

Grange Hall News



Autumn 2011 . . . Autumn 2011



A RECENT visit by S3 pupils at Earlston High School has opened the door to new opportunities at Grange Hall

for the youngsters. After they were shown round and met many of the residents, some of the big-hearted pupils asked if they could

come along to the care home and work as volunteers.

Said Social Carer, Margaret Scott: "A total of 85 youngsters came from Earlston High altogether to see round Grange Hall as part of their Modern Studies class work.

"We explained about the different activities we do with the residents and how each individual has their own care plan.

"As a result of the visit, some of the pupils asked if they could come along at weekends to help out."

Margaret added that the young volunteers not only spend time with the

residents and assist them with different projects, but also help to take care of Grange Hall's animals!

She added: "We have four Shetland ponies and some of the pupils asked if they could feed and groom them too.

"It is wonderful that these youngsters have volunteered to help out here. All the pupils who come along enjoy chatting to the residents and, in turn, they love to see the young people."

ABOVE: Pupils help residents with an art project.

LEFT: Two girls groom the ponies.





A touch of pink for Hallowe'en

ON the spookiest day of the year, Grange Hall staff and residents brought a bit of glamour to the witching hour. For they wore something pink to raise much needed funds for Breast Cancer Research. It was decided to combine the annual 'Wear it Pink Day' with Hallowe'en on October 31, and everyone had a fantastic time dressing up for the occasion. Residents also enjoyed a concert and a dance as well as some scary-looking, but very tasty treats! And the double event was a great success as £100 was raised for this very worthwhile cause.



Watch your speed plea

AS everyone arriving at Grange Hall will have noticed, work on both the driveways to the care home has now been completed.

And Grange Hall's administrator, Alison Scott, has asked all drivers to keep to the speed limit.

Said Alison: "The River Tweed Commission is responsible for the driveways and agreement to repair them had to be reached between themselves, Grange Hall and other residents of Drygrange."

"Grange Hall (Scotland) Ltd has paid a considerable amount towards the cost of the repair and we are delighted that the work has been finished before the winter comes in."

Alison added: "We would ask that motorists respect the speed limit signs on the driveways when coming and going from Grange Hall."

Dazzling display

THE popular annual fireworks display was held this year on Friday, November 4, and everyone agreed it went off with a bang!

Residents gathered to watch the spectacular event on the front lawn and staff were delighted that so many visitors came along to join in the fun.

Seasonal scenes

ART projects at Grange Hall are proving very popular with the residents.

The Garden Project is complete and visitors have a chance to admire the colourful scene of a lady with her plants and a gardener taking a break in his potting shed.

Now residents are working on an Autumn/Winter one featuring a tree with real leaves complete with a squirrel on its branches (not a real one!)

And in the winter scene, children are playing, wrapped up well against the cold and there's a super snowman, sporting a very colourful scarf!

ABOVE RIGHT: The Autumn/Winter mural.

RIGHT: Resident, Helen Sibbald, at work on the tree.

BELOW: The Garden Project.



Cameras bring added security

NEW CCTV cameras have been installed at Grange Hall.

At present there are nine in total and they have been placed at different points inside the building.

And Matron/Manager, Wendy Smith, believes the installation of the CCTV is a 'positive' move for the care home.

She explained: "The cameras are all

now up and running and this brings added security for the residents as well as the home itself. This gives extra peace of mind as well, as staff members can see different parts of the building on a computer screen at the same time.

"It's a very positive move as the security of our residents is paramount," Wendy added.



Chef Stephen enjoys chatting to the residents at mealtimes.

"I love my job. I'm quite happy and content," he said.

Stephen makes space to be creative!

WHEN people spend most of their lives working in kitchens, you would think the last thing they would want to do when they got home was to cook.

But not chef, Stephen Thomson.

Stephen enjoys cooking so much that he is more than happy to man the stove at home too!

He has spent the past 11 years helping to prepare delicious meals for Grange Hall's residents.

And he doesn't even mind washing up the pots!

Said Stephen: "I help to make all the meals, bake cakes, make tea, tidy up the kitchen and wash the dishes.

"I really enjoy the actual cooking - that's my favourite part - and we have a really good team in the kitchen which is great."

Creating culinary delights is not the popular chef's only talent, however - but more of that later.

Stephen, 36, is from Newtown St Boswells, where he still lives with his

wife, Claire, and daughter, Caragh, who is six.

When he left school, Stephen went to college and obtained a HNC in Electrical Engineering.

But he couldn't get a job in that field, so when he saw that a kitchen assistant's post at Grange Hall was available, he applied straight away.

Said Stephen: "I was basically taught everything at Grange Hall and after a while I gained the SVQ2 certificate in catering.

"I love my work. I enjoy the camaraderie with my colleagues and it's great chatting to the residents at mealtimes. I'm really glad now that I didn't get an electrical engineering job."

Stephen works closely with the kitchen team - head chef, Colin, and assistants, Angela and Lukasz.

And when Colin creates new menus, it is Stephen's job to come up with ideas for the desserts.

"Sometimes this can be quite tricky, especially when we do menus from

different parts of the world. Quite a few places just have fruit, so I read a lot of cook books to get ideas."

Stephen also enjoys watching cookery programmes on TV, especially Masterchef, and likes the celebrity chefs, Antony Worrall Thompson and Gordon Ramsay.

He added: "I think Antony Worrall Thompson is great as he is self-taught and comes up with brilliant recipe ideas.

"I also get a lot of inspiration from the way chefs on TV present their dishes."

Away from Grange Hall, Stephen enjoys listening to music, especially Scottish folk and classical. But he doesn't have much time for hobbies as Caragh keeps him very busy.

Said Stephen: "She loves arts and crafts, so together we've made handbags, a jewellery box and even a space station!

"She also enjoys swimming and riding her bike, so there's never a dull moment," he laughed.

Eyes right for residents

LOOKING after your eyesight is vitally important for people of all ages.

But it is especially so for older people.

And Grange Hall residents have regular visits from dedicated staff at Healthcall Optical Services for visual checks.

The company's Scottish Regional Manager, Cathy Sweeney, said: "We have been coming to Grange Hall for many years and, as well as our regular organised visits, we also come here on a month-to-month recall basis when necessary as well as for emergency cases.

"For opticians, their first

duty is the health of eyes and if anything suspicious shows up in tests, then residents are referred to their GPs.

"Conditions such as glaucoma have no symptoms and early detection is so important.

"This is the case for diabetes as well as other age-related conditions."

Cathy added that the company also runs special Optical Awareness Training which is free of charge to staff in care homes as well as residents' relatives. This training also goes towards the SVQ certificate for carers.

"All our staff members

have Dementia and Alzheimer's training and our records are computerised as patient confidentiality is so important.

"We also carry out free hearing tests as well."

Michael Hughes is an optical advisor who arranges glasses for residents and helps them to choose suitable frames.

Michael has been coming to Grange Hall for almost five years.

He said: "Many people don't realise that a stroke also affects a person's sight. If a stroke affects the left side of the body, then the left eye will be affected too.

"In our Optical Awareness Training, we have special

demonstration glasses which shows staff and relatives just how the sight can be affected."

Michael added that with age-related conditions, eyes are monitored very closely and tested every three or six months.

Together with his colleague, Alison Hepburn, and opticians, Peter Tait and Stephen Pollock, Michael travels to nursing and care homes all over Scotland.

"We love coming down to the Borders and Grange Hall.

"We've got to know the residents well and it's nice to be able to check up on everyone," he said.



Firemen give Marion's party a lift!

SPECIAL birthdays deserve an extra special treat.

And nurse, Marion Wall's, was no exception.

But staff had to put their thinking caps on to come up with ideas before the big event on September 10.

Explained Matron/Manager, Wendy Smith: "We wanted to give Marion a very special day, but couldn't think what to do to make it really memorable.

"By chance, a few weeks before her birthday, we had one of our regular safety visits from the local fire brigade.

"Marion was on duty at the time and happened to mention how much she admired the work of the fire service.

"And that gave us the idea."

Staff contacted the fire station in Galashiels and explained the situation.

But no-one knew until the day itself whether any firefighters would be available to pop in.

Wendy added: "We were delighted when we saw the fire engine coming down the drive, and Marion's face was a picture when two firemen came in.

"It was fantastic that they were able to put in an appearance.

"They just made Marion's special birthday."

Said Marion: "It was such a lovely surprise and everyone was so kind to arrange it for me.

"I certainly won't forget that birthday in a hurry!"

ABOVE: Left - Marion gets a birthday hug and right - the two firemen who made her day!

Salon style

The room used for Grange Hall's hairdressing salon was redecorated this autumn, but it could have more than a hint of colour in the future.

Staff are trying to come up with ideas for a mural on one of the walls which the residents could help to create . . . so watch this space!



ABOVE: Arthur Taylor opens his present.
CENTRE: Sam Neilson on his 80th birthday.
RIGHT: A delighted Alan Lister receives his gift.



Autumn birthdays

TWELVE residents celebrated their birthdays during September, October and November. They are Sheena Barron who was 87; Alan Lister, 78; Margaret Mitchell, 71; Sam Neilson, 80; Nessie Middlemiss, 97; Catherine Stirton, who was also 97; Joyce Fairweather and Margaret Gillie, who were both 75; Elsie Martin was 92; Arthur Taylor, 95, Morag Redington, 74, and Finlay Miller was 89. Congratulations to them all.



Senior carer, Mania, brings Catherine Stirton her cake



Left: Margaret Mitchell looks at her birthday card. Centre: Morag Redington with carers Karina and Lindsay. Right: Birthday girl, Margaret Gillie, with members of her family.

Kirsty, the West Highland terrier, was a four-legged friend to residents, staff and visitors alike.



She came to Grange Hall with her owner, Dorothy Heveran, and quickly made herself at home. But sadly, Kirsty, who was a ripe old age in doggy years,

has had to be put to sleep. It was an upsetting time for everyone, but Kirsty, pictured above with Dorothy and Matron/Manager, Wendy, leaves behind many happy memories.



Stuart Anderson from Harmony entertained residents at the St Andrew's Day concert on November 30 in the Social Centre.



Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to all our readers