



Bryn Derwen Newsletter

Sixth Edition 2015



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About Us

Bryn Derwen is a small EMI residential home in the historic city of St Asaph who specialise in caring for the elderly who have dementia. We are located in a quiet residential part of the city but are very close to all of the shops, post office and cathedral, and as such are very much part of the local community. We are registered with the Care Standards Inspectorate for Wales and we provide 24 hour care for 19 male and female long term care clients, as well as also providing care for our respite and day care service users. All of our bedrooms are spacious and have en-suite facilities.

The resident's in Bryn Derwen receive professional care delivered with respect in a friendly, homely and compassionate environment, where quality of life is imperative. Our dementia care is provided by well trained and dedicated teams in an environment personally adapted to each resident's needs, all of whom receive a care plan which reflects their individual needs, interests, and physical and emotional abilities.

Editors Message

Happy New Year everyone and welcome to the February edition of our newsletter!

We had a wonderful time celebrating Christmas together both within the home and the local community, and we would like to take this opportunity to once again thank everyone who helped to make it such a magical festive season for us. You will be pleased to hear that the video editing has now been completed for our 12 Days of Christmas reminiscence video and should any of you desire a copy then please don't hesitate to request one from me.

As well as our regular activities on offer here, our staff have continued to research into new, stimulating and inclusive sessions for our residents' benefit and as usual you are all welcome to participate in these with us, so please check the 'Forthcoming Events' section for further details on these.

We also have some important announcements to make regarding our ongoing improvements to our home and we would love to hear any suggestions that you may have for us. We recently received some feedback from one relative who praised both our staff and our newsletter and we would like to thank them for taking the time to send such a lovely email. The staff here work together tirelessly to make Bryn Derwen a safe, comfortable, stimulating and enjoyable home and we are very proud of the work we have accomplished so far as well as the future projects we have lined up.

I hope you enjoy all of our latest news!

Thank you
Helen Johnson (Activities Organiser)

Spending time with loved ones

At Bryn Derwen we warmly welcome relatives to come and spend time with their loved ones, but we also understand how this can sometimes be difficult due to work commitments, travel issues, illness etc. This is why we also encourage both our residents and their relatives to keep in contact via phone calls and also through Skype. If anyone would like more information on the Skype service, please contact Margaret Spencer or Lina Davitt.

Activities

We have a wide variety of activities here at Bryn Derwen as we believe that they are essential to a person's wellbeing as they give purpose and enjoyment to their day and so help to improve their quality of life.

We enjoy music therapy sessions, arts and crafts, gardening, baking, memory exercises, armchair exercises, dancing, sing a longs, quizzes, bingo, card games, board games, pampering sessions, multi-sensory activities and pet therapy.

As well as all this, Bryn Derwen also provides entertainers on a fortnightly basis and our residents thoroughly enjoy the performances from Tony Hudson, Gavin Strong, Christopher Dean, and John Broadhead.



We are also able to offer our residents the opportunity for day trips out to see the countryside and local attractions and so are regularly able to visit places like Llandudno, Rhyl, Conway, and Rhos on Sea.



Over the last couple of months we have spent a lot of time visiting our friends in the local community. As well as enjoying coffee mornings at St Asaph Cathedral, Llanelwy Community Church and Jacobs Ladder, we also partake in many other social gatherings such as the 'Speak Up' Project, 'Singing for the Brain', and the 'Trefeirian Social Group'.

We also had our guest Rodney stay with us for a short while whilst he was waiting to be rehomed and he certainly made himself comfortable! As well as spending his time taking over the house, lounging about, and seeking constant attention, his playful antics and friendly nature made him very popular for pet therapy with several of our residents.



As reminiscing forms an important part of our activity programme we have continued to produce short videos documenting important events from Bryn Derwen. These short films not only help to preserve memories for our residents and staff, but they also allow for friends and relatives to share in these happy moments too. If any relative would like a video of their loved one then could they please speak to Helen Johnson (Activities Organiser) for further details.

Our friends in the community

We have excellent relationships with our friends in the community and they regularly support the activity programme, themed parties, and charity events that we run.

As well as attending 'Singing for the Brain' and the 'Trefeirian Social Group', we also regularly attend the 'Llanelwy Community Group' where we have been making new friends over tea and cake, and sharing our skills and experience in the activities on offer.

As discussed in the previous newsletter, we have been fortunate enough to work alongside Age Connects in their 'Speak Up' project led by volunteer Theresa Redfern Jones. This work has seen some of our more shy residents really build in self-esteem and confidence over the last several months, and Theresa is currently helping our residents to create memory scrapbooks. These nostalgic scrapbooks together with the memory box project that she has planned will help to bring back so many happy memories and also offer a sense of comfort and familiarity to them when experiencing a dementia. Theresa is also working closely with our Activities Assistants Beck Marriot and Sarah McNamara in order to provide our residents with sensory based relaxation sessions. Relatives are encouraged to attend these sessions if they wish, which are held each Thursday at 10.30-12.00 in the main lounge.

Other regular visitors to our home include various Lay workers from St Asaph Cathedral. Our Church Services are held on the first Thursday of every month in the main lounge @ 13.30 and all are welcome to join.



Over the festive season we were fortunate enough to have several visitors to our home and we would once again like to thank our dear friends Tom and Carol from St Asaph Cathedral, The Grange, St Asaph VP Infants School and Ysgol Esgob Morgan for spending quality time with us. We would also like to thank the St Asaph Community Association for kindly inviting us to the annual Senior Citizens Christmas Party. You can find further information on these events and experiences in the 'Christmas' section of this newsletter.

Celebrations

Over the last few months here at Bryn Derwen we have set up a variety of entertainment and activities to celebrate important events in the calendar. Here is a list of all the themed events that we have participated in.

Origami Day

We celebrated origami day by having an arts and crafts session. We struggled to make a frog and a car, and there was a lot of paper thrown across the room, but overall we had fun and really enjoyed decorating the pieces we had managed to make.



Art Exhibition at Rhyl Library

Towards the end of November a group of us went to see a wonderful art exhibition at Rhyl Library. We saw many interesting pieces and were even fortunate enough to get a personal tour of the gallery from the artists themselves. As well as discussing their work they also gave us some advice on ways to produce art from recyclable materials, which has inspired us for our next arts & crafts session. After we finished the tour we then went upstairs to

view the library's museum which displays antiques and retro clothing, all housed within replica vintage shop fronts.



Christmas

We were incredibly busy over the whole of December as we took part in numerous Christmas events and activities both within Bryn Derwen and the local community.

We had several Christmas themed arts and crafts sessions where we produced some wonderful cards for our loved ones, as well as some festive decorations to go along with the ones we displayed around our home and on our Christmas tree.

We were treated to Christmas carols again this year from our good friends from the Cathedral Tom and Carol who really helped us to get into the festive spirit with their lively performance. We also had our regular entertainers sing Christmas songs with us, and we enjoyed a festive themed sing-along at our Singing for the Brain sessions in Denbigh. As well as all this, we had our much anticipated visits from both St Asaph V.P. and Ysgol Esgob Morgan who kindly came to spend time with us and sing their wonderful Christmas songs.



Our friends from The Grange also came to spend time us over the Christmas period and we had a lovely morning with our Christmas themed quiz, festive character board photo-shoot and making our 12 Days of Christmas reminiscence video together.

Several of us also attended the annual Senior Citizens Christmas Party at Llanelwy Community Church where we had a really lovely time making new friends and we each received a 3 course meal, a visit and gift from Santa, a Christmas carol performance from Ysgol Esgob Morgan choir, and some games of bingo.

We also had the opportunity to attend a panto this year and so many of us got to go and see 'Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs' at The Pavilion in Rhyl. We had a wonderful time and are hoping to go to next year's show.

As usual, we had a fantastic Christmas party, with festive activities ranging from quizzes, wind up Santa sleigh ride races, pin the nose on Rudolph and taking turns singing Christmas songs on our karaoke machine. We also held a fancy dress competition which was won this year by the baby Jesus entry.

On Christmas Eve, all of our residents were treated to some early Christmas presents and a festive tea party where we indulged in a variety of sweets, chocolates, cakes and wine!



Theresa from Age Connects has continued to work with our residents to produce memory books and over the Christmas period they concentrated on a section entitled 'Memories of Christmas'. One resident recalled how;

"I have lovely memories of Christmas days growing up such as getting up early, having breakfast, rushing impatiently to open presents. I remember we had a Christmas tree, a real one. We would play by the tree once it was decorated. There was an angel on the top of the tree. I remember there were dolls, my favourite being a knitted stuff doll, and also a pram and a bike. We had lovely turkey dinners and would always attend church service".

When asked about their reflections of Christmas and New Year at Bryn Derwen, one resident stated that;

"Everything was wonderful, the food was good. It was like staying at a hotel, everything was there for us. We had a lot of laughter, watched television. There were quite a few programmes on the television which I thoroughly enjoyed at the time. I cannot remember now what films I watched but I enjoyed them".

“My son and the family took me out. I had lovely gifts; items I need, toiletries and jewellery. I thoroughly enjoyed the company of my grandchildren. We celebrated New Year but didn't wait up until midnight. We wished each other all the best before we went to bed, with a small glass of bubbly singing Auld Langs syne”.

“Everything is now getting back to normal but I have a good sense of peace following Christmas. I enjoyed myself very much. The food was really good. I indulged in lots of chocolates. I had a happy time and everything was good and lovely. I had no sad periods; I set my mind to focus on the positive and to go forward”.

“Since the new year we are still talking and reflecting on the festive period. I remember mostly the sharing of gifts and the presence of each other. We are always asked what we want to do and have a choice”.

“Christmas here is what it should be all about; sharing, reminiscing and having a laugh. I am happy to be here. If I was at home I would be alone, this is where I want to be”.

New Year

As we were all exhausted from our many festive activities we chose to have a relaxing start to the New Year instead in order to recharge our batteries.

Show & Tell at Work Day

For Show & Tell at Work Day many of us shared our interests, hobbies, and experiences with one another by giving talks on topics ranging from golf, swimming, knitting, life in Australia, dancing, cross-stitching, fashion, farming, Spiderman, and a memory box collection. It certainly was a fun and informative day and we are hoping to do it again next year.



International Hot & Spicy Food Day

To celebrate International Hot & Spicy Food Day we were treated to some traditional and vegetarian Indian themed taster sessions comprising of a selection of samosas, onion bahjis, and hot and spicy chicken wings, all generously served with some sweet chilli sauce. The food was thoroughly enjoyed by all as evident by people asking for second helpings, and in some instances even thirds!



Due to the popularity of this event, we are pleased to inform you that we are now building upon this activity as we will be running regular taster sessions entitled 'Around the World in 30 Plates'. Please refer to the 'Other Special Occasions' section for further details.

Afternoon in Jacobs Ladder

We decided to treat ourselves to some drinks and cake at our local café where we spent the afternoon chatting to the locals, reading newspapers and looking at the art and craft displays.



Camcorder Day

On Camcorder Day we all had a go at filming, directing and editing our own mini movies with many of us re-enacting scenes from both 'Casablanca' and 'The Wizard of Oz'. Thanks again to our dogs Henry and Jacob who kindly took turns in acting as Toto for us.

Puzzle Day

For Puzzle Day we spent the morning identifying items from a Nostalgia DVD and then moved onto answering questions from a Reminiscing quiz game. After this we solved a jigsaw, completed a crossword puzzle together, and also played the card game Memory.



Bird Feeding Month

We spent an afternoon learning all about the variety of birds that visit our garden whilst we listened to relaxing bird songs. We then got creative in the dining room by making some fat balls for our feathery friends to enjoy over the cold months.



Doodle Day

For Doodle Day our staff and residents spent the morning producing a variety of quick drawings to be exhibited around the home for 2 weeks, and we had lots of fun drawing landscapes, animals, portraits and quirky patterns together.



Forthcoming Events

The following are a list of dates that our weekly entertainment will be visiting and also dates for our organised parties. We would like to invite you all to come and join in with us on these special occasions

Entertainers

- Tuesday 17/02/15 @ 10.30-12.00
- Tuesday 03/03/15 @ 10.30-12.00
- Tuesday 17/03/15 @ 10.30-12.00
- Tuesday 31/03/15 @ 10.30-12.00
- Tuesday 14/04/15 @ 10.30-12.00
- Tuesday 28/04/15 @ 10.30-12.00
- Tuesday 12/05/15 @ 10.30-12.00
- Tuesday 26/05/15 @ 10.30-12.00

Parties

- **Valentine's Day** 12/02/15- there will be entertainment, party games and a romantic themed tea party
- **Bryn Derwen Awards Ceremony** 18/02/15- we will be having our own awards ceremony this Oscar season with many wonderful categories for our residents to compete for the highly coveted Bryn Derwen certificates. Feel free to join us on the red carpet as we enjoy some wine and crackers.
- **Chinese New Year** 19/02/15- we will be enjoying a selection of Chinese foods, listening to oriental music and doing calligraphy
- **St David's Day** 26/02/15- entertainment and party games will be provided for, as will daffodil flower arranging and some lovely Bara Brith
- **Pancake Day** 24/02/15- we will be having our annual pancake race again, followed by pancakes together with a selection of toppings
- **St Patricks Day** 17/03/15- entertainment and party games will be provided for, and there will be Guinness and Irish coffees too!
- **Mother's Day Celebrations** 26/3/15- we will be enjoying a special tea party to mark this important occasion
- **Easter** 16/04/15- come join us as we celebrate with our Easter themed games and annual egg and spoon race! Once again Rabbit and Chicken will be joining us for the Easter egg hunt and birdie dance
- **St Georges Day** 23/04/15- there will be entertainment, party games and an English tea party

Community Based Activities

- **'Speak Up' Project**- held every Thursday @ 10.30-12.00 in the main lounge
- **Singing For The Brain**- every alternative Wednesday in the Eirianfa Centre, Denbigh @ 13.30-15.00
- **Trefirian Social Group**- held every 3rd Thursday of the month @ 10.00-15.00

- **Llanelwy Community Group**- held every Tuesday in Llanelwy Community Church @ 10.00-12.00

Other Special Occasions

- **Kite Flying Day** 09/02/15- come join us as we spend the afternoon flying our kites in a local park
- **Opera Day** 10/02/15- we will spend the day learning all about opera whilst attempting to sing some classic opera songs. In the afternoon we will offered the chance to watch 'Madame Butterfly'.
- **Darwin Day** 12/02/15- come and join us as we learn all about the evolution of the species together
- **Radio Day** 13/02/15- we will be celebrating radio day by listening to a variety of music as well as some classic radio plays, after which we will attempt to produce our own radio show for the home.
- **Floral Design Day** 27/02/15- come join us as we begin arranging flowers around our home
- **World Compliment Day** 02/03/15- we will be celebrating this event by having a competition to see who can deliver the most compliments in under a minute, as well as learning how to say compliments in other languages
- **National Book Day** 06/03/15- we will be enjoying a selection of short stories and discussing which books have inspired and moved us through the years.
- **Women's Day** 08/03/15- we will be learning all about feminism and how this has affected our own individual lives. We will also be partaking in traditional female crafts
- **Quilting Day** 16/03/15- come and join us as we begin work on our Bryn Derwen quilt
- **World Storytelling Day** 20/03/15- to celebrate this event we will be working together to create our own unique story for everyone to enjoy
- **International Waffle Day** 25/03/15- yes you guessed it! A selection of waffles with different toppings will be available for everyone to enjoy!
- **Take a Walk in the Park Day** 30/03/15- gentle strolls will be on offer throughout the day
- **Jazz Appreciation Month** 01/04/15- we will be having a jazz-tastic time swinging away to the rhythm and blues
- **Poetry Month** 02/04/15- we will be reading a selection of poetry to celebrate this event as well as reading our own written poems too
- **International Dance Day** 29/04/15- come and bust a move with us as we learn and perform new routines together
- **Photo Month** 01/05/15- we will be taking and editing photographs to be used as part of a 2 week display around our home. There will be prizes for the winners of each category, so snap to it!
- **Star Wars Day** 04/05/15- feel free to come along to our marathon film event and space themed tea party
- **Twilight Zone Day** 11/05/15- enter the twilight zone with us as we show back to back episodes of the classic series
- **Golf Day** 14/05/15- come and join us as we tackle our mini golf course as well as teeing off at our local park

- **Museum Day 18/05/15-** all are welcome to join us as we visit a local museum
- **Maritime Day 22/05/15-** come and join us matesys as we learn all about the sea and produce some nautical based art and enjoy a sea themed tea party
- **Senior Health & Fitness Day 27/05/15-** feel free to join us as we spend the day taking part in a variety of fitness programmes such as Zumba, yoga, tai chi and armchair exercises

As well as all of these planned activities we will also be going on our regular day trips out and walks to the local cathedral. We will also be offering taster sessions in our 'Around the World in 30 Plates' events, and will feature foods from England, Wales, Scotland, Ireland, Belgium, France, Switzerland, Spain, Portugal, Africa, Germany, Austria, Hungary, Italy, Greece, Turkey, Russia, Scandinavia, Argentina, Peru, Mexico, USA, India, Thailand, Vietnam, Indonesia, Australia, Japan, South Korea, and China. Dates are still yet to be confirmed so please keep an eye on our notice boards for further details.

Fundraising

We have continued to raise money for our residents fund in order to help pay towards the costs for day trips out, parties, and new activity products. As well as raising money from our weekly lottery game, we have also been successful in raising money from our car boot sales.



As well as our regular fundraising, we also held a Movember Tash Bash in order to raise funds for men's health causes. After decorating our home with moustache balloons, we all put on our Village People fancy dress costumes in order to perform the YMCA dance routine.

After doing the YMCA and having lots of macho photos taken, we then had a gentlemen's tea party complete with moustache decorated cakes and hot chocolates. All of our residents, staff and even our dog Henry got involved and had a lovely time, and we are pleased to announce that we successfully raised £22.50 for this event.

We would once again like to take this opportunity to thank you all for your continued help and support, and should anyone wish to play our lottery or take part in any of our other fundraising events then please could they speak to Helen Johnson (Activities Organiser) for further details.



Other News

Renovations

As several of our residents enjoy producing a variety of art works, our Activities Assistant Beck Marriott recently encouraged a small group of our budding artists to create some canvas paintings to be displayed in the new Gallery section of our home. The work really helps to brighten up the corridor and has become a popular focal point too. New exhibitions are planned in conjunction with future activities in order to display the wide talent of the residents; please speak to Beck Marriot for further details.



Future Plans and events

As discussed in the last newsletter we have many projects planned for improving our home, and we hope to start redecorating our two remaining bathrooms with bright and colourful nature scenes soon in order to accompany our wonderful nautical themed large bathroom. We also intend on redesigning our corridors using the theme of the four seasons as our inspiration, and we will keep you updated on all of these developments over the next few months.

We will also be undertaking major improvements to our gardens soon; please see the 'Congratulations' section for further information regarding this.

Congratulations

As many of you have probably seen in the local newspapers, we were recently awarded a grant of £3,750 from the Welsh Governments' regional collaboration fund in order to create a sensory garden that helps to enhance the lives of those affected with dementia.

We would like to thank both Margaret Spencer and Lina Davitt for all their hard work that went into researching and applying for this award, and we look forward to seeing the designs become reality. The work is scheduled to begin soon and if anyone is interested in becoming involved in this project then could they please contact Margaret Spencer for further details.



Thank You

All of our staff would like to thank Bryn Derwen's family and friends who very generously gave gifts to them over the festive period. All of the presents were thoroughly enjoyed and we would once again like to say a big thank you for your thoughtfulness and kindness.

Condolences

The staff and residents of Bryn Derwen would like to express their deepest sympathies to the families of Mrs Doreen Evans and Mr Glyn Jones who sadly passed away.