

MAY 2021  
ISSUE 03

#ABBEYFIELDANGELS



# THE ABBEYFIELD ANGEL

LIFE AT THE ABBEYFIELD WEY VALLEY SOCIETY

Care | Compassion | Companionship

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# CONTENTS

ISSUE 03 MAY 2021

## 3 WELCOME TO THE ABBEYFIELD ANGEL

The Abbeyfield Angel is our newsletter keeping you up to date with all things within the Abbeyfield Wey Valley Society's family. As a charity, we love to embrace our local friends with our residents, staff and volunteers all playing an active role in putting us at the heart of our community.

## 3 SHELTERED HOUSING - INDEPENDENT LIFE

Sheltered Housing is an important ingredient within AWVS care offering. We profile our homes and the personalities enjoying independent life within them. In this issue we take a look at Castle Gate , our home that sits in a lovely central Guildford location.

## 4 UPDATE FROM SALLY TIDY, OUR C.E.O

Sally talks about the start to 2021 and our hopes for the rest of the year.

## 5 GUILDFORD - A BYE-GONE ERA

John Burston, one of our residents at Castle Gate in Guildford writes a fascinating account of his local area, Guildford, through the years.

## 7 WHAT'S BEEN GOING ON

We always make the most of life at Abbeyfield Wey Valley Society. Our teams' passion is infectious and whatever life has thrown at us over the last few months everyone within the AWVS has faced it head on with a smile , a laugh and just the odd tear.

## 8 FRIENDS TOGETHER - BEREAVEMENT SUPPORT

We have close links with our local communities and there are some wonderful people doing wonderful things. In this edition we hear from our friends at the Spire Cafe in Farnham who get together to offer bereavement support to those feeling isolated and lonely. A subject close to our heart here at Abbeyfield Wey Valley Society.

## 9 ABBEYFIELD WVS HIDDEN HEROS - OUR CHEFS

A vital ingredient to enjoying life in an Abbeyfield Wey Valley Society home is gorgeous, fresh, home cooked food. Here we chat to a couple from our team of chefs who work tirelessly to cater for all our residents' individual needs.



*Welcome to Abbeyfield Wey Valley.*



So suddenly here we are, all our COVID vaccinations done and heading towards summer 2021 ! Time really does fly, however as usual, everyone within the Abbeyfield Wey Valley Society family has been making the most of it and we certainly plan to continue to do so over the summer months.

It's lovely to start seeing some of you visiting the homes again and we look forward to spending some great time with all our family and friends locally over the next few months.

We hope you enjoy our third edition of the Abbeyfield Angel and can't wait to see you all soon.

### *The Abbeyfield Angels* X



## INDEPENDENCE, SUPPORT AND COMMUNITY, ALL WRAPPED UP INTO ONE LIFESTYLE

Castle Gate is located just a few minutes walk from Guildford high street and is adjacent to the beautiful castle grounds.. It has been providing more active AWVS residents with an independent lifestyle since the society took ownership in 2016.

"The eight residents each enjoy their own independent lifestyle whilst revelling in the social atmosphere within the home" says Sybil Bradburn, the House Manager .

Sybil was born in Durban and qualified as a nurse in South Africa working in A & E departments predominantly. She moved to the UK in 2008 and started with the society in 2011 as House Manager at Kemnal – she moved over to Castle Gate in 2018.

"People who come to our sheltered homes are generally independent and social older people who perhaps want a change from living at home and enjoy the company and camaraderie" says Sybil who provides meals twice a day for the residents and is generally around as a friendly face helping the home run smoothly.

Residents enjoy time in the gardens and the conservatory and many a laugh is shared around the dinner table.

It is no surprise that spaces in all Abbeyfield Wey Valley Sheltered homes are very sought after. Residents not only enjoy the lifestyle and locations, but benefit from the basic fee structure that simplifies life too – one simple monthly payment with no council tax, utility bills or other contracts to have to worry about!

In the next issue we head over to the nearby town of Haslemere to learn about Kemnal and their House Manager Janet.



As we gradually open up the society, we hope to be able to welcome some of our wonderful volunteers back into the homes to share some quality time with the residents and staff.



### *A few words from our CEO, Sally Tidy*

MAY 2021

Well the time has finally come, after a very long year, I was delighted, today, to finally invite visitors back into our homes. Albeit with strict restrictions, but it's a start on our way back to normality. With the summer coming we can start looking to the future. We hope that the pandemic will continue to subside and are already planning trips to start again towards the end of August into September – here's hoping for an Indian Summer.

It will also be so nice to invite back our volunteers who have been so greatly missed over the past year, a large garden party to welcome all back is the first thing on our 'to-do' list, once we can.

Volunteers have always been such a very important part of our Society, it has been so sad that our residents have not been able to benefit from their interaction for so long. Volunteers bring that extra dimension, as a friend not a carer, as someone to chat to who has something new to bring to conversation and someone who has more time to spend with

them. The impact they make is immeasurable and we are looking forward to greeting them back as soon as we can. If you would like to consider volunteering please contact us, even if you only have an hour to spare it can make a world of difference. Please contact tracey.pollard@abbeyfieldweyvalley.co.uk for more information.

As you can see we have continued with activities, creating a positive atmosphere and keeping morale up, now with better weather (I say this as it starts to flutter with snow in April!) we hope to be able to tidy up the gardens and have more outdoor activities – if you have a little spare time and would like to help out in the tidy up please let us know.

Our staff have remained our backbone and have shown remarkable resilience over the past months, their positivity and compassion has been amazing, fully earning the title of Abbeyfield Angels, they really have become an extended family to all.



Sally Tidy  
CEO Abbeyfield Wey Valley Society.  
Below: Max the puppy

Wishing you best wishes and I hope to see you soon, with a rather large 6 month old Chocolate Labrador.

Max is growing by the day and loves coming into work – sulking on the days he can't! – his training is going well although as with many Labradors is so very excited to meet new friends, manners are sometimes forgotten! Especially if his new friends have food!





# GUILDFORD, A BYE-GONE ERA



*By John Burston, Castle Gate Resident.*

I was born and brought up in Guildford. Having travelled the world, lived and worked abroad, I have since lived for the greater part of my life in or near the town.

My earliest memories are of shopping in the High street with my mother in the early thirties. I would have been 5 or 6 years old. The High Street in structure was much as it is now – cobbled surface with the familiar features; Grammar School, Abbot's Hospital, Town Hall Clock and the Angel. The famous painting of the High Street depicting the view from the top is little changed today!

The High Street in those days was the main road from London to Portsmouth with 2-way traffic, no pedestrian crossings or traffic lights. Guildford had no by-pass, no cathedral and no university. The street was lined with the shops of tradespeople – grocers, bakers, fishmongers, tobacconists and confectioners. There was a pork butcher selling everything and a game shop offering rabbit, hare, pheasant and even venison. Swan Lane, connecting High Street and North Street was an open air vegetable market.

The Grammar School, truly royal by virtue of its charter granted by Edward IV in the 15th century still occupies original buildings including a rare chain library, books being so scarce and valuable they were chained to the wall. Abbot's Hospital, is named after the Archbishop of Canterbury whose statue adorns the pavement on the opposite side of the road.

The famous clock at the Town Hall is opposite Tunsgate through which horse-drawn carts brought produce to the market. The Angel Hotel, as it then was, is much reduced from the days when Nelson's coach would change horses or he would stay overnight on his way from London to Portsmouth.

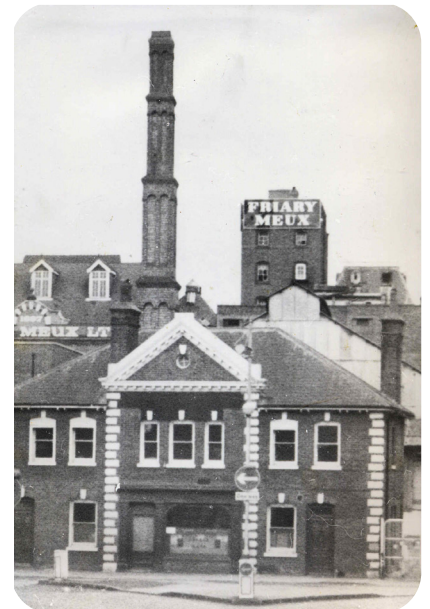
At the bottom of the hill the road crossed the river Wey and continued to Godalming, Milford and Hindhead. There was no Yvonne Arnaud - the theatre came after the war. Guildford repertory theatre was in North Street where many famous actors learned their trade. There was always three plays in hand; one reading the parts, one in rehearsal and one on stage. Also in North Street was the Borough police station, the original building is now occupied by Laura Ashley.

On the railway, trains were hauled by steam locos and by the entrance to the tunnel where the Farnham Road car park now stands was an engine round house where engines entered via a turntable.

Where the Friary shopping centre now stands was the Friary Brewery, whose beer stocked pubs across southern England. Across the road on the site of the multi-screen cinema and car park together with the law courts and police headquarters were the gasworks and a busy cattle market.

Thirty years later, in the 60's coal from the gasworks fueled our Aga for £3 a ton. We enjoyed luxury cooking, domestic hot water and a lovely warm kitchen for £9 a year !

Market day was Tuesday and it was not unusual to see cattle driven along Woodbridge Road. Further along the road past the cricket ground and railway bridge was the coal fired power station.



Down on the river, Moons Warf received barges loaded with timber from the London docks via the Thames and river Wey. The Wey Navigation is the oldest canalised waterway in Britain with locks at intervals to allow barges to navigate the river. It dates from the 16th Century.

Just off the High Street, alongside the keep of King John's thousand year old castle is Castle Gate, one of Abbeyfield Wey Valley residential homes, where I have one of the eight rooms with splendid views across the river flowing through the gap in the North Downs carved by Glaciers in the last ice age.



Across all our homes, residents and carers celebrated some Easter Joy



Care teams throughout AWVS get into the spirit of celebrating St Patrick's Day



Val King, an integral part of the Hatch Mill team for 20 years celebrates her 60th. [#abbeyfieldangels](#) ❤️



*As always, there is plenty to celebrate and enjoy within the Abbeyfield Wey Valley family.*



### HAPPY 60TH BIRTHDAY VAL

Val started working at Hatch Mill when it opened in 2001 (20 years ago in August) as a domestic and night carer. She remembers her first day as if it were yesterday!

She then changed to a care assistant in the day mainly on the nursing wing until she became a senior care assistant on the residential wing in 2013.

Val loves all aspects of life at Abbeyfield, driving the minibus and assisting on most outings when she can, never missing the trips to Marwell Zoo, Southsea and the visits to the Gin distilleries!

She has a great sense of humour and displays this regularly when taking part in the AWVS carnival parades dressing up in many costumes including Tweedledee, Football player, a Lion and Line dancer; Yes, we do have evidence of all these, but as it's her Birthday we have decided not to publish the pictures.

In her spare time Val enjoys walking her dogs and decorating her house. She has a great rapport with the residents and loves to chat with them, including keeping up with the football scores so she can discuss with the gentlemen of the home.

Thanks for all your amazing work Val - Happy Birthday and here's to the next twenty years!

### NATIONAL NEST-BOX WEEK

National Nest-Box Week is an established part of the ornithological calendar. Celebrated from February 14th each year, it puts the spotlight on breeding birds and asks everyone to put up more nest-boxes in their local area.

This year residents at each of the homes made and decorated some nest boxes which have been situated in each homes' garden providing valuable nesting space for the birds together with a vibrant theme for the summer months - our endeavours even made it onto the BBC Surrey News.

### MIKE RETIRES

Mike Maher started at Abbeyfield Wey Valley by doing a couple of small projects for Sally back in 2012 and he enjoyed being part of the team so much he never left!

Mike spent much of his career in the army working all over the world with spells in Cyprus, Jordan, Hong Kong and Malaysia, where he was instrumental in commissioning and opening a new 300 bed hospital and retirement home in Sungai Petani.

Since returning to the UK, he managed two care homes before joining Sally and the team at Abbeyfield Wey Valley Society.

Mike will be sadly missed however, I'm sure you agree, fully deserves his retirement!

As we reported in the last edition of Abbeyfield Angel, Shelley Hartley, who has been with the society managing Hatch Mill for many years took on the role of General Manager back in January and has been working closely alongside Mike over the past three months - he has handed the baton over to a very capable pair of hands.

### CATRIONA, 100 - INSPIRATION TO US ALL

Catriona (pictured on rear page) started her medical career in the blood transfusion service and then studied at St Andrews University where she was one of very few women studying medicine.

During WW2 she spent time in Kenya in the Women's Royal Army Corp before going on to become a local GP. She spent 20 years single handily running her own practice in the local area.

Even after retirement Catriona liked to keep busy and worked at a local school teaching children to read, and would often be seen volunteering at The Farnham Maltings.

In her 70's she became fond of adventure holidays, finding herself rafting down the Colorado river in the Grand Canyon, climbing mountains, and travelling the world, visiting Antarctica, Russia, and Borneo to name a few.

In her 80's she joined the gym going 3 times a week to keep active, and was still walking the English countryside into her 90's.

Aged 98 she opted for a more relaxed life at Abbeyfield Wey Valley Society's Ridgway Court home in Farnham, but she does still keep herself busy joining in with all the events and activities within the home.

Congratulations to a very impressive lady!

# FRIENDS TOGETHER

*Friends Together is a fellow Farnham based charity that offers support and company to those touched by bereavement*



Above: The Spire Café at the church in South Street Farnham, where Friends Together meet to chat share experiences and dealing with bereavement

Just over five years ago an independent support group was set up to help anyone who had suffered the loss of a loved one based on the idea that a cup of tea and a chat might be helpful. It is run by volunteers, who are not trained counsellors or medical practitioners, but have a listening ear and time for others. Our conversations cover many subjects, not always bereavement.

Even for those bereaved people who have a strong and supportive family and friends, there comes a point when they don't want to bother people with how they are feeling. So often there is an expectation that they should be 'over it by now'. This does not mean that they have in any way come to terms with the death of someone close to them. Sometimes the grief can still be affecting them years later, leaving them feeling isolated and lonely.

That is why Friends Together came into being, providing an opportunity for anyone struggling with grief to meet and chat with others, a chance for new friendships to develop, as we have seen happen. We facilitate the meetings but we do not offer any specific counselling as this is not our purpose. We give people space to talk about how they are feeling. Although Friends Together is run by the Christian community the meetings are not

religious and are for those of any or no faith.

Our meetings are Monday afternoons and evenings at the Spire Café, South Street, Farnham GU9 7QU. Because of Covid 19 we have a Zoom meeting on a Monday evening, otherwise we are able to offer a chat on the telephone. For more information go to [www.friendstogetherbereavement.org](http://www.friendstogetherbereavement.org) or call 0999368128 or 01252 560687



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# ABBNEYFIELD WEY VALLEY

## SERIOUS ABOUT FOOD



*The AWVS chefs take pride in providing varied and nutritious daily menus*

Below, Lynn serving breakfast at Hatch Mill and Leah making home made shepherds pie at Wey Valley House

Eating healthily is important for all of us no matter what stage of life we're in, however ensuring you have plenty of nutritious foods in your diet throughout later life will help you stay active and healthy for longer.

Across Abbeyfield Wey Valley's three care homes a team of chefs work tirelessly behind the scenes ensuring that every mealtime is an occasion to be enjoyed by all the residents.

Working in a care environment provides unique challenges for the chefs – "there are a great number of dietary requirements and preferences our residents need, however we soon get to know everyone as individuals and understand their likes and requirements" says Lynn one of the catering team at Hatch Mill.

Although meal times are a real social hub in the homes, sometimes residents prefer to eat in their room and a slick operation between the chefs and care teams ensures hot and tasty meals get to be enjoyed by all throughout the home.



Part of the key to the success of producing varied daily menus that are both tasty and nutritious is using fresh locally sourced ingredients as much as possible. "Using fine ingredients gives us the ability to be flexible with our preparation procedures and ensures that every meal not only suits the individuals' dietary requirements, but tastes lovely too" Lynn explains.

The society's belief that meals should be an occasion certainly rings true when the chefs put on one of their ever popular themed lunches, celebrating world cuisines, national events and traditional UK occasions. These regular lunches provide a fantastic excuse to celebrate life and it really is a joy to see the residents sharing stories, telling jokes and even having a good old sing song around the table.

Residents are looked after even when the chefs go home in the evening. Anyone feeling peckish at night, or anytime in between meals for that matter, can dive into the snack trolleys and help themselves to fresh fruit, drinks and other snacks.

The teams in each kitchen are of course experts in ensuring there are "occasional" indulgences on offer too. Fresh cakes and pastries are among their specialties although we are regularly told their talents are limitless in this area.

A huge thanks must go to all the teams in our kitchens whose passion and skills go to make each of our homes restaurants the residents happy places!

## Our community in pictures

Happy 100th  
Birthday, Catriona,  
Ridgway Court Resident



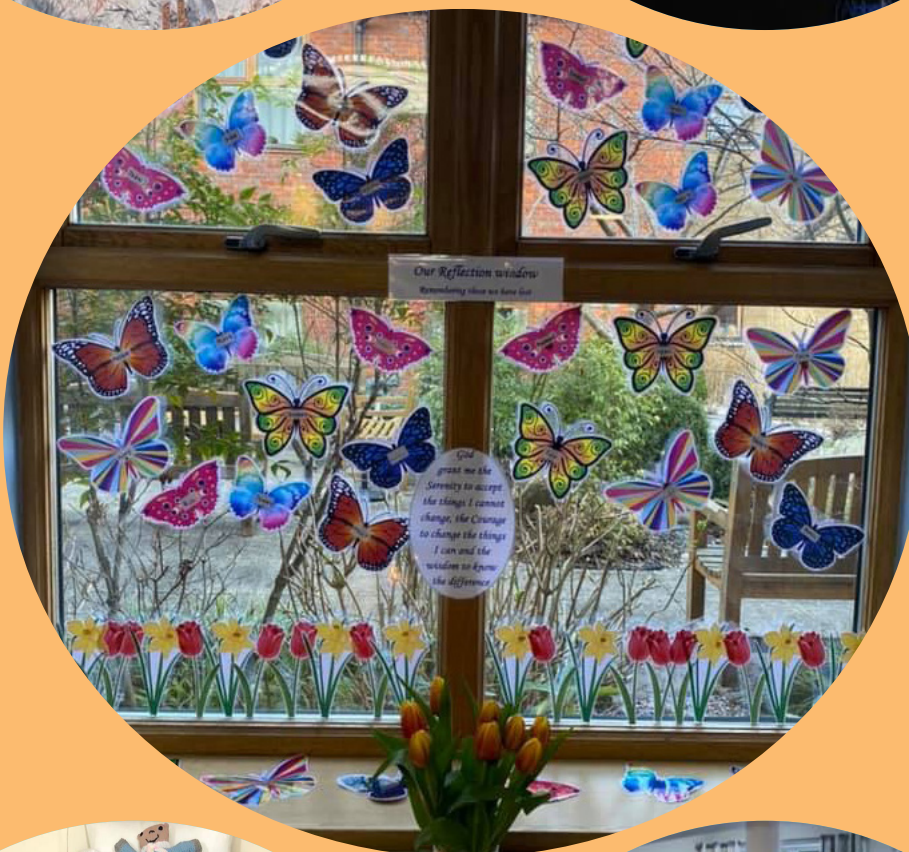
Happy 21st  
Birthday Leah, @W.V.H  
#abbeyfieldangels  
❤️



Right :  
**National Day of  
Reflection**

Residents and staff at all  
our homes got together  
to reflect over the past  
year. Remembering  
residents, family members  
and friends by putting their  
names on the beautiful  
reflection windows.  
We lit a candle, said a few  
prayers and held a minutes  
silence.

Tuesday 23 March  
was an emotional day for  
us all.



Enda has been  
keeping busy knitting  
54 teddies for the local  
neonatal unit



Some very  
competitive table tennis  
at Wey Valley House

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