



Brian Lewis House

Abbeyfield

Brian Lewis

HOUSE NOTES

Issue 12 — Summer 2011

Brian Lewis House provides very sheltered accommodation for 10 elderly people, in the heart of St Clements, Oxford. Residents live independent lives, in en-suite rooms, and enjoy home cooked meals together as part of the community — a lifestyle which combines independence and comfort, with security and flexible daily support.

Garden party success again



Charlotte with Holly and baby Patrick

Despite heavy showers, our annual garden party on Saturday 18th June 2011 was a lovely day of meeting friends and family for a summer celebration. Patrick Varakamin Klimek, now three months old, was guest of honour, alongside Charlotte's gorgeous great grand daughter, Holly (pictured). Paula excelled herself carving her magnificent flowers from carrots and turnips again, and Clare and the house staff cooked up a banquet enjoyed by residents, their families, staff

and friends.

We were very happy to welcome back the Thai dancers again, and to see so many of our trustees on the day.

Special thanks to Rhoda for organising the raffle, which raised over £60 to help offset the costs of a lovely event, and thanks to all who donated prizes too: a great selection giving lots of us an extra treat to take home.



From the newspapers—June 2011

Meet the world's "greatest"

Gladys Sweeting is not your average 91-year-old. Last month, she welcomed her great-great-great grandson into the world.

Gladys and her family hold the world record for the most living generations in one family alive today, according to an announcement today by the World Records Academy.

There's Gladys, her 74-year-old daughter Pam, Pam's daughter 54-year-old Wendy, Wendy's 34-year-old daughter Lisa, Lisa's 19-year-old daughter Jessica and now Jessica son, Harry, born in May. That makes six living generations of one family, the most on record alive today.



"We feel so lucky to be six generations of one family," great-great grandma Wendy told The Sun. "People are stunned when we tell them about Harry's family tree."

Gladys' tribe, based in the U.K., is just one generation shy of holding the all-time world record. That was marked by a U.S. family who clocked in at seven generations in 1989. But Gladys' family isn't counting. They're just happy to have a healthy new addition.

A lot has changed since Gladys had her first child in 1935. Still a teenager, she had a home birth with the help of a midwife.

"[My husband] then went to work, leaving me with her to have the baby. In those days dads weren't encouraged to be there," she told the Sun. All of Gladys' seven children were born at home, without the aid of pain relief or even a telephone.

She lost her first child to measles when he was only a year, and another child to whooping cough. She also gave a daughter up for adoption to avoid scandal, after she was conceived through an affair with a soldier during World War II.

Gladys' experiences as a young mother are in stark contrast with great-great-granddaughter Jessica. She gave birth to Harry last month in a hospital, surrounded by doctors, nurses and her husband. While Gladys' husband would announce the birth of a child by going door to door, Harry's birth was announced on Facebook.

But not everything has changed since Gladys became matriarch to 56 spawn including her great-great-great grandson. The entire clan lives within two miles of each other, which means they still get plenty of old-fashioned face time.

Enquiries

There are currently two vacancies at Brian Lewis House, and a short waiting list exists for those who want to be considered for future places.

For further information, or to arrange a visit to us, please contact :
our Administrator, Jo Curtis

on tel: 01865 790439

Email: admin@abbeyfieldoxford.org

Postal address: The Abbeyfield Oxford Society, 80 St Clements, Oxford, OX4 1AW

Attendance allowance—are you entitled to money to help you?

Attendance allowance is a benefit which is not means-tested, so anyone can apply irrespective of your income/savings, if you are finding life difficult. It is designed to help people who receive it to continue to live independently, to pay for carers to help you dress or wash, to pay for taxis, perhaps to collect prescriptions, or to enjoy an occasional outing, if you are not able to take a bus.

There is a higher rate of attendance allowance which is designed for people who need some help each night.

The daytime attendance allowance is gained by filling out a very long form, which takes you through the day, asking you to tick those areas that you find difficult. This might be getting up, washing, walking, dressing, eating or taking medication, for example. You do not have to be in such difficulty that you cannot manage at all. You simply have to find some of these things difficult each day and be prepared to admit to it. Your Administrator or House Manager can help you to fill out the form.



Are people turned down for attendance allowance? Yes. One common problem seems to be that people wait until they are feeling well to fill out the form, and so may not be finding life so difficult. You should fill out the form on a typical/average day, to make sure that you tick the right boxes to describe what is difficult for you most days.

What happens if I claim and am told that I am not entitled? You are allowed to claim again, if and when things become more difficult.

Can I get any help filling out the form? Yes, Jo will be happy to help you, or the disability and carers office at the Department of Works and Pensions will send someone to fill out the form with you. You can ring 0845 7123456 to ask for a form or a visit.

Five stars for health and safety in the kitchen again!

It was the end of a long hard winter, and Chaowadee had just days to go before her maternity leave began, when there was a knock on the front door in the middle of lunch. It was a surprise visit from the Food Hygiene Officer! Each year businesses providing food are inspected by Officers and awarded a star rating between zero and five. Only 373 out of nearly two and a half thousand premises in Oxfordshire are rated as 5 star last year and we are delighted that Abbeyfield Oxford Society was awarded a 5 star rating again for the second year in a row. Well done to Chaowadee and all of the staff!

Many congratulations to Trustee, Alison Dalton now Dight



Doesn't she look lovely?! Many congratulations to Trustee Alison Dalton, who became Mrs Dave Dight in June this year. Laidon Alexander attended the service at Iffley Church, in South Oxford and the Society was able to take along an engraving of the church as a gift from us all.

Alison, who works at the University of Oxford, has been involved with Abbeyfield Oxford Society for two years now, currently having responsibility for Health and Safety in the house. She is also a Trustee at Abbeyfield Cumnor too, so has a good overview of the work of the Abbeyfield Society in Oxford.

We hope to learn more about Alison in an in-depth interview next month, but in the meantime, once again, send our very best wishes to her in her new role.

Thank you, thank you, thank you!

A huge thank you to the four young volunteers from St Andrews Church North Oxford, who — along with staff and Trustees — gave up a Saturday afternoon to come to Abbeyfield to paint the flat upstairs ready for the next resident to move in. We were particularly grateful as the fabulous four are now busy preparing for an exciting trip to Bangalore in India with their church, where they will spend two weeks working in an orphanage, as well as organising a number of activities with local Christians and fitting in a little sightseeing too. I'm sure that we send them all very best wishes for a safe and exciting trip — we would love to see some photos of their trip.

Nicholas Elwes 1928—2011

On 1st July, Trustees and staff joined Nicholas's Elwes family for a Requiem Mass in Blackfriars, Oxford. Nicholas had been with us for just six months but had become very much part of Abbeyfield Oxford in that time.

Nicholas's daughters led the tributes to him, remembering him as a warm and loving family man and an enthusiastic, if accident prone, inventor. He had a great love of the environment and of children — a good thing bearing in mind that he had five daughters and one son, tenor John Elwes who led the singing beautifully. Nicholas's coffin was decorated with wild flowers and carried out of the church by his family and friends to be buried in Binsey, with his wife, near Port Meadow which he loved..

