We also have film Friday's in reception as well, which have gone down well with some residents, sometimes they enjoy the popcorn and refreshments more than the film.



UPCOMING EVENTS

- **Huntingdon Garden & Leisure Trip Out**
- **Rheola Annual Christmas Bazaar & Jukebox Legends**
- **James Lebec Christmas Special**
- **Mother Goose Performance**

We would like to welcome the new staff to Rheola; Amy Taylor-Riseley, Emma Sillett and Sophie Azhar, we would also like to welcome Jodie-Leigh Clifton back from maternity leave!

The residents, staff and visitors have been busy with lots of fundraising days, we have taken part in raising money for Genes for Jeans, Lennox children's Cancer Charity, Wear it Pink - Cancer Research and the Poppy Appeal. We have also started fundraising for Children in Need 2013.



The staff got all dressed up for Halloween, and the residents enjoyed their Halloween goodie bags full of sweets and chocolate. A cake was



also made and donated by Sally-Ann Kilby to mark the occasion. The residents took part in decorating the home in true Halloween style, baked and decorated Halloween cookies and enjoyed a homemade pumpkin soup for tea on the day. There were 3 new additions to the home - on the 5th November the residents on each unit got together and made 3 Guy Fawkes dummies, the residents say they thoroughly enjoyed it and would love to do it again next year, they enjoyed a homemade chilli and hot dogs to celebrate the occasion.



The residents enjoyed a performance of We Will Meet Again by a travelling

Rheola

theatre company, who are also due to perform a performance of Mother Goose in December 2013. Nearly every resident in the home attended the performance and sang along to the classics.

We have started a Residents Wishing Tree and our first wish was granted, one of our residents Harriet went out for an Indian in St Ives with our activities coordinator. She said she enjoyed getting out and it was a lovely change.

The residents enjoyed an outing to the Burgess Hall to a 1940's Tea Dance. They have also enjoyed a sing and dance with the karaoke machine!

We have lots of fun activities, outings and entertainers

booked over Christmas and are very excited about the upcoming months.



Brook House

Summer and Autumn has been an exciting time at Brook House. We are pleased to announce that we have been shortlisted to the final 5 of the Care Home of the Year by the Caring Times UK publication. This is a massive honour and we are so excited, the awards night is Friday 29th November and will be hosted by Phil Tuffnel and Olivia Godfrey. We will get back to you with the results keeping all fingers and toes crossed.

Halloween at Brook House was a spooookky event. In the morning we played Halloween bingo with gruesome prizes, in the afternoon we all met in the decorated day room where we watched Hocus Pocus starring Bette Midler and Sarah Jessica Parker and we were treated with Halloween themed cakes and hot chocolate with whipped cream and marshmallows. In the evening we were visited by zoolab who brought in their creepy crawlies at this point the staff seemed to

disappear. But the residents thoroughly enjoyed the rats and spiders.

We at Brook House hosted a MacMillan Coffee Morning we had a fine selection of cakes made by staff, residents and relatives. Our dear friend the Cockney Sparrow came and performed for us and made the perfect entertainment to accompany our coffee and yummy cakes. We made a whopping £107.00 for this well deserved charity.

We have had some fab trips this year including pub lunch, Felixstowe Beach our most recent trips were to Woburn Safari Park where in our Dial a Ride Bus we drove through the park and watched the safari animals, this was such an amazing day made all the better by a few relatives joining us and the weather being just right.

UPCOMING EVENTS

- **19th December**
Christmas Panto Winter Wonderland 11am
- **23rd September**
Christmas Party with Peter Day and Fiona McLean from 4pm



We also went to Scotsdales where we had a mooch around at some of the Christmas Decorations that are already out, the fish and then made our way to the canteen to eat cake hmm I'm sure there is a pattern forming here. We do love cake :-).

We are still regularly visited by KL Sports Chair Based Classes..... we must burn off all that cake and the music lady. We love our visits from these entertainers and are always well looked forward to.

What have we got planned. Bring on Winter

