



Issue 32 Christmas 2009



The Trustees, Director and Senior Management Team would like to thank you for all your support during 2009, and wish everyone a Very Happy Christmas and a Peaceful New Year

EXCITING NEW DEMENTIA SERVICE

A new integrated service for people over 50 with early onset dementia has been introduced at Plymouth Age Concern's William Venton Day Centre at Plymstock. The service was officially launched by Plymouth Age Concern's President, Alderman Mrs. Betty Easton O.B.E., on Monday 14th December during an Open Day at the centre. The new service is partly funded by Plymouth City Council.

In readiness for the launch, the Centre underwent a major refurbishment which includes a large welcoming reception area, a consultation room, a resource library and internet/memory cafés. A capital grant from P.C.C. and a generous donation from The Plym Valley Lions Club helped towards the cost of the refurbishment.

The Early Onset Service also offers daytime places for up to twenty people every Monday, providing them with the opportunity to join in with activities or to simply enjoy the company of others. Anyone over 50 who are in the early stages of dementia, or anyone with concerns about someone they care for, are also welcome to 'drop-in' to the Centre any weekday for informal advice and support.

At the Launch on 14th December, Alderman Mrs. Betty Easton O.B.E., was invited to cut a cake that had been made and beautifully iced for the occasion by Sandra Garry a volunteer at the Centre. Visitors, including the Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress and Gary Streeter M.P. were able to view the new facilities, find out more about the service, and enjoy free refreshments.

For more information on this new service contact Peter Scurr, Manager of The William Venton Day Centre on 01752 405632

GROUND BREAKING NEWS!!

At long last, Plymouth Age Concern has its own website! Our Assistant Director, Nigel Backhouse, was very pleased to announce that the website went 'live' on Monday 14th December. Further work is needed to add more information about our services before all pages are finalised – and there will also be the opportunity to add details regarding events, news and job vacancies as time goes on - but, this major step into the world of the internet will not only help to promote Plymouth Age Concern, but will also be accessible to older people and carers around the world.

If you have internet access, why not have a look at our website yourself?

www.plymouthageconcern.org.uk

DEBT AWARENESS SESSIONS

Starting on Friday 8th January 2010, the Citizens Advice Bureau will be holding Debt Awareness Surgeries on the first Friday of every month, at Plymouth Age Concern's Elspeth Sitters House Centre on the Barbican. The surgeries are available to anyone over the age of 50 who is experiencing debt difficulties. If you feel overwhelmed by debt and would like to talk to the Citizens Advice Bureau adviser in complete confidence, why not call and make an appointment?

Appointments are available from 11.30am until 1.30pm and must be booked in advance by phoning the Centre reception on 665424.

Our **SUNDAY LUNCH CLUB** is proving very popular with up to 20 people coming in every week.

The Club is held at the Plymouth Age Concern William & Patricia Venton Centre at Mount Gould, and is open to anyone over 50 who would like to meet new friends and socialise while enjoying a delicious home-made three-course lunch - and an optional glass of wine! We can even provide transport if necessary!

The lunch costs just £10 with transport or £6 without. Places must be booked by phoning **Plymouth 318037** - bookings are limited and are on a 'first come first served' basis.

So close!

At the beginning of November, Plymouth Age Concern was very pleased to learn that the Charity had been nominated by Jobcentre Plus for the Heart FM Pride of Plymouth Employer of the Year Award – and even more delighted when told that we were one of only three finalists! The other two were Primark and Security Management SW. The winner would be the one who received the most online votes. Results were announced at Heart FM Pride of Plymouth Gala Evening held at the New Continental Hotel on 20th November. Sadly, Plymouth Age Concern did not win (the security company did) – but it was nevertheless excellent that we were nominated and to have been 'in with a chance' for such a prestigious award. So a big thank you to Jobcentre Plus, Heart FM and all those who voted for us – your support was greatly appreciated.

NEWS IN BRIEF

- **Halloween, as usual, provided the ideal opportunity to decorate our centres and dress up! Day guests helped to make spooky decorations and spent the day in the company of witches, wizards and other strange looking characters!**
- **Older Persons Day on 1st October was also celebrated in style with themes ranging from Old Time Music Hall to the 1940's. Needless to say, the staff and volunteers dressed accordingly – with many of our day care clients joining in! Special lunchtime menus followed the themes and, of course, there was plenty of nostalgic activities and entertainment to enjoy.**
- **Visitors to an Energy Awareness Day held at our William & Patricia Venton Centre (Mount Gould) on Wednesday 16th December were able to talk to the Devon Energy Team about what grants are available for insulation and central heating. Our own Starting Point team were also on hand to help with grant claims and to answer questions.**
- **Two free electric blanket testing and energy advice days were held at our centres on 26th and 27th November, providing people with the opportunity to have their blankets checked and, if deemed unsafe, to receive vouchers for a new one!**
- **A 'Fit For Life' Day, held on 10th October at our William & Patricia Venton Centre (Mount Gould), attracted over 150 visitors – all keen to have taster sessions in yoga, exercise, stress management and reflexology. Sessions by Attik Dance and the chance to have a go on the Nintendo Wii proved particularly popular – as did the free buffet lunch! A variety of static displays and information stands were also available – including members of the Devon Fire & Rescue Service who gave advice on safety in the home.**
- **Plymouth Age Concern's Director, Barbara Duffy, and Finance Director, Peter Tremlett, met with MP's Linda Gilroy and Alison Seabeck at a special breakfast meeting organised by Jobcentre Plus. Attended by representatives from a few other organisations across the City, the meeting provided an opportunity to promote the work of Plymouth Age Concern and the needs of older people.**
- **£152.25 was raised for the Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal at our Elspeth Sitters House centre on the Barbican.**
- **For the second year running, the Dementia Care Journal calendar features our River View Centre. Two pieces of work made by people who attend the centre – a painting and a collage – appear in the 2010 calendar, together with information on the centre itself. Apparently, this is the first time a centre has been included for a second year – and extremely unusual to be given two months!**
- **A coffee morning and table-top sale held on 7th December at our River View Centre raised £80 for day centre funds. Visitors enjoyed home-made cakes with their tea and coffee – and pick up a bargain from the sale. The Friends of River View Christmas Raffle Draw also took place during the morning.**
- **A magnificent £513 was raised by the William Venton Day Centre catering team when they served food and drink at the Plymstock Festival in September. A further £345 was raised from raffles, tombola, sale table, treasure hunt. A long day and a lot of hard work by staff, volunteers and their families - well done!**
- **Welcome to Penny Newman who has joined Plymouth Age Concern as Senior Advocacy Worker. Based at Elspeth Sitters House, Penny can be contacted on 665424.**

NEW VENUE FOR THE SKILLED HANDS EXHIBITION

As many of you will know, the 2010 Skilled Hands Art & Craft Exhibition is to be held at Plymouth Age Concern's Elspeth Sitters House Centre on the Barbican week commencing 14th June. The theme of the show is "Carnival" but if you'd rather not follow the theme, you don't have to! Public open days will be from Wednesday 16th to Saturday 19th - which is a day more than we've had in the past - so, hopefully, we'll have lots of visitors. The cup presentation will take place on Monday 21st June. Information packs giving full details of how to enter the exhibition and the different classes will (hopefully!) be available in the New Year. In the meantime, make a note of the dates in your diaries - and get started on all those wonderful exhibits!!

Don't quote me on this but

**To obtain a copy of
Plymouth Age
Concern's Annual
Review for 2008-09
call into one of our
centres (Barbican,
Plymstock or Mount
Gould) or
telephone 256020.**

- *In the 1400's a law was set forth in England that a man was allowed to beat his wife with a stick no thicker than his thumb. Hence we have the saying "rule of thumb".*
- *Many years ago in Scotland, a new game was invented. It was ruled "Gentlemen Only ... Ladies Forbidden" - and thus the word GOLF entered into the English language.*
- *The first couple to be shown in bed together on prime time television was Fred and Wilma Flintstone!*
- *The first novel ever written on a typewriter was Tom Sawyer.*
- *Coca-Cola was originally green.*
- *It is impossible to lick your elbow! (Go on – try it!)*

Contributed by Karen Skyrme of our Finance Team

THANK YOU....

- ★ To all those who help us provide quality services to the people of Plymouth – the Charity's Trustees, staff, volunteers and supporters. Your commitment and dedication is greatly appreciated.
- ★ To The Plym Valley Lions Club for donating £2030 towards the cost of refurbishment of our William Venton Day Centre (Plymstock)
- ★ To members of the Sugarcraft Guild who, once again, kindly donated beautifully decorated cakes to us for distribution.
- ★ To Prince Rock School for donating their Christmas tree to our Mount Gould centre at the end of term.
- ★ To Plymouth City Council for enabling us to open an Early Onset Dementia service
- ★ To everyone who, in whatever way, supports the work of Plymouth Age Concern – long may it continue!

The Story of the Lonely Stray

It was a cold and windy winter, the snow was falling hard
As along the way I wandered, to reach my best back yard.
The wind held no pity for a creature such as me, it made the
Dustbins rattle, someone threw stones at me.

I was so very hungry, my throat was parched with thirst.
Would I ever reach that pool and would I get there first?
As I settle down my head beneath the stars at night,
I murmured to myself, "Not another night".

I heard a voice calling, somewhere from above.
It spoke to me with mercy, it spoke to me with love
"Run little dog, run on. No longer shall you roam,
You will find love, you will find a home".

I got up and off I ran, through the long endless night.
I came across a cottage, wherein there shone a light.
I dragged my tired body, weary and so sore
I fell upon the doorstep banging my tail against the door.

The door slowly opened, two hands reached out for me.
I was so very tired, I could hardly see.
They took me to a fire and stroked my weary head
And laid me on a blanket which I could call my bed.

They gave me food and water, my body to sustain
But most of all they gave me love, I felt happy once again.
There is a moral to this story, for some hard to see,
Why is man so cruel, not to heed the words of He?
"To love them as I love you".

Written by Doreen Brennan, a day guest at our William & Patricia Venton Centre (Mount Gould). This poem has appeared in other publications, so 'thank you' Doreen for sharing it with PAC-Chat readers.

**PLYMOUTH AGE
CONCERN IS
ALWAYS IN NEED
OF MORE
VOLUNTEERS!**

***Fund-raisers
Drivers
(mileage paid)
Kitchen and
Coffee Shop Assistants
Day Centre Helpers
Phone Friends
Receptionists***

***If you, or someone you
know, would like to try
something new and
have a few hours to
spare each week,
please contact our
Volunteer
Co-ordinator,
Sheila Harrison,
on 01752 253980
and find out how you
can
'make a difference'.***

Colebrook Housing Society Ltd is a not for profit organisation with 25 years experience of delivering a variety of support services to vulnerable people in local communities.

CHS is currently looking for people to join its Voluntary Management Committee. They are particularly keen to recruit new members with a Legal, Diversity or Property background and/or experience. The Management Committee meets 8-10 times per year in Plymouth during office hours.

For further information please contact Kerry Thompson, Business Manager, Colebrook Housing Society, on **01752 205210**. To find out more about CHS, go to www.colebrookhousing.co.uk



Christmas At Plymouth Age Concern

A tremendous amount of time and effort is put in every year to make sure that everyone who attends our centres has the opportunity to enjoy the festive season - and this year has been no exception. In early December, day guests helped staff to make decorations and had the chance to go on Christmas shopping trips. A full programme of festive activities and entertainment then followed including trips to see the lights, fancy-dress parties, raffles and traditional games and, of course, delicious Christmas lunches. Carol concerts by local schools and the Salvation Army have been greatly enjoyed, as has the talent provided by many other people who kindly came in to entertain our day guests and residents. Father Christmas made numerous appearances to hand out cards and gifts to everyone - and donations of hampers and Christmas cakes enabled us to help those who are in need of a little bit extra at this time of the year.

And just when you think it's all over (oh no it's not), trips to the pantomime - Aladdin at the Theatre Royal - have been arranged for January!

Advice / Information / Support / Phone Friends / Advocacy

Plymouth Age Concern's **STARTING POINT** is a service designed to encourage people aged 50 and over to maintain their independence and offer support and guidance to people wanting to take control and make choices about their lives. Our Supporting Independence Team run this service and can help with:-

- Access to opportunities to enjoy active ageing.
- Outreach support for people unable to access our drop-in centre.
- Access to good quality validated services such as domestic cleaning, shopping, hairdressing, plumbing and gardening – at a reasonable cost.
- Information, advice and support on accessing care services.
- Increasing social networks and meeting new friends through our drop-in centre.
- Individually tailored support.
- Access to leisure and volunteer opportunities

The service is free and provided by fully trained staff who have knowledge and understanding of the needs of older people. There are many ways you can contact the Supporting Independence Team to gain information and advice on the support and services available to help you live life to the full:

- 01752 318037 Starting Point enquiry line.
- Drop-in service at Plymouth Age Concern, Hoegate Street, Barbican, Plymouth PL1 2JB
- Appointments at any of the Plymouth Age Concern centres.
- Appointments for a home visit.
- Open Monday to Friday 9.00am to 4.00pm.

New Year – New You?

Our **FIT AS A FIDDLE** programme may be just what you're looking for! This programme has been designed to support older people to remain as fit and active as possible well into their older age. It offers the opportunity to learn new things, enjoy activities dedicated to people your own age, revive former activitiesand enjoy life to the full! To find out more simply give Rosie McTaggart a ring on **01752 665424**. She'd be delighted to hear from you.

Dates for Your Diaries:-

<i>Date</i>	<i>Event</i>	<i>Venue</i>
<i>14th - 21st June 2010</i>	<i>Plymouth Age Concern's Annual Skilled Hands Art and Craft Exhibition</i>	<i>Elspeth Sitters House, Hoegate Street, Barbican.</i>
<i>Wednesday 29th September 2010</i>	<i>Plymouth Age Concern's Annual General Meeting</i>	<i>Elspeth Sitters House, Hoegate Street, Barbican.</i>
<i>Friday 10th December 2010</i>	<i>Plymouth Age Concern's Staff and Volunteers Christmas Party</i>	<i>Elspeth Sitters House, Hoegate Street, Barbican.</i>

There will, of course, be many other events throughout 2010 – details will be displayed in our centres or included in future issues of PAC-Chat.

<p>Answers to Puzzle Box no. 26</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Wells ➤ Crewe ➤ Boston ➤ Axminster ➤ Cowes ➤ Newport ➤ Potters Bar ➤ Coventry ➤ Banbury ➤ Yarmouth ➤ Leicester ➤ Leeke ➤ Rugby ➤ Hastings ➤ Witney ➤ Wick 	<p>Puzzle Box no. 27 Here are a few seasonal questions for you ...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ In Charles Dickens' "A Christmas Carol", how many different ghosts visit Scrooge? ➤ In which famous Christmas song is a snowman pretending to be "Parson Brown"? ➤ In what year was the first Christmas card produced – 1809, 1843, 1894 or 1914? ➤ According to the lyrics of the Christmas song, what was Frosty the Snowman's nose made from? ➤ And what were his eyes made of? ➤ Which of the following is Saint Nicholas <u>not</u> the patron saint of – children, scholars or thieves? ➤ On what date does Saint Nicholas day fall – December 6th, December 16th, December 25th or December 26th? ➤ Christmas Island is a territory of which country – Australia, Chile, England or New Zealand? ➤ In the song "Twelve Days of Christmas", what are there 11 of? ➤ How many white Christmas's were there in England in the 20th century – 7, 10, 21 or 56?
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Have you any favourite poems, stories or special news for inclusion in future issues of PAC-Chat? If so, please send them to Mrs. Chris Newham, Editor, Senior Management Offices, Plymouth Age Concern, River View Centre, Astor Drive, Mount Gould, Plymouth PL4 9RD or via centre receptions.

A CHRISTENING BLESSING

I give you a child – a boy dressed in white,
A gift from Our Father – pure perfect delight,
A piece for the puzzle that makes up mankind,
Secure and contained by a family combined.

I give you a child, in love wrapped so warm,
A mother, a father – an aura of calm,
Peacefully watching in beams of God's grace,
As their new son is christened, in this holy place.

I give you a child, very lucky and blessed
To have people to love him, ne'er see him distressed,
A family unit to support and to care,
To advise and to guide through life's thoroughfare.

I give you a child, new life for God's world,
Like a freshly grown flower, slowly unfurled,
Part of four generations present this day,
Serenely surveying in a baby's sweet way.

I give you a child to follow tradition,
Three generations in this church were christened.
A child should have the past to consider
And a faith that is constant – for always – forever.

I give you this child with no fear for life's road,
With a family who love him, who'll keep him from harm,
A father on high who will watch as he grows,
With good guidance, godparents, promises told.

So rejoice with me, as we can all pray
For a future so blissful under God's sway,
Please bless him, Our Father, his family too
And let us be thankful, my dear Lord, for you.

A. V. Abbott

Sent in to PAC-Chat by a former resident (sadly now deceased) of Patricia Venton House.

Plymouth Age Concern – contact numbers:-

Elsbeth Sitters House, Barbican	01752 665424
William Venton Day Centre, Plymstock	01752 405632
William & Patricia Venton Centre, Mount Gould	01752 253980
Patricia Venton House Residential Care Home	01752 221806
River View Day and Respite Care Centre	01752 253974
Starting Point	01752 318037
Home Care	01752 434709
Senior Management Team	01752 256020

If you are thinking of leaving a legacy to Plymouth Age Concern in your Will, please be sure to stipulate that your gift is for Plymouth Age Concern, registered charity number 281820. Thank you.