

Kathleen Bidewell

*Our oldest-ever resident,
celebrates her 106th birthday*



Modest Kathleen Bidewell has one thing she can justifiably be proud of – she is the oldest person ever to reside at Quebec Hall in its 63-year history.

And it is a title no-one looks likely to take from her, as she celebrated a remarkable 106th birthday on September 8th.

World War One was still raging across Europe when the Bidewell family, from Norwich, welcomed their baby daughter into the world – just one day after Victoria Cross hero and renowned philanthropist Leonard Cheshire made his own debut.

Joining staff members in wishing Kathleen well were her niece and nephew, who brought a celebration cake with them.

Among the many cards and goodwill messages was one from King Charles and Queen Camilla. Last year's royal greetings were from Queen Elizabeth II.

Kathleen, brought up in Cambridge and Onley Street area of Norwich, summed up her long life in one sentence:

“God has been so good to me.”

Her life has been hallmarked by a firm Christian faith, to which she has held unwaveringly since childhood. She lived in Norwich all her life – apart from four years of nursing service in London and Watton – until she moved to Quebec Hall 10 years ago. “I am looked after so well here – I have got nothing to complain about,” she said.

Before and after the war she was employed as a clerk with the Norwich Corporation Electricity Department. After her mother's death in 1969, she kept house for her father for 13 years.

Throughout her long life, Kathleen has been known as an avid writer, both of letters and poetry. She has even had two anthologies of poems published during her time at Quebec Hall, some reflecting on experiences from her long life – and others focussing on her faith and beliefs. One was so popular it sold out and had to be reprinted, helping to bring in funds which enabled the installation of our new lift in 2017.

ALF 535

by Kathleen Bidewell

*Now you've all heard of Austin called Alfie
With crash gearbox and starter that won't,
Whose driver (that's me) sounds half crazy
And does things that good drivers don't.
Well, you may be surprised when I tell you,
That me and that old-fashioned car
Set out, during holiday season,
For a place they call Leamington Spa.
We had filled up with oil, air and water –
Oh, aye, and some petrol, cheap grade;
We were armed with a jack, pump and
wheel-brace
And an AA badge boldly displayed.
Me brother had said, “Don't flog engine!”
So we steadily jogged on our way
And we sang, as we went, me and Alfie,
Though it didn't look much of a day.
At Thetford, Newmarket and Cambridge
We stopped to send postcards to mum
Giving times of respective arrivals
And let her know how far we'd come.
We passed arrows and lines and huge warnings
That we'd never encountered before,
But if my poor old heart beat more quickly,
Alfie battled on, looking for more.
I'll admit I felt sort of nervous
When I read, “Great North Road lies ahead.”
But Alf, never faltering, showed me
There was really no cause for my dread.
I had lunch with relations at Bedford,
So that Alf could have bit of a rest.
Then, well fed and cheered and encouraged
We set off again with new zest.
The road, now, was quite unfamiliar
And the journey seemed unduly long;
But we studied the map, boards and signposts
And we didn't go very far wrong.
So we got there, unscratched and undented
To the place they call Leamington Spa,
Where friends gave us such a warm welcome –
Me and that brave little car.
(Alf was a 1932 Austin 10)*

Dear friends

*“Even down to old age My people shall prove
My sovereign, eternal, unchangeable love.”*

Trustees and Staff thank all who support QH in prayer or with practical help.

And a warm welcome to new Residents and Staff Team members.

(The line of a hymn quoted, is from Rippon's Selection 1787.)

Stephen Read, Trustee

WHAT'S BEEN HAPPENING...

Hog Roast

We held our Hog Roast on Saturday 17th June at 5pm.

A dry and warm evening which was nearly spoilt by the weather as it was raining just a couple of hours earlier! Everyone who attended, of which some 40+ did, would not have been able to fit in the dining room if it had continued to rain. The weather dried out extremely quickly



and we enjoyed wonderful food provided by Johanne, John and Karen, helped by Mark and Grace.

Our thanks to them for all the hard work they put into the evening. Our thanks also for the Village Green Ukulele Society who played two sets of 40 minutes of easy listening songs.

It was a very pleasurable evening of friendship and food being entertained by a live amateur band.



Bar-B-Q

We held our Bar-B-Q on Saturday 29th July at 5pm.

We had to set up inside and outside due to the weather but we were blessed in being able to sit outside! Around 35 attended, a mixture of our residents; bungalow residents and visitors from Florida and Australia! The food was delicious and cooked by John Kelly and Johanne Fletcher ably assisted by Karen and Grace. Thank you to all who came and for those who made it possible.



Reginald Lewis 100 years young!!

Mr Reginald Lewis was 100 years old on 28th August 2023 and celebrated the day with family and a visit from Dereham Town Mayor.

He also received a card from King Charles which you can see on show in the Hall.



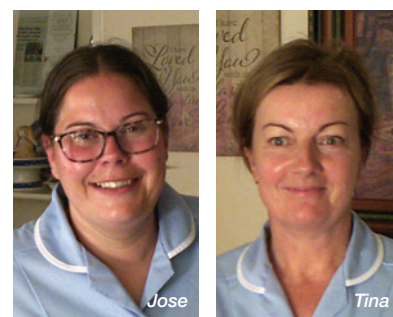
Cream Tea

We had our first Cream Tea of the year on Wednesday 17th May at 3pm.

Our fish & chips were cooked on site. Although we were blessed with some dry weather it was a little on the cold side and many enjoyed the afternoon together in the dining room. A big thank you to our staff who once more went that extra mile to ensure a great time was had by all. Scones courtesy of Margaret, Karen, Mark and John.



STAFF NEWS...



New staff

We are pleased to announce two new members of staff, Josephine Jay, started on 14/8/23 and Tina Duggan who started on 21/8/23.

Both are carers, and we pray they will both enjoy their time working with us.

FUTURE EVENTS...

- ★ **OCTOBER:** Fri. 6th at 5pm – Quiz Night with Fish & Chips – cost £5
- ★ **OCTOBER:** Wed. 25th at 5pm – Themed Evening Meal – cost £15
We are going to Austria/Germany/CH (Limited to 32 reservations)
- ★ **NOVEMBER:** Fri. 3rd at 6pm – Fireworks with Soup & Hot Dogs
(donations welcome)
- ★ **NOVEMBER:** Mon. 27th at 2.30pm – Salvation Army Singers
- ★ **DECEMBER:** Mon. 4th at 7pm – Cub Pack visit
- ★ **DECEMBER:** Thurs. 14th at 3pm* – Quebec Hall Carol Service (*note time)

Quebec
Hall

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Mark Woodgett (General Manager)
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