



LAKE NEWS

Our First Centenarian!



Congratulations to John Bricknell on his 100th Birthday.

John was born in Richmond on 26th July, 1925. Towards the end of the second world war John applied to join the army and was selected to join the Royal Engineers. After courses at Corpus Christi Cambridge and the Engineer Officers Training School, John was given a short service commission. He took well to army life and applied and was given a permanent commission. Thereafter John rose to the rank of Major and served multiple postings in the UK as well as spells in India (during the partition), Malaya, Libya and Cyprus.

John was one of the original residents of Hampshire Lakes having moved into one of

the penthouse apartments when the complex opened in 2016. John was previously living on the beautiful Scottish island of Islay (is that where he found his love of good whisky?) but decided to move to Hampshire to be closer to his family. John had earlier once lived in Camberley during a spell at the Army Staff College. On arriving in Hampshire Lakes John immediately connected up with his old regiment and has joined in different reunions.

John played an active part in the life of the villagers during his stay in Hampshire Lakes. He started the bridge club and saw problems in the way the service charge was calculated.



John also insisted the village had a guest suite after Anchor sold the apartment in Oakleigh Square which had been set aside for guest accommodation. We have also to thank John for the red post box at the entrance to Oakleigh Square aptly named **The Major**. John also introduced croquet to the Village.

John has made the move from Hampshire Lakes to Willow Gardens Care home and has been happily living there since November 2024. He tells me his granddaughter is due to give birth on his birthday! John is very keen that all residents drink his health at **Happy Hour** on the 25th July, the Friday before his birthday. **Please let Reception know if you will be there.**

Babble and Speak

Babble and Speak is about interesting people who have experienced a wide range of situations and sharing them with their friends. And also asking other interesting people to come and share their experiences. I am sure that there are many of you who live in Hampshire Lakes who have interesting experiences that you could share with us. If you didn't think you could talk for an hour



perhaps you could talk for half an hour. We do have more external speakers lined up but we would love to hear from you on subjects that you think would interest your fellow residents. The next Babble and Speak is at 6:30 on Wednesday 23 July in the Bistro, when Adrian Collett, our erstwhile county councillor, will be telling you about his life and work.

David Alan and Keith Hall

Something New!

The village will be "celebrating summer" on Saturday July 19th. The fun day will include 10+ craft stalls from 11am, BBQ food, open bar, fun games, raffle and live music. The event will be located in the Oakleigh gardens to the rear of the garden room (weather permitting). All residents, family and friends are invited to come along just to enjoy the day. If you are eating, the BBQ food tickets need to be pre-booked at reception.

Gaye Collins

Cool Cruisers Latest

Ten go to Tangier – May 2025

After last year's successful cruise to Istanbul, we decided to go again: Portugal, Spain, Italy and Morocco this time. Same lot, plus Sam.

On our first night we were allocated 2 adjacent tables at the window with a panoramic view overlooking the wake of the ship - ours for the rest of the holiday!

In Lisbon we enjoyed a coffee with a famous Pata de Nata, in the walking precinct. Then some of us went to Belem to see the Monument of the Portuguese Discoveries, while others visited the colourful, atmospheric old city.

The next port of call was Alicante in Spain, where we enjoyed the lovely alleyways,

squares and seafront. Roger and Annet took the lift to the Castillo de Santa Barbara located on top of a massive rock, for a spectacular aerial view.

In Barcelona we rambled along La Rambla. Intrigued by the lady beckoning from a balcony for us to enter her premises (apparently an Erotic Museum) we noticed Frank waving back at her with a smile!!!! Then Astrid, Keith, Roger and Annet took the Metro to the Sagrada Familia Church for a pre-booked tour inside, very impressive.

Next, in Civitavecchia, the port of Rome, we decided to stay put because all of us had been to Rome before. Bit of a dreary day, the only one so far. Some of us visited the Roman Gardens, which they said looked dry and uninspiring. Others roamed the streets and the very impressive Market and visited the Cathedral.

Total change in Olbia, Sardinia. Lovely sunshine, wonderful little place, where Ann and Annet fell in love with the Gatto Sardo (Sardinian wildcat) and promptly bought the T-shirt.

Then Morocco!!!! First Casablanca with its Art Deco/Moorish architecture, famous Hassan II mosque (second largest in Africa) and, of course, Rick's Cafe. Roger and Annet had been to Casablanca before, so they booked a trip to Rabat, the capital, which they very much enjoyed.

Next was Tangiers, a beautiful city, clean, green and no hassle. We all went visiting the Lighthouse, where the Atlantic meets the Mediterranean sea, St. Andrew's Anglican Church and, some of us, the Medina, which was a wonderful experience, especially for kaftan haggling!

Our last port of call was Ferrol in Northern Spain. Most of us took to the countryside and a Tapas lunch, all very enjoyable. Roger and Annet chose to stay in town, visiting the Naval Museum and the Street Art area, which allegedly was also once visited by Banksy, but were unable to find his signature.

So, that's all folks. Once again, we all had a wonderful time and got on together so well. *Muchas gracias* to everyone, especially to Roger Pullen for organising this again and, of course, to Keith Hall, who has put a wonderful video together that can be watched on the website, www.hlra.info.

Annet Pullen

Dead Dog and Ice Cream

In North Wales close to the foot of Yr Wyddfa (Mount Snowdon) surrounded by beautiful tranquil hill country, favoured by hikers and mountain climbers, lies the village of Beddgelert which translated from Welsh means Gelert's grave. The reason for this apparently morbid name for such a charming place lies in Welsh folklore.

The legend is this; Prince Llewelyn Fawr (the Great) had a baby son Dafydd who as his heir he loved very much. He also had a hunting dog named Gelert who he also loved. One day Llewelyn went hunting leaving the baby in his crib guarded by the faithful Gelert. On his return he found the crib overturned and empty when Gelert came to greet him he saw that it was covered in blood. Assuming the worst, that Gelert had killed his son, he drew his sword and put Gelert to death. No sooner had he done that than he heard the baby cry. Upon investigation near the crib he found the child and next to him a dead wolf which Gelert had fought and killed defending Dafydd. Grief-stricken that he had so misjudged and killed his faithful dog he buried Gelert in a field near the river which runs through the nearby village. Visitors can (and do) visit the grave which is marked with an oak tree and a plaque telling this very story.



Another and some would say a far better reason for a visit is probably the finest ice cream parlour in the whole of Wales. It seems unlikely that it could make a living in a little out of the way place like this, where people only stop on the way to somewhere else, yet a steady stream of customers proves otherwise. It offers a huge range of award-winning ice creams, hand-made on the premises, all of which I am assured are delicious, however I personally even after many visits never got past the mint choc chip. That alone is almost worth a trip to Beddgelert.

Vic Oliver

Congratulations to Hannah

Who has just left the reception team to move to a more responsible post in **Willow Gardens**. We'll miss your cheerful friendly approach, Hannah. Thank you for all the work you have done for us.

Thanks to Emrys

I would like to thank Emrys (and Wendy) and all the volunteer drivers. How grateful we are for the help they have been giving to people like me over many months. As a non-driver it is great to know that I have only to make a call to Emrys a week in advance of a medical appointment for a volunteer driver to contact me after a short while to arrange to take me.

All these volunteer drivers give up their time to help, asking only for a small donation. Thank you Emrys and all the volunteers. For the period **June 2024 to May 2025**, the drivers drove **2096 miles**. By using the VDS, instead of taxis, our **residents had saved £9269.32!**

Diana Duckworth

Can You Knit or Crochet!

We are knitting poppies ready for the November "Remembrance Day" display in Reception.



All you need is double knit (poppy red) wool and needles or crochet hook.

For patterns or more information, contact Pauline Pearce on Extn. 4604, or come and join

us in the Activities Room on a Monday 2-4pm at the Art and Craft Sessions.

Many thanks to . .

. . Diana who has given many ideas and much inspiration to the Lakes News team. Diana is no longer able to help and we welcome Janet McCombie to take her place.

Library

The next meeting of the Book Club is in the **Library, at 11 am, Thursday 3rd July**. Come along. If you read books we (and you) could learn something.

Thank you to everyone who has been helping me to shelve returned books. Please continue to help!

Diana Duckworth

HLRA

The next committee meeting will be on **Saturday July 5th at 10.30** in the Library.

D-Day Landings in Normandy

After HLE had failed to get sufficient numbers to offer a group trip to Normandy I investigated the option of joining an open Leger trip, and hopefully finding some like-minded neighbours to come with me. Forward to May 26th and I was at Fleet services on the M3 with Meryl, Emrys and Brian Branson waiting for a coach to take us to Folkstone, then on to France via the Dover/Calais ferry.

We had two drivers, Matt and Dan, and a tour guide called Mike. Dan also provided drinks and snacks from the on-board "bar", and set out a few "rules" for the trip, all delivered with a superb sense of fun and humour. It was a long day but gave Mike the opportunity for him to fill us in on the itinerary and point out places of interest. Our hotel on the outskirts of Caen was basic but most importantly immaculately clean and comfortable, with a steak house next door.

Our second day took us to the moving Normandy American Cemetery overlooking



"Omaha" Beach. The beauty and peace were breathtaking, with not a blade of grass out of place. The Overlord museum was excellently presented and fascinating. At Sainte-Mere-Eglise we saw the mock parachutist hanging from the church steeple in commemoration of the actual event on D-Day. We went on to see Utah Beach, one of the more successful landing sites. We then visited a German cemetery which was again well cared for but had a more sombre and dark feel with flat memorial plaques and a vast mound in the centre for the unknown dead.

On day three we saw Pegasus Bridge and heard about the brave exploits of the British men who flew in on gliders. Five out of the six

planes landed safely in the pitch dark on an unlit area about the size of a football field. The vital bridge was taken easily when the two young German soldiers guarding the bridge took one look at the invading force and decided to run for it. Being able to cross the bridge took a bit longer. The museum there was amazing and it was clear the gliders had been not much more than flying garden sheds made of wood and canvas. We later visited Sword, Juno and Gold beaches visiting the scenes of the British and Canadian landings.

At last we arrived at the new British Normandy Memorial. So impressive and beautiful. Alongside, in sight of the beaches were hundreds of the "Metal Men", the amazing black, cut-out figures of soldiers of all regiments represented among the swaying daisies. This was the pinnacle of my visit and is a place I shall never forget. We ended the day at Arromanches to see the remains of the Mulberry Harbour.

Our next day we learned more about the German retreat and visited some beautiful cemeteries and battlefields and listened to tragic tales of torture and murder of 21 Canadian soldiers who came to an Abbey to find it had been taken over by the SS.

I learned a lot on this, my first coach holiday, and was grateful for the team who took us and made it so interesting. I'm also grateful to my Hampshire Lakes chums who joined me on this adventure.

Janet McCombie

Corrigendum

The HLRA website is www.hlra.info It was wrong in the paper version of last month's Lakes News.

Lakes News is written by "ordinary" residents like you and printed and delivered for us by the administration team.

We want it to inform, entertain and help keep everybody involved. Content is based on articles and stories **sent in by residents**. Concerns? Compliments? Requests? News? Interests? Suggestions? Offers? Photos? Ideas to make people think? We fill the gaps!

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Your contributions are our life-blood.