

YOUR VISIT TO THE HALTON HOME FOR THE ELDERLY

On the afternoon of Friday 8 April you will visit this home for the very old and frail that belongs to the Abbeyfield Buckinghamshire Society (ABS), of which Lady Carrington is the President. The home is located about half a mile north of Wendover.

The Society was founded in 1980 to build and operate an "extra care" old people's home to serve the follow-on needs of the Abbeyfield Societies in the County. There are now eleven societies running seventeen "supportive" homes housing some 120 old people.

The ABS has been substantially assisted in its intentions through the advice of the Tudor Trust. A fund-raising appeal will have raised by 1984 £805,660, all from private sector resources, except for a £60,000 donation from the Buckinghamshire County Council and £35,000 from the European Community Welfare Fund. The Society are about to start on a new fund-raising appeal for £50,000.

The ABS, through an Executive Committee, owns the freehold land and all the buildings. The Society is registered under the Industrial and Providence Societies Act 1965. (A DHSS paper is attached.)

The Society, as a charity, is essentially non-profit making and seeks to run the home on a carefully budgeted annual cost.

Currently all income comes from residents' fees. Weekly charges for those coming on from Abbeyfield supportive homes are £110; for all others the charge is £135.

The Home opened in November 1982 providing a home for 30 residents. The ages of the current residents range from 72 to 96 years. They include 24 women and 4 men and a married couple. Some of them show signs of senile dementia and do need regular medical care. Since their arrival, their health has considerably improved. Amongst the interesting people you will meet are a 95 year old suffragette, Mrs Spurway; Dr Elspeth Gilmore (89 years), one of the first lady doctors and who has devoted a considerable amount of her private time

to unmarried mothers and their babies; Miss May Day (72 years), a Queen Alexandra nurse in the Second World War; Miss Mildred Wheeler (86 years), a founder member of Chesham Comforts, which provides nursing aids for the disabled, and Air Vice Marshal William Stam (74 years), a senior pathologist in the RAF and based at Halton for a number of years.

The building is custom-built by the architects, Salmon Speed Societies, who in their specification saw it as a home in which to "live" and have successfully created a warm and welcome feeling, suggesting a degree of permanence and observing the privacy of the residents. It is a two-storey timber frame building constructed by Lovell, in the shape of a cross. The large double crossed windows provide a light and bright interior and on the top floor, a lovely view across to the Aylesbury Vale.

Each resident has a single room partly furnished with their own personal possessions. There are three lounges, a dining room, modern kitchen and bathroom, medical room and a hairdressing room.

The rooms are tastefully decorated in pastel shades with timber framing giving the appearance almost of an alpine chalet interior.

The nursing and care staff are professionally trained. You will meet Dr Garrod, who visits the home regularly and takes pride in his assignment. The Matron, Mrs Sheila Morgan, provides the full medical care and organisation ability with a natural dedicated enthusiasm for the care of the elderly. This enthusiasm and her experience is widely admired. She and her Deputy have separate accommodation within the Home's grounds.

On your arrival at 3.30 pm you will pass through the front entrance hall into the central reception room where you will be met by Lady Carrington, the Chairman Mr John Dennett and the Vice-Chairman Mr Dermot Adamson.

The Matron and the Chairman of the House Management Committee, Mr Geoffrey Lancaster will then escort you into the main lounge next door where Matron will introduce you to each of the residents, most of whom will be seated, with some in wheelchairs.

The Matron and Mr Lancaster will then escort you around the accommodation on the ground floor including some of the residents' rooms, the medical room and the hairdressing room and, if there is time, to some of the rooms on the top floor.

You will then return to the central reception room where Lady Carrington will escort you along a short corridor and, turning to your left, into the dining room where you will take your seat at a round table.

The residents and nursing staff will be seated in the front rows and behind them about 70 guests. They will include Mr Timothy Raison, MP; Lady Elles, Thames North MEP; members of the Executive Committee and representatives of the Tudor Trust; the builders and architects; and of the National Abbeyfield Society.

After a short welcoming speech, Lady Carrington will invite you to unveil the commemorative plaque set on the pale yellow wall to your right. The plaque is chiselled out of green slate and will be covered by blue curtains. Before the ceremony a few congratulatory remarks about all those concerned with the venture would be most appreciated. (draft att)

Mr Dennett will then thank all those who have made donations to the home and will close the formal proceedings by thanking you for your visit.

The Matron will present you with a circular wooden framed piece of wool embroidery of a bowl of pink wild roses. It is the work of her 75 year old mother, Mrs Morson, who runs her own newsagents shop in Bulth Wells - her working day starts at 4.00 am.

The Society and staff hope that you will be able to stay for tea and to meet some of the guests before you depart.

I am keeping open the media arrangements partly because the local police do not yet know the strength of a proposed CND demonstration at Strike Command, High Wycombe, nearby the same day.

But because of the limited amount of space and the need not to confuse the residents with a "circus" of press, I am proposing at the

most to arrange through the NPA near the time a pool photographer and journalist; at the moment only the local press are interested.

Obviously the Home would like publicity to aid their fund appeal but wish to comply with your wishes. I propose to defer until nearer the time the question of TV, depending on the demo prospects. I will put up another minute on the media on Thursday when the position is clearer.

*Sheenagh Wallace*

MISS SHEENAGH WALLACE

5 April 1983