

Turning back time – Edinburgh care homes honour D-Day anniversary

A number of care homes in Edinburgh have hosted special events and raised money for a good cause to mark 80 years since D-Day.

Care UK's Murrayside, on South Beechwood, welcomed Carrick Knowe Primary School for a wartime talk from resident Audrey Russel on Thursday.

To commemorate the 80th anniversary of the Normandy Landings on 6th June 1944, Care UK partnered with royal pageant master Bruno Peek CVO OBE OPR, coordinator of 'D-Day 80 Lamp Light of Peace'. Along with the three Forces Charities and the Merchant Navy Association, more than 100 Care UK homes took part in this nationwide tribute.

At Murrayside, the Primary 7 pupils, residents and team members enjoyed a talk from Audrey who remembers being an evacuee during the second world war and spoke fondly of the family she was placed with.

Audrey said: "I enjoyed sharing my experiences with the children and I spoke about the importance of educating young people about what my generation went through, while speaking about the positives."

Following this, the special lamp, representing the peace following the end of the second world war, was lit by

residents. There was then a minute of silence for everyone to pay their respects and music from the lone piper.

While at Care UK's Lauder Lodge, on Wakefield Avenue, local people were invited to a 1940s themed party, complete with flags, bunting, popular wartime songs from Anita Watman, a talk from historian Roy Johnstone, and a delicious afternoon tea.

93-year-old resident Jack Laing, whose father was a Sergeant Major, lit the lamp of peace. He said: "It's a great honour to be chosen to light the Lantern for the Heroes on D-Day and wonderful that the community can get involved with this special event."

Residents from Care UK's Cairdean House, on Redford Road, attended a coffee morning at the Dreghorn Barracks getting to meet local soldiers. In the afternoon the home was adorned with D-Day bunting, flags, and bowler hats and hosted a special D-Day party with live wartime music.

Resident John Hill said: "I enjoyed meeting with the local soldiers and then coming back to the home to enjoy the celebrations."

To help mark the 80th milestone of D-Day and raise money for Help for Heroes, residents, family and team members also walked 13.5 miles from Care UK's Murrayside to Cairdean House, crossing the finish line at Lauder Lodge. Upon completion, everyone enjoyed a cake and coffee to celebrate.

Suzanne Welsh, Home Manager at Murrayside, said: "It was an honour to join this nationwide initiative and mark the 80th anniversary of D-Day.

"Many residents, including Audrey, have vivid memories of the war, so major anniversaries like these are extremely meaningful to them. Commemorating the occasion gave everyone a

valuable opportunity to reminisce, while sharing their stories with the younger generation – which was beneficial for both sides.

“It really was a heartfelt day for everyone involved. We’d like to say a big thank you to Carrick Knowe Primary School for joining us!”

Anees Riaz, Home Manager at Lauder Lodge, said: “It was fantastic to see so many new and old faces at our 1940s party to help mark such an important anniversary. Everyone loved learning about the significance of D-Day and got their toes tapping to the live wartime music, bringing back many fond memories for residents.”

Kat Barnwell, Home Manager at Cairdean House, said: “It was a real honour to walk alongside residents, family, and team members to raise money for Help for Heroes. We’re always looking for new ways to fundraise for a good cause, and D-Day seemed like a great opportunity. Thank you to everyone who donated and cheered us along.”

To find out more about how Care UK has supported the initiative, please visit: careuk.com/dday-80th-anniversary

Murrayside, Lauder Lodge and Cairdean House have been specially designed to enable residents to live active and fulfilled lives, while also promoting independence.

