



# NEWS

Issue 7 – January 2009

## Welcome

Thank you once again for supporting Strathcarron Hospice. As we enter the "credit crunch" we are nervously waiting to see how much of an impact this will have on our income so we are particularly grateful to those of you who have donated so generously over the Christmas period.

We are also very grateful to everyone who supported our Bridge Walk over the new Clackmannanshire Bridge last November. Over 700 adults registered and several hundred children including lots of Brownies and Guides also walked. Luckily the weather was very clement for late autumn so walking was a pleasure. This event seemed to really capture the imagination and we were staggered by the response – with most of the sponsorship money now in we have made £68,000. This is amazing and far exceeds any other event we have organised. Well done and thank you to

everyone who walked, sponsored or helped with the organisation.

Now that you are used to walking, our next challenge is a Ladies Midnight Walk in May. I'm afraid we need to raise at least as much as we did on the Bridge Walk to keep our services going! The back page of the newsletter provides some information about our next walk. We plan to walk from Stirling out to the Wallace monument, through the University and Bridge of Allan and then back to Stirling, taking a wide sweep round the Castle. Although many English Hospices have Midnight Walks, we will be the first in Scotland and I am sure the event will be good fun as well as challenging so please sign up to join in.

Also on the fundraising horizon is a new shop in Callander. Following the success of the shop we opened in Cumbernauld, we are opening a shop in Callander at the beginning of February – volunteers and donations of goods will be most welcome.

Our Denny shop is about to have a face lift and rewiring work is already underway. I hope that you can support our shops as much as possible.

This year we have new office bearers on our Council of Management. Alex Jannetta, previously our Vice Chairman has taken over as Chairman from Dr Stan Wright, Tom Ogilvie is now Vice Chairman and Stephen Reid is our new Treasurer. We are very grateful to Stan for all his hard work and leadership for the Hospice over many years. Our Council Of Management are now discussing our strategic direction for the next 3 years and there are interesting times ahead as we get involved in implementing the Government's Action Plan for Palliative Care.

I hope you enjoy reading our news and continue to support Strathcarron Hospice.

Irene McKie  
Director

## Cherry Ward

With the help of a grant from the Rank Foundation, administered through Help the Hospices, we were able to refurbish Cherry ward. The work was extensive as it included the installation of piped oxygen and suction at each bedside, reflecting the increasing needs of our patients.

We also took the opportunity to install wall mounted televisions at each bed, replaced the flooring and curtains and bought additional chairs for the room. The result is a warm, welcoming environment that has been very popular with patients and their families.

We also created a wet room for the inpatient unit by knocking a small shower room and toilet into one larger room. This facility will enable wheelchair patients to have a shower instead of a bath if they so wish and we hope to purchase a special shower chair to help our most disabled patients use this facility.

We are delighted with the result and hope to do some more refurbishment in the coming year .



# NHS Forth Valley – Celebrating Success Awards

The Palliative Care Resource Pack developed by the Managed Clinical Network (MCN) for Palliative Care recently won the NHS Forth Valley Celebrating Success Award for 2008. Competition was stiff, with 60 entries and 6 short-listed projects. One of our consultants, Dr Fiona Downs, delivered a presentation outlining the benefits of the Resource Pack, which includes detailed practical information for use by a wide range of professionals and carers to help them provide the best possible care. The MCN Team were presented with their trophy by Shona Robison, Minister for Public Health and the trophy is now proudly displayed in the Hospice's reception area.



## New Consultant

We are delighted to introduce our new Consultant in Palliative Care, Dr Ruth Isherwood. Ruth joined Strathcarron Hospice in October 2008, prior to which she was a Specialist Registrar based at the Beatson Oncology Unit. Ruth is a graduate of Aberdeen University but did much of her specialist training in England. On her return to Scotland she was initially based at Strathcarron Hospice and we are very pleased to welcome her back to our clinical team.



## Strathcarron Wishes

A huge thank you to everyone who has bought a "virtual gift" from our Strathcarron Wishes brochure. These are ideal gifts for someone who has everything... instead of giving them a gift for themselves, give the gift to Strathcarron and send them a card illustrating the gift you have paid for. So far the most popular gift has been afternoon tea – just ahead of grounds and gardens and hairdressing!

Strathcarron Wishes has made over £11,000 for the Hospice and your help makes our services better than ever.

## Celebration by Candlelight

In December, we held our first special celebration by candlelight in the grounds of the Hospice.

This short ceremony included officially turning on the lights on our Christmas tree and gave those attending an opportunity to remember loved ones and write messages to attach to the tree.

The event was well attended on a dry but

cold night and everyone was glad to come in to the Day Care lounge for refreshments. The feedback has been very positive and many people clearly appreciated the opportunity to commemorate loved ones as Christmas approached.

We plan to make the Celebration by Candlelight an annual event and for those of you who like to plan ahead, our next one will be on Tuesday 8th December 2009.



## Strathcarron Singers

The Strathcarron Singers have been entertaining people since 2004 and have raised over £30,000 in their first four years. The Choir are now branching out by producing their first CD, thanks to the help of Collie productions and this will be on sale shortly. The Choir's new website will also be up and running soon [www.strathcarronsingers.org](http://www.strathcarronsingers.org) and will provide information about their concerts. For further information contact Molly Parsons on 01360 550945.

Forthcoming events for the Choir include :

- Tillicoultry Parish Church – 7.30pm Tuesday 24th February
- Holy Rood Kirk, Grangemouth – 7.30pm Wednesday 11th March,
- Spring Concert Albert Hall, Stirling – 7.30pm Sunday 19th April

## New Staff . . .

We are delighted to welcome new members of staff.

Ruth Isherwood joins us as our new Consultant in Palliative Care.

Catherine Haggerty is our new Education Department Administrator. Catherine was previously a clerical assistant at Kinneil Primary School, Bo' ness.

Yvonne Van Der Does has been with us for some time, firstly as a Bank Staff Nurse and then on a temporary contract. She has now been appointed to a permanent post as a Staff Nurse.

We have two new Staff Nurses on temporary contracts, Nicola Millward and Fiona Watson. Nicola and Fiona were previously both Bank Staff Nurses at Strathcarron.

## Goodbye to . . .

Bridget Stevens, one of our Staff Nurses has retired from the In-patient ward after 14 years. Bridget will keep in touch by doing some Nurse Bank work for us from time to time.

Dea Francis, our Education Department Secretary also retired in November.

We wish both ladies a long and happy retirement.

## Congratulations to . . .

Anne Davenport (now Anne Wilson) completed her M.Sc. in Clinical Pharmacy with distinction at the University of Strathclyde.

Staff Nurse Claire Daly completed a Diploma in Therapeutic Massage at the College of Holistic Medicine, Glasgow.

Marie MacKrell, Clare Jack, Helen Hobbs and Sharron Love have all completed their SVQ level 2 in Health Care. This initiative involved training two Internal Assessors – Bridget Stevens (far left) and Caroline McDiarmid (far right), to support the staff in their learning, which was mainly work based. We are grateful to Linda Tripney from NHS Forth Valley for her support and to Lesley Whitelaw at Strathcarron who has steered this worthwhile project.



## Bereavement Service

At some time in our lives, we all experience the loss of someone we love. We experience grief which is natural but painful. Grief is the struggle to make sense of what has happened and how to adjust to loss.

At Strathcarron Hospice we offer a support service to all our patients' relatives, friends and neighbours. Most people will cope with their usual support network of friends and family, but sometimes it is easier to speak to someone outwith their usual circle. We have trained staff and volunteers who offer bereavement support, usually on an individual basis. Sometimes the need for this is soon after a death, but it can be months or even years later.

A few weeks after the death of a loved one, we send out a booklet which offers support and informs people about our service. Approximately six months later we send out a letter offering further support if it is needed. At the first anniversary of the death, we send out a card to let relatives and/or friends know we are thinking of them at this difficult time. Volunteers decorate the cards with dried or painted flowers and each card is unique.

We also offer a specialist bereavement service for children and young people, Seasons for Growth, and they are invited to come to the Hospice for an 8 week programme of group activities. Through these activities they learn about loss and grief and how to deal with the resulting emotions. The

groups are of similar aged children between the ages of 6 and 18 years. Parents/carers are invited along to participate in a support group for adults, which helps them cope with their child's difficulties and their own grief issues.

The Seasons programme teaches young people that loss and change, like the seasons of the year, is part of life and that although we cannot avoid loss, we can learn how to cope with it. The sessions are informal and mostly fun, despite exploring difficult issues. So far we have helped almost 100 children and young people to cope with their grief and we have been quite staggered by the demand and need for this service.

## WEBSITE

Our website ([www.strathcarronhospice.org](http://www.strathcarronhospice.org)) has been updated and the new version should be on line by the time you read this newsletter. The website now includes a lot more information including a virtual tour of the Hospice and electronic links to the Palliative Care Resource Manual and other useful sites. It will also be possible to order and pay on line, which will be more convenient for many people. The website includes details of job vacancies, education courses and events.

We hope that the website will be easy to use and tell you much more about our services. Please let us have your comments!

## FUNDRAISING EVENTS 2009

Date	Event	Venue
27th March	Ladies Night with Janey Godley (Comedienne)	Airth Castle Hotel
23rd April	Golf Day	Glenbervie Golf Club
26th April	Bark in the Park	Palace Rigg, Cumbernauld
2nd May	Midnight Walk	Stirling
8th May	May Ball	Inchyra Grange Hotel
24th May	Bark in the Park	Gartmorn Dam, Sauchie
5th June	Go Yellow Day	Schools
6th June	Fete	Hospice grounds
21st June	Ladies' Lunch with Elish Angiolini, Lord Advocate	Inchyra Grange Hotel
August	Family Fun Day	Tulliallan Police College
23rd August	Bark in the Park	Falkirk