



## Feedback for the Future

Feedback is an extremely important process for us to be able to know if things are being done the right way, or if there is anything which needs improved. Although we send out questionnaires each year, have suggestion boxes, and encourage anyone who enters the care home to give us feedback, people can sometimes be reluctant to comment for fear of causing upset.

For this reason, we have created a "Discussion Tree". This is a bare tree which is located on the wall near the lift and therefore accessible to all. Each month there is a theme, on which any clients, staff, visitors, friends and family are all encouraged to leave a comment or suggestion.

There are leaf shaped notelets beside the tree for you to write any comments and then stick to the tree. This is also completely anonymous. The more comments, the more the tree blooms. At the end of the month, a new theme is chosen and the current leaves are removed from the tree. The current leaves are then evaluated and a report is put out for all to see in the form of a "You suggested ..... We replied" board. In this, the main suggestions and comments are displayed with an explanation of what we have done using this information.

This also allows clients, staff and family, to make positive contributions to the service provision and the achievement of positive outcomes for individuals.

We have also scheduled a **Relatives Meeting for Thursday the 30th of July at 6.30pm**, hopefully to gain in-depth information and feed-back from the families of our clients in the care home. The meeting will be held in the dining room.



"We need your comments to make the tree come to life"

## Memories of Summer

The school holidays are here, giving children freedom from the classroom and after-school activities.

What did summer holidays mean for children many years ago? Reminiscing recently with two clients from Day Care, it was striking how the influences of family commitments and the needs of the local economy had shaped their summer activities, with one family being involved in the Bed and Breakfast business and the other family involved in crofting.

Elizabeth MacDonald was brought up in Invercoe, where her father was head gardener at Invercoe House. Her mother did Bed and Breakfast from Easter until October and Elizabeth remembers she and her sister sleeping on camp beds under the stairs, whilst her parents slept on a bed settee in the living room throughout the summer months. She helped her mother do the washing by hand; hanging up the sheets to dry in the warm cupboard at the top of the stairs if it was raining. She helped to serve breakfast and evening meals to nine or ten guests, helped with house work and the dishes, fed the animals which included cows, pigs and hens.

She also recalls free-time as "children of the woods", playing at "houses" and swinging on a tree rope her father had tied to a branch. She played tennis in the back garden and remembers her father rowing her over to the Burial Island. A school trip by bus to Ganavan Sands at Oban was a particularly favourite memory, as was the weather which was always sunnier than today!

.....Continued on page 2

Continued from page 1..... Jessie MacDonald was brought up on the croft at Springwell, Onich, where her father had five milking cows. In summer, the cows were free to graze on the hill, and the children had to fetch them into the byre twice daily for milking. Jessie remembers sometimes not being able to find the cows on the hill if they were lying down in tall bracken. She remembers midgies and ticks being troublesome; midgies were a nuisance in the byre when the cows were being milked, and her father used to tie a burning rag to the door of the byre to deter them with smoke whilst milking.

Jessie delivered the milk in cans to the Onich and Alt Nan Ros Hotels, and also the village school during term time. She helped her mother to make butter in the churn—this was kept cool in the meat-safe outside the back door. The family grew their own vegetables and fed their pigs on “brac”- food waste from the Onich Hotel. She also helped at the hay cutting, which her father did by hand with a scythe, laying the hay over rucks in the field to dry.

Jessie’s memories are of sunny, dry summers and masses of blue-bells in the Onich woods. A school trip by bus, to the Empire Exhibition in Glasgow in 1937, was a very happy memory.

Pleasant memories for these two ladies; they enjoyed both work and play over the summer holidays, each contributing in their own way to the economy of the local area.

## Activities

We recently embarked on a Paint Pal Scheme with children from the local primary school. This is an intergenerational art project to encourage interaction between older and younger members of the community and more importantly, Abbeyfield Ballachulish. We have had one session so far and the feedback has been very encouraging, the children thoroughly enjoyed the experience, likewise our clients. More art projects to follow....

There has been a great mix of music since our last newsletter and a local theatre group called Bright Productions Ilona Lawson and company brought to the stage the life and works of Robert Burns in a humorous production tailored specially to our clients and something different for all of them to enjoy.



## Home Improvements

As part of ongoing investment a new alarm call system was recently installed by Tunstall HealthCare. This gives us more longevity and room to expand and add as needs arise which the older system couldn't, effectively future proofing us for several years to come and continuing to ensure the safety of our clients.

## On Yer Bike!

Fern Britton's #challenge 57 happened in May. As part of the cycling challenge Lindsay Simpson well known to Abbeyfield took part in three arduous stages covering over 170 miles Thanks to Lindsay Simpson for her fundraising of over £240 which was over and above her original £600 pre event for Genesis research.



Thanks to everyone who has donated to Abbeyfield so far this year

## Staff News

We have had three new starts since our last newsletter, so welcome to Janelle Viray a new carer, Hazel Orr, our new Senior Carer; Charlotte Duffy, who has moved from general assistant to care. Welcome one and all.

Congratulations to Shauna Kydd who recently completed and passed SVQ Social Services and Health Care Level 2 and Christine McKellar SVQ Professional Cookery Level 2, well done and here's to the next level.

We would also like to congratulate Karen MacNeill who recently celebrated a Big Birthday in Benidorm, a great time was had by all! Congratulations and best wishes to Anne Mackenzie and Donna Fleming on their landmark birthdays.

### Registered Charity no SCO15946

Registered Office: Abbeyfield House, Park Road, Ballachulish, Highland .PH49 4JS

Tel: 01855 812950 Fax: 01855 812952 Email: [abb.ballachulish@btconnect.com](mailto:abb.ballachulish@btconnect.com)