

Bits & pieces



Roots
for the future

On April 23rd, a group of local Brownies arrived in the woods to join with the tree planting social enterprise, Roots for the Future, to plant 45 hardwood saplings – 15 Beech, 15 Hornbeam and 15 Wild Cherry which are all indigenous trees. The venture was inspired by central government's plan to plant 11 million trees to encourage and inspire the community to leave a lasting legacy of an improved local environment.

With the bluebells in full bloom and a dry cool day, the planting went well and the children all seemed to enjoy their time in the woods, judging from the smiling, happy faces.



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The next edition will be Autumn 2016.



Birtley



Birtley

house&home

The Birtley House Group Newsletter, Summer 2016

Computerised care plans

Surrey Hills
CowParade



Queen's 90th
birthday
celebrations

Activities team
'in the pink'

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Freedom of choice

You will read in more detail elsewhere in this month's edition of House & Home about our wonderful entry for the Surrey Hills CowParade, and how, after a fun competition to name her, our cow was christened 'Liberty'. This is an anagram of 'Birtley' and was cleverly thought of by both Miss Lewis in the Mews and also Senior Staff Nurse Michelle Hutchison. It is a perfect name for this beautiful work of art, created by the hugely talented artist Emma Allen, which depicts the abundance and variety of nature throughout our estate. The word 'liberty' has such positive connotations, many of which are closely linked to our own Birtley House ethos.

The closest association of 'liberty' to our core fundamental principles is that of 'freedom' and in particular the way that we enable our Residents to have the freedom to make and be a part of as many of their own decisions as possible - whether this is being closely involved in their personalised Care Plan, deciding to have their lunch in their room that day, or just wanting to enjoy afternoon tea with their family in a quiet corner of the gardens. We understand that just because



our Residents have moved to a nursing home, it should not mean that they are not allowed to live the life they want and we strive continually to help all our Residents to achieve this as much as possible.

Part of this comes from our ability to help our Residents (and often their families) deal with changes in their lives. Our pastoral care is an integral part of the overall care provided and alongside the wonderful Nursing and Activities teams, we have a Pastoral Care Team that assists Residents to adapt and come to terms with changes in their lives.

Whilst the future of so much of the wider world seems clouded in uncertainty - how will Brexit really affect us; who will be the next President of the US; can Lewis Hamilton manage to win a fourth F1 World Championship? - it's good to know that we are always trying to help our Residents have control over their daily lives.

Frank Whalley
Managing Director

From Matron's desk

Writing this, I can't believe that September is just around the corner - we have had lots of changes to embrace this year. Some of the roles such as the Wellbeing Mentor, have changed and developed, hopefully strengthening the team and organisation. We are always looking at new ways of supporting our Residents and their families.

Sadly, Amber our Counsellor, has moved on to a new venture and to do extensive Granny duties. Amber has made this role very successful and the organisation recognises its value and therefore we will be looking to continue with this service and are currently speaking to other counsellors who may 'fit' the Birtley mould.

Whilst we explore possibilities, our Pastoral Team will continue to support as needed. They include: Tricia, our Chaplain; Rosa, Wellbeing Mentor; Cheryl who supports Rosa and also 'escorts' Residents when they need to go to hospital appointments etc, and Denise who continues as Companion and also helps with the 'escorts'. We also have our volunteers, who are supported by Dawn our Support Services Supervisor.

We have had some great fun this year with our themed evenings, these have included a Chinese evening, St. Patrick's day celebrations, a night at the opera, and an Indian evening. The next planned themed evening will be a Hawaiian/ South Pacific evening in September, so we will all have to get our grass skirts on!

The Queen's 90th birthday celebration tea was another highlight for us all and we had a truly lovely time together celebrating in the marquee in the parkland.

The CowParade has been very interesting and lots of Residents went to meet the artist, Emma Allen, during her time here with us. Liberty, as our Birtley cow is now called, looks fantastic and all the animals and flowers have a personal meaning to Birtley and its long history.

The staff were treated to a party by Simon and the family to celebrate the 'Outstanding' award we received from CQC and to recognise everyone's hard work. It was a fun evening with games of rounders, dancing and eating plus the odd beverage! Gill, our bookkeeper and her partner Mel, ran the bar and Steve (Head Of Kitchen) provided some lovely food including delicious Birtley pork. A big thank you to Simon and all those that helped to make the evening a success.

Three years ago we were awarded a 'commended' status by the Gold Standard Framework organisation. Now the time has come for them to revisit us and check to see if we have maintained the standard, or indeed improved. I have been gathering evidence over the last three years to present to them, so with a little bit of work, we should be able to retain this award. I will submit our evidence in August for examination prior to the Inspector's visit sometime in October.

The Gold standard framework is an important award, as it shows that we have achieved excellent standards in quality of life and of course, exemplary palliative care, something I am passionate about.

Looking forward to continuing to work with you to create a living environment that is healthy and happy.

Karen Williams
Matron/Registered Manager





It has not gone unnoticed that the Activities Organizers are “in the pink”! After 18 years of wearing white, Caroline, Carol and Tina are now wearing bright pink. The positive reaction from both Residents and Staff was so immediately obvious, with comments such as “it makes me feel happy to see you in that colour” to just a simple “Wow!” that I decided to look into the meaning of the colour pink. You can imagine my reaction when I discovered that “Pink represents caring, compassion, love, and understanding and is also associated with giving and receiving care, as well as being the colour of happiness”. Perhaps we should have been wearing this appropriate colour many years ago!

But it is not just the uniform that makes our Residents feel happy - with so many varied and interesting activities planned each month, we feel confident to say that Birtley goes that extra mile to provide something for everyone. In the Spring Newsletter, my article on the A-Z of Activities demonstrated the huge choice we give our Residents, so this time I will highlight a few of the more special events that have taken place here over the past couple of months.

Everyone’s birthday is special and we always celebrate these occasions with a home-made birthday cake which, whenever possible, is shared with all those attending the activity that afternoon as seen in the photo of Mrs Fairlie

Think . pink!



on her birthday. 2016 was a very special year for our long reigning Queen Elizabeth II when she celebrated her 90th birthday in April. All over the country, parties were arranged to mark this milestone, and of course Birtley was no exception! A memorable Tea Party was held on 9th June, in a beautifully decorated marquee, to which relatives and friends of Birtley were invited. More about this tea party can be found in a separate article.

Another special occasion was the annual Strawberry Tea in the Rose Garden, which, once again, was a great success. We were blessed with perfect weather, delicious home-grown strawberries, as well as a scrumptious cream tea, sponge cakes and sandwiches. Residents thoroughly enjoyed a relaxing afternoon in the beautiful surroundings. Teamwork is at the heart of a successful event like this, so my thanks go to all the teams involved - activities department, carers, the kitchen team and of course the gardeners.

Another particularly memorable event on the Activities programme in June was a first-time visit by several students from the Yehudi Menuhin School (pictured). What a privilege it was to listen to these young musicians performing. Ranging from 11-17, their talent was remarkable and they had their audience spellbound! All the students were delightfully modest with great personalities. Cathy Whitnall who arranged to bring the students to Birtley, has promised to visit us again next year, which we are already looking forward to!

By the time this newsletter goes to print, we will have been on our Summer outing. In April I received a warm invitation from Sarah Dunsdon to visit her beautiful garden, Lukyns, near Ewhurst, which is wheelchair friendly and has wonderful views across the South Downs. The minibus is booked and I have no doubt that this will be a very popular and enjoyable afternoon.

While mentioning special events, I would also like to pay tribute to Theo, the cocker spaniel, who has been a very special PatDog visitor to Birtley twice a month for 7 years with his owner Claire Jenkinson. Sadly, Theo passed away in May, he was a small dog with a big personality and will be greatly missed by all. We are so grateful to both Claire and Theo for all the companionship and pleasure they have brought to so many Residents over the years. Claire has visited some of her friends since her loss, and has reassured us that she will be getting a new puppy soon, who she hopes will be trained to become a PatDog in due course. This might take as long as a year, so in the meantime, Patricia Bland, the charity’s co-ordinator, is trying to find some “cover” and is on the look-out for a suitable dog to fill the gap until Claire is able to resume her PatDog visits. However, she has promised not to lose touch with us and will visit whenever she can.

For those Residents who are cat lovers, our PatCat Qweenie (yes, correct spelling!) visits once a month with her owner, Sue Collingwood, and is another special visitor

giving lots of pleasure to many people. The therapeutic benefits of stroking either a cat or dog should never be under-estimated.

Over the past few months, we have also been trying out various morning activities organised by Rosa Dollerson, who arranges a weekly themed morning music session, which is very popular. Rosa also meets with those Residents who don’t regularly attend afternoon activities, and these one-to-one sessions are extremely beneficial. Small groups might choose to play scrabble, rummikub, crosswords, or just meet for a coffee and a chat. Rosa is also responsible for personal Life Stories, and might be found chatting about days gone by with a Resident, resulting in us all having even more respect and admiration for our Residents past achievements and interesting lives.

My thanks to everyone who supports the activities either regularly, or selectively, and to my team for all their continuing hard work.

Caroline Whalley
Director/Activities Co-ordinator



From the Kitchen

Just like the other Heads of Department, I'm only as good as my team who support me daily and just like my colleagues, I'm so lucky to have a great team who work tirelessly every day to help me keep the catering department running like a well-oiled machine.

In my team I have two great chefs, Rachel Enticknap who has been at Birtley for 19 years and Auri Virsulis who joined us in January 2016.

Our two kitchen assistants are, Suree Armstrong who has been at Birtley for 6 years and Magda Tyniec who has been in the kitchen for 9 years. Between them (with a little help from the chefs sometimes, but mostly for tasting!) these two lovely ladies bake all the amazing cakes and cookies that we all get to enjoy every day.



Suree, who is originally from Thailand, recently got married (pictured below) and we would all like to wish her and her husband our congratulations and wish them a long and happy life together.

The personnel responsible for keeping everything clean in the catering department are Robert Abraham who has worked at Birtley for an amazing 21 years, Michal Tyniec who has been here for just over 2 years and Michal Ordon who joined us in January 2015. Both of the Michals have recently signed up to start their Level Two NVQ food production training.

I run a pretty harsh regime when it comes to hygiene in the kitchen and every one of us has a part to play in keeping it up to my high standards and the team never let me down, so I would like to say thank you to each and every one of them for the part that they play daily and their tireless input and professionalism.

We have dedicated teams in all departments at Birtley, who strive daily to ensure that we deliver the highest standard in all that we do.

Again another year of wonderful fresh produce from the garden and this year we have introduced our highly successful themed evening with lots more to come. Do come and join us, we'll be happy to see you.

Steve Morton
Head of Kitchen

Mews news

With Summer in full swing, the Mews Residents have been enjoying the warmer weather and the chance to sit outside and enjoy a mid-morning coffee, as well as the sherry mornings each Sunday.

The Birtley cow has also been a welcome addition and the Residents have all commented on how wonderful it has been to watch its progress over the weeks, and now see the finished result. They were also very keen to participate in the naming of the cow and we are very pleased to announce that one of our Residents, Miss Lewis, was joint winner alongside Staff Nurse Michelle Hutchinson with the name 'Liberty', which is an anagram of Birtley.

They have also enjoyed the various events taking place this summer within the grounds especially the Queens 90th birthday celebration, with Mrs Brooks winning one of the raffle prizes.



Also this summer we were very honoured to have the Health Secretary, Jeremy Hunt MP pay us a visit in the Mews visiting Mrs Powell-Jones to speak about her time at Birtley.

Mrs Pat Stevens has settled in very well, and enjoys her daily walk around the grounds. I am also enjoying my role as part-time Warden which I have been doing for six months now, and look forward to the next six months.

The acoustic tiles in the Mews Dining Room have been a great success and the sound has improved greatly allowing the residents to communicate better.

Cheryl Searle
Mews Warden

Poem

by Birtley Resident
Mrs Pat Scrase

Simple and Beautiful things inspire me
Nor do I hope you will pass them by
I feel that we all must share
Our gifts and treasures.
Sometimes in moments rare
I feel some deep emotion
Or see some exquisite thing
And then I know – I did...
Not ask to be born and yet
I have more gifts and talents
That I have won
With my own efforts.
Passing through life we meet
So many different folk
Some are introspective
Others not at all
But each has something
New and interesting to give.



A day in the life of Reception

Every day on Reception is different, we never know what will come our way or how busy we will be. There are five of us providing cover seven days a week, all under the watchful eye of Gill (pictured) who is our supervisor and whose job it is to keep us on our toes! In the team are Sinead and Wendy, Kasia works during the week and on Saturdays with Katalin and Melinda providing alternate Sunday cover.

Our principal role is to be a friendly and helpful presence for the benefit of Residents and their families, so we need to be ready for any queries and have all sorts of information at our fingertips. We answer all phone calls that come in to the nursing home and try to direct them to the most appropriate person or deal with queries ourselves. Then there's the post to sort out and many daily deliveries to accept and visitors to greet and find out who they have come to see.

We also provide administrative support to our Matron Karen, her PA Emma, and the nursing team. We prepare paperwork for anyone being admitted to the home and add their details to the records. Then there's a reverse process when people leave Birtley, yet more paperwork and record keeping!

The most enjoyable part of the job is the conversations we have with Residents and families and the feeling of being able to help someone, either by resolving a problem or just cheering them up, is very satisfying. If we are not too busy, it's lovely to have a chat with our Residents, to learn more about their



Residents tell us they enjoy the wildlife in Birtley's grounds and they provide updates on what's happening with the ducks and ducklings, which sometimes come into the building through an open door. Mary's team then have to shoo them out and clean up any mess they leave behind!

The view from the windows is very important for our Residents and they like to watch the geese in the park and anything else that's going on. Recently we had a staff party in the marquee and this included a game of rounders, which provided great entertainment for one of the Residents, who watched us all running around and wanted to know which team won!

The recent CowParade caused great interest and the competition to name the cow was very popular with everyone. Many of us had a turn at guessing the name and were hoping to win the mystery prize!

In Reception, we are asked about anything and everything and we try our best to know what's going on at Birtley!

The Reception Team

Jeremy Hunt MP visit to Birtley in May

Birtley House received a congratulatory visit from RT Hon Jeremy Hunt, MP for South West Surrey in recognition of this being the only Nursing Home for the Elderly in Surrey to have been rated as 'Outstanding' by the Care Quality Commission (CQC).

Jeremy met several members of staff including Matron/Registered Manager Karen Williams who explained: "This fabulous outcome has involved all members of staff who have worked tirelessly as a team to achieve this wonderful commendation. We strive to do the very best for our Residents and their families".

Several of our Residents were keen to meet and chat to Jeremy, including our oldest Resident, Mrs Amey (Karen's Grandmother) who is 105. He asked them about life at Birtley and Mrs Hughes explained about the family atmosphere and the way our Residents try to help and support each other. Jeremy also visited the Mews and met Resident,



Mrs. Powell-Jones (pictured above). He was impressed by the lovely flats with their open aspect to the fields beyond, commenting that perhaps he'd move there in 30 years' time!

During this flying visit of just 45 minutes in his busy schedule, Jeremy made time to sample the delicious homemade shortbread and coffee provided by our kitchen.

After the visit Jeremy quoted "It was a pleasure to visit Birtley House today and see first-hand the high class facilities the Nursing Home has to offer its clients. The team running Birtley has a real passion for what they do and this is clearly reflected in the day-to-day smooth running and quality of the operation. Meeting residents, including 105 year old Mrs Amey, was a genuine highlight and I wish everyone staying or working at Birtley the very best."

Janet Hall
Marketing & IT Manager



Community *links*

In our last issue of House & Home (Spring 2016), we incorporated an article in our Community Links section featuring Betty Bell who was a schoolgirl at Birtley during the 1930s. We invited Betty and her daughter Jenny to come and join us to celebrate the Queens' Birthday in June and whilst here, Betty recalled some more happy memories that she has shared with us as follows:

What a wonderful way to celebrate Queen Elizabeth's 90th birthday! Betty Bell nee Hopgood and daughter Jenny so enjoyed their day at Birtley House on June 9th 2016! They met some interesting Residents, including Mary Ellingworth (who had known Betty's Birtley school friend, Carmen Blacker, later on whilst a diplomat's wife in Japan), and Patricia Lewis (who turned out to be a church bell ringer like Jenny).

The main difference between then and now was how lovely and gracious it is now compared with how spartan and bare it was then: only metal and wood desks and chairs, with maps of Europe on the walls and a big globe in the classroom. There was very little heating and so the radiator at the bottom of the oak staircase was reserved as a privilege for the prefects to stand around and on which to warm their posteriors; everyone else froze! There were no carpets in the school, and the woodblock floors throughout were cold and had to be treated with care, so much so that the pupils not only had to wear felt slippers in the school, but they were not allowed to have ink pens, not even the dip ones, or ink wells, but wrote in pencil so as to save the floor from ink stains!



One classroom, Betty recalled, was named 'Ben Ezra' classroom, presumably after Abraham ibn Ezra (1089-1167), one of the great poets, mathematicians and scholars of the 12th century, who wrote on grammar, astronomy, and the astrolabe, among other things. He was the inspiration behind 'Rabbi ben Ezra', a poem written by Robert Browning in 1864 which begins: "Grow old along with me! The best is yet to be, the last of life, for which the first was made. Our times are in his hand who saith, A whole I planned, youth shows but half; Trust God: See all, nor be afraid!" John Lennon turned it into a beautiful song, but, because he was shot, it was never recorded by the Beatles.

Betty remembered singing alongside the grand piano in the dining room and once, when Miss Ball the music teacher (who had frizzy hair and no sense of humour) was playing for them, Betty crawled under the piano and kept the pedal pressed down; she was sent to the headmistress (whose study was behind the dining room where there is now a fireplace and the loos) and she was probably quite amused, so just told her to behave herself in future. This dining room had a seniors' table, a housekeepers' table, and the headmistress' table in the middle; they mainly ate stews and mashed potato, with jam sponge or tapioca for pudding at dinnertime, but they always had fried egg and bacon for breakfast.

In the summer they wore green cotton dresses and navy cardigans for their school uniform. They would take the horse and springboard from the gym onto the lawn for their P.E. lessons. Dance lessons, when they wore green tunics, often took place under the big oak tree.

Then of course Betty, who still has a sense of adventure and mischievousness, remembered more about the fire escape; it had a round aluminum wheel with the rope wrapped round it, and when one of them descended, another could ascend, and as their bedroom was above the kitchen, the kitchen staff would all be watching these antics from the window below!

On our tour of the Birtley House grounds, Simon Whalley drew our attention, not only to the flat roof onto which Betty and her roommate climbed when they were meant to be in bed, but also to the house martins making their nests and feeding their young under the eaves. Betty did remember their 'pit, pit, pit' and was pleased when Simon informed her of all the birds now seen at Birtley: red-kites, osprey, tawny and little owls, sparrow hawks, buzzards and kestrels, also Canada geese with their goslings, little egrets, sometimes a kingfisher and even once a bittern.

As for mammals, mink, stoats, weasels, badgers, foxes and deer are often in evidence. The lakes which attract this wildlife were not there in Betty's day as they were developed by the Whalley family.

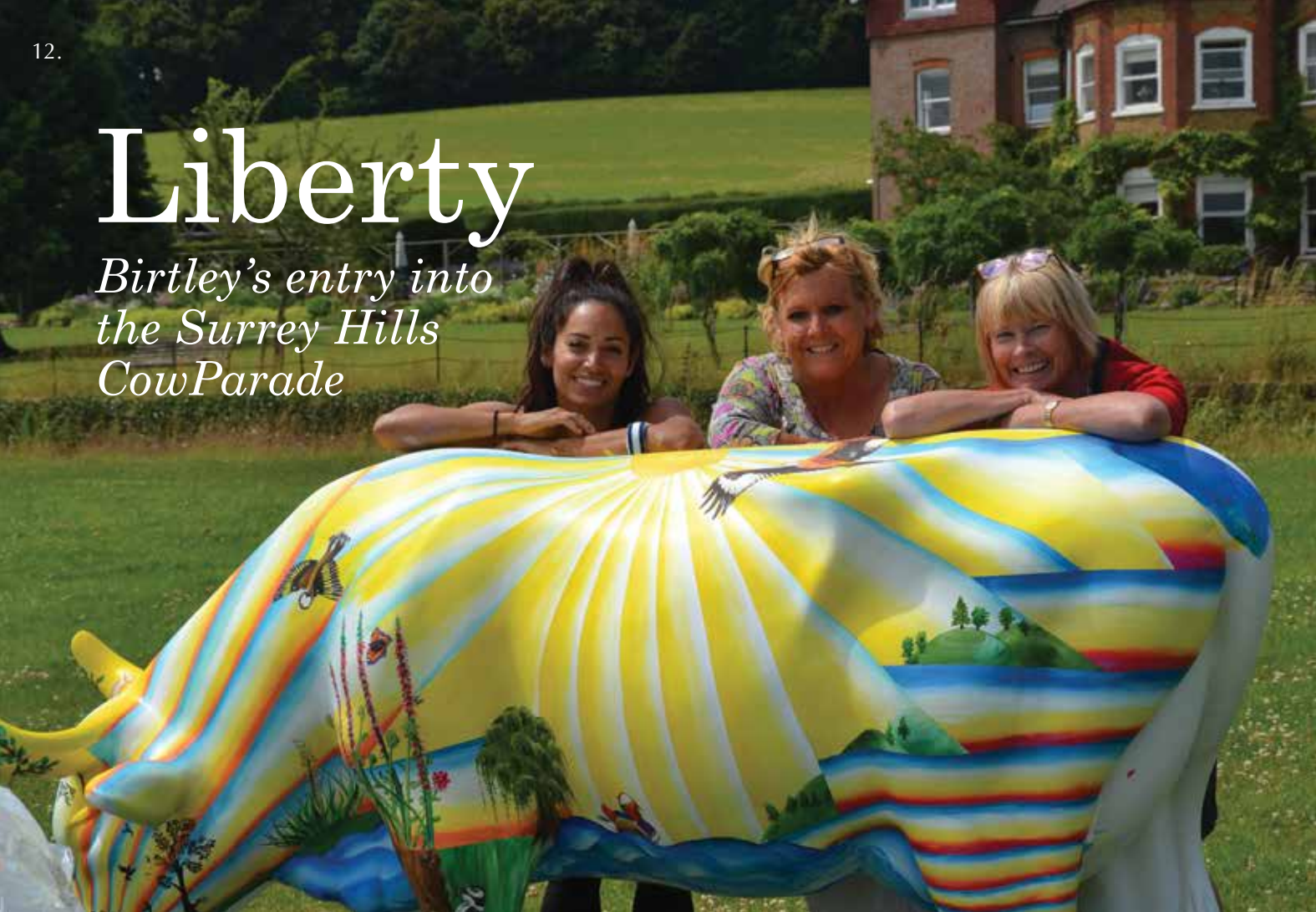
Jenny and Betty are most grateful to Simon, Caroline and Frank Whalley, the staff, and all the Residents at Birtley House for their warm welcome on such a special day.

Jenny Elmes



Liberty

*Birtley's entry into
the Surrey Hills
CowParade*



Over recent months, amazing life-size painted model cows have been popping up all over Surrey. The CowParade is the largest international public art event and has been running in cities around the world for some years. Only a couple of these events have been run in rural areas and this one is designed to promote and support the Surrey Hills and a wide range of other charities, through eventual sale by auction of the cows. Surrey Hills Enterprises, a Community Interest Company jointly owned by Birtley and Surrey County Council (on behalf of the Surrey Hills AONB), is managing this year's CowParade.

The Birtley Cow has been decorated by Emma Allen (pictured right), an artist well-known for her amazing projects of body and face painting and her support for young people's schemes in Sri Lanka. We wanted the artwork on our cow to reflect the wonderful scenery and wildlife around us here at Birtley. This contributes so much to the health and well-being of our Residents and gives so much pleasure to all those who work in or visit our

beautiful grounds and the wider surrounding landscape. The cow's name, 'Liberty', is an anagram of 'Birtley' but also reflects this sense of freedom and renewal which is inspired by our countryside in the wonderful Surrey Hills. We had a competition to find the name and both Staff Nurse, Michelle Hutchison and Mews Resident, Miss Patricia Lewis came up with this inspired choice and they were both awarded a bottle of wine as prize winners.



Emma's beautiful painting reflects her 'brief' with delightful illustrations of many of the plants and animals that can be encountered at Birtley. The overall theme is 'a day in the country' with sunrise on the cow's nose and a dawn chorus of birds around its head. The rays of the midday sun illuminate many birds, animals and flowers around the body and the sun sets finally at the cow's heels with the tail fading into moonlight. However, under the image is another which can be seen only at night by u/v light where the night time animals appear under a glowing moon.

Some of the featured species reflect other stories that characterise some of Birtley's history. The Wisteria, which is such a feature at the front of the main house, is over 150 years old and, as such, must have been one of the earliest examples planted in the UK. The Red Kite flying over the cow's shoulder is a much more recent arrival in this part of the world having spread from a reintroduction in the Chilterns a few years ago. The Roebuck is a lovely inhabitant of our woods (though less welcome when it gets into the garden and eats the roses!). I first saw one here on 25th August 1957 – which I only remember as it was the day my younger brother (another Francis) was born! The Koi Carp swimming in the pond were introduced a few years ago as the Residents found their bright colours easier to spot in the water. You might also see a trout in the painting too, as the lake in the park was created for them.

In the night scene there are two owls which reflect the two baby owls that the family rescued over the years and then released back into the wild when they were grown. The appearance of one of the world's most beautiful pheasants, the cock Lady Amherst Pheasant in the painting, may be a surprise as all the other wildlife is natural to our area. However, it reflects the arrival one day of a hen of this species that walked up the drive and which we captured, found a mate and bred from. This led to a major project with the World Pheasant Association (which my

brother and I helped establish) to breed a range of rare pheasants in a compound in the woods. Some of the eggs produced (by a type called the Cheer Pheasant) even got flown back to their native Pakistan to help support conservation.

We hope that this wonderful work of art will attract substantial bids in the Surrey Hills CowParade Auction this Autumn, so that we can support both the Surrey Hills and our own Birtley Fund at the Community Foundation for Surrey. Many of the cows are attracting great interest and one has already had a bid of five figures so we are very hopeful!

For more information about the CowParade contact Surrey Hills Enterprises on 01483 661150 or visit their website at www.surreyhillsenterprises.co.uk and for more information on Emma Allen, her website is as follows: www.emmaallen.org/about

*Simon Whalley
Chairman*



Queens'

birthday celebrations

On Thursday 9th June 2016, a special tea was organised gathering Residents, family, friends and staff together to celebrate the Queen's 90th Birthday. Everyone assembled in a marquee set up in the parkland which was decorated with festive bunting, balloons and 7 exquisite flower arrangements that had been assembled by Residents and the Activities team, under the watchful eye of Emma Abrew and Cheryl Searle. Almost all of the flowers and greenery were from the Birtley gardens, with the peonies at their very best for the occasion. The standard of decoration was so high that several people asked who the florist was!

Also adorning the tables were napkin rings, again made by Residents during the Pastoral Team Activities sessions, assisted by Denise, Cheryl & Rosa and each person had a commemorative bar of chocolate laid out at their place.

Around 90 people attended the celebration and each table had the name of a previous king/queen of England. A sumptuous tea was prepared by the kitchen including



sandwiches, cakes, biscuits and tea/coffee. Everyone had a glass of Prosecco to 'toast' the Queen, plus two of our Residents were celebrating birthdays, Mrs. Trewick and Mr. Chandler, both of whom received their own birthday cake, complete with a loud chorus of singing! Also present were Mrs. Iris Newton and Mrs. Betty Bell, who celebrate turning 90 this year too and were both presented with a commemorative mug to mark the occasion.

There was a Royal Quiz to complete for those who wanted to get involved and a raffle with many royal prizes for the lucky winners, with proceeds going to the Birtley Fund for the Community Foundation for Surrey.

We were so lucky with the weather that day, the sun shone all afternoon and everyone agreed that it was a lovely, happy occasion, with much laughter. The Queen would have fitted in very well, if she had popped in, but her busy schedule sadly wouldn't have allowed a Birtley visitation!

Rachel Richards
Marketing Assistant



The Garden team

The Garden Team have been hard at work maintaining the beautiful Birtley grounds. The wet, cool conditions of early summer then turned a bit brighter with a very hot period for a few days in July with temperatures reaching a scorching 32 degrees, so the plants have all been put through their paces!

The kitchen garden is producing beans, tomatoes, squash, currants and raspberries for our Residents to enjoy being incorporated into their daily menu.

This Autumn there are brassicas, apples and pears to follow the summer produce. We are in discussion with local charities about developing this as a Community Garden.

The wisteria has flowered twice this summer which has been a joy for the bees, who have been very busily collecting pollen & nectar from this sweet-smelling creeper. Guildford Beekeepers have been active with their courses each Saturday and have planted many additional bee-friendly flowers in the gardens.

Finally, we all wish Geoff Davidson a happy retirement. After some 20 years at Birtley, it will seem strange without him. His careful attention to all the house plants will be greatly missed.

Please do keep enjoying the gardens whenever you can and give us any feedback at any time.

Matt Miller





Moving

Birtley House Care Plans onto a computerised system

At Birtley House we continually strive to improve on the Outstanding care and support we give to all our Residents. We have therefore decided to 'move with the times' and invest in a computerised care plan system to help us maintain and improve upon the care our Residents receive from our multidisciplinary team of Nurses, Carers and support staff – even our GP will be able to access and update the medication records for each of our Residents.

We will implement our chosen system (MED e-care www.mede-care.com) on a phased-basis, with some information e.g. fluid balance charts, remaining paper-based on a temporary basis while we all get used to the system. All staff involved in recording the care of our Residents will have extensive training immediately prior to us moving to the new system and the MED e-care team will be on-site to help us once we 'go live' on 18th August.

With any new process, whether computerised or not, it takes a while for it to become 'business as usual' with all staff familiar and confident in the new way of working. During this learning process we will ensure that the high level of care our Residents receive is maintained and over time we will all start seeing the benefits. The following aims to answer questions you may have regarding Care Plans and MED e-care.

What is a Care Plan?

Each and every Resident in a Nursing Home has a Care Plan which provides a holistic overview of their needs. This extensive document is a guide for the multi-disciplinary team who will be involved in looking after each Resident, outlining the specific medical and personal requirements for each person, including: what is their past and present medical history; do they have any allergies; how do they like to spend their day; do they need any help with personal care – if so, what and how much; is their weight stable; how is their mood; what medication do they need?

Following an initial assessment, the care-plan can be created. However, several other assessments may be required which also feed into the personalised Care Plan, e.g. if the Resident has a history of falls, what can we do to prevent/minimise these; are they at risk of choking; do we need to closely monitor their fluid intake to avoid the risk of dehydration?

The Care Plan therefore is a constantly evolving document which is updated when care requirements change. Each Care Plan is re-evaluated and updated on a monthly basis, while unscheduled changes and updates may be also required when a condition warrants. Residents and their relatives are able to see and discuss their Care Plan, on request.



Why move Care Plans to a computerised system?

The main reasons are:

- Time saving and accuracy of information – allowing our care assistants and nurses to spend more time with our Residents rather than having to write extensive notes
- Facilitates person-centred care – the personalised Care Plans become quick and easy to maintain, according to each Residents' changing requirements allowing prompt and accurate hand-over between shifts. A carer who is unfamiliar with the Resident will be able to find all the information needed to care for that person – quickly and easily
- Help us to meet CQC/legal compliance guidelines
- Ensures a consistent approach to care planning for all our Residents

Why Med e-care?

We investigated several systems to find the right one for Birtley.

- MED e-care provided the closest fit to the Birtley ethos of providing personalised care for our all Residents

- The MED e-care team inspire confidence in their product and have been flexible, personable and very helpful in ensuring that the system is tailored to Birtley-specific needs
- The system is easy and intuitive to use and telephone support is available 24/7 for our staff
- The security for all records held on our Residents is paramount. Access to sub-sets of information for each Resident is only granted on a need-to-know basis
- The system is web-based i.e. held on the internet, where regular back-ups take place, facilitating continued availability to the information from anywhere with an internet connection, assuming the person is authorised to access the system

Later in the year we will add the e-MAR (Medical Administration Record) module to the MED e-care system. This module will interface to the Pharmacy allowing for quick and accurate administration of prescriptions, while for our Nurses it will help to keep track of who requires which medication at what time.

Janet Hall
Marketing & IT Manager

Staff news

New appointments and promotions / change of role

We are delighted to announce that Andrew Shaw has joined the main Board of Directors while Karen Williams, Matron / Manager, is now an Associate Director.

Congratulations to Raj Navaradnasinkam who has been promoted to Lead Carer. While still continuing her role as a Care Assistant, Melinda Chikanya will be working as a Weekend Receptionist on two Sundays every month. Julie Robins has left her permanent role as a Staff Nurses but will continue as a Bank Nurse. Former Senior Care Assistant, Cheryl Searle's role as Mews Warden remains unchanged but she is now also a Multi Role Assistant in the Specialist team.

New starters

We welcome the following to the Birtley team: Care Assistants Brenda Pope, Amy Eagleton, Vicky Punter, Sita Gurung, Louise Wong (returning after being abroad), Hannah Cooper (Bank Care Assistant) and Staff Nurse Monica Bejan.

Welcome back to Amparo Romero who has returned from Spain and joins us once again as a Senior Care Assistant.

Leavers

Best of luck to Sarah Mills, Edith Kiraly, Karolina Poznanska, Emma Brown, Jill Parrott, Amber Turnell, Frances O'Neill, Theo Tramblinas, Geoff Davidson, Ken Ashwell, and Lorraine Bain.

Wedding and baby congratulations

Congratulations to Suree Brook-Jones who married Jonathan Armstrong in May and would now like to be known as Suree Armstrong.

Many congratulations to Tim and Vicky Whalley on the safe arrival of their baby Richard as also to Raj Navaradnasinkam and his wife who welcomed their first baby, a little girl called Sajana.



Richard



Sajana

Bits & pieces

ENRICH your life

The ENRICH programme (Enabling Research in Care Homes) is the first national care home research project network in the world. This innovative initiative aims to broaden the research landscape by encouraging stronger partnerships between researchers, care home staff and Residents.

Several of our Residents have already registered their interest in ENRICH and have already signed-up to 'Join Dementia Research'. Anyone, with or without dementia, can register as a volunteer and, as our Residents show, you are never too old to get involved.

For further information, or to sign-up as a volunteer, please see:
www.joindementiaresearch.nihr.ac.uk



Birtley House fund

We have raised £626.00 for the Birtley House Fund this year, which is administered by the Community Foundation for Surrey to benefit the local community in the surrounding area.

The money was collected through fundraising events such as the raffle during the Queens 90th Celebration Tea and the naming of the Birtley Cow. A substantial amount of the money has also been raised through sales of cards that were produced by the late Mrs. Coe.



Brave the shave

Birtley Massage Therapist, Val Hutton, is going to join the ranks of over 17,000 in the UK who have Shaved their Head in aid of Macmillan Cancer Support this year. The date for her shave is Saturday 27th August, 7pm at Ewhurst village club. Everyone is welcome to go along & support. There will be food, a raffle and a chance to help cut off her hair.

To-date this year, over £1.5 million has been raised by those brave enough to shave their head. Please do sponsor Val who is aiming to raise £1,000 for this worthwhile cause. Donations can be made either via Reception or on www.bravetheshave.org.uk/shavers/val-hutton



Macmillan Coffee Morning Save the date!

We will be holding our annual Macmillan Coffee morning on **Thursday 29th September 2016** from 10am-12pm. Please note this date is the day before all of the other coffee mornings will be taking place.

There will be the usual delicious array of cakes, coffee/tea, along with a raffle and the chance to meet up with friends and family.

We look forward to seeing you.

