

"MAGNIFICENT." "A heroic effort." These were some of the words used when the vaccination team came to Spring Grove last week to inoculate our residents and staff against Covid-19.



The lounge was turned into a vaccination centre as a medical team of 15 came to the home with a large box of vaccines. The occasion was filmed by ITV news who broadcast it on their evening bulletins. Naturally, our residents were delighted at their celebrity – and the fact that Springdene was once again seen to be setting an example for others.

In all, 34 residents and 19 staff got their jabs on the day, including the 82-year-old Reverend Linda Dean (above), who told ITV's interviewer that it was completely painless. "And I'm so looking forward to seeing my grandsons again. I'm longing for that," she said. To avoid any risks all safety procedures were followed. There was just a single journalist, who also operated the camera and she was tested before entering the home. Social distancing was in place at all times.

We're proud to have helped reinforce such an important public health message on the vital need for vaccination, and the occasion was a morale boost for residents and staff alike.

It was also a success from the point of view of the health authorities. Lisa Basi, head of integrated primary care at Central and North West London NHS Foundation Trust wrote to Spring Grove manager Sony:

"I am emailing to say a sincere thank you to you from our team today. You and your staff were so well organised and professional; it was a joy to work in your beautiful care home. It was wonderful to see the team on ITV news too!

"Thank you so much for looking after us with such wonderful hospitality and kindness; it was an absolute pleasure to meet your residents and to be able to vaccinate them in a super-well-equipped area. I am so pleased that all went so well, thanks to your support and hard work."

Later in the week the residents at Springview got their own jabs, including 107-year-old Gladys Gathergood, who, we believe, is the second oldest person in England to have had the vaccine. Gladys reported afterwards that she felt grand! We cannot emphasise more strongly how important it is for everyone to have the jabs offered – it is the only way we are going to escape from the pandemic which has blighted our lives in so many ways.

Unfortunately, Covid-19 has resurfaced in the homes and we have had a handful of positive cases in each location. In order to limit the infection, residents are staying in their rooms for a period of quarantine. There are regular tests for both residents and staff, with staff being tested every day before they begin their shift. Everyone, naturally, wears PPE, and ozone-generating units are deployed to sanitise the air.

We are far from alone in seeing infections again. Data from Public Health England out this week shows that outbreaks of coronavirus in care homes have more than trebled in a month. But we are better off than many – and are very much hoping that, now residents at all three homes have had their vaccinations, we will soon turn the corner.

In the meantime, your loved ones are cherished and cared for, and our activities staff go out of their way to ensure that they don't feel lonely. Odile at Spring Grove has been doing lots of lovely arts and crafts with people in their rooms, ranging from sewing to painting and drawing. Magda at Spring Lane has been making great puzzle packs to keep everyone's brains stimulated and enjoying a natter with everyone.

Susie at Springview has been doing exercises with residents on a one-to-one basis as well as quizzes and knitting. Eirlys has been singing in the corridors as have Tegan and Steve. Eirlys has been sitting with residents and catching up on pen pal letters where possible.

With our folk so preoccupied looking after residents in these difficult circumstances, we're appealing to you not to pursue managers about general issues relating to the homes. This takes valuable time away from the crucial business of caring for your loved ones. We are, you can understand, very busy at the moment.

Naturally we are always happy to discuss matters involving the health and wellbeing of your own nearest and dearest, but here we will only respond to communications from direct next-of-kin. All other issues will be communicated through our newsletters and regular emails.

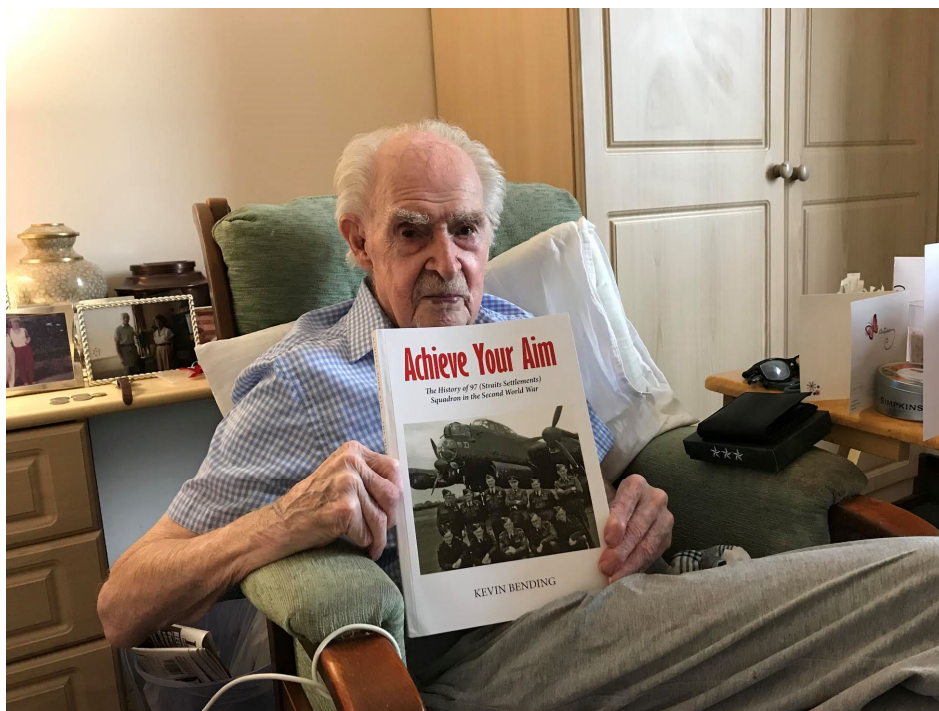
Please bear with us on this. Meanwhile, we're delighted as always to hear from you with voices of support during this tough time. Paul Fineberg

writes on behalf of his father Basil at Spring Grove: “Please extend our heartfelt gratitude to all your staff for their unwavering dedication to keeping the home a happy and safe place. We look forward to being able to visit again soon.”

“Thank you for keeping us in the picture,” writes Sir Richard Gozney on behalf of his godmother Marjorie Thacker, “You are facing quite a challenge. I sympathise. You have the strong support of myself and I suspect of others who’ve seen you and Spring Grove looking after your residents.” Pauline Rau emails on behalf of her mother Nora Rudland. “We are more than grateful for the care given to our relatives. Thank you.”

We’ve had some great celebrations, too. As we mentioned in the last newsletter, Ken Newman celebrated his 100th birthday and had a fantastic time. His bedroom was adorned with balloons and banners and a high point was a call from his grandson Danny.

Ken (pictured below) also had some wonderful presents, befitting a former war hero, including an aviation wallet, a lavish history of the 97th Squadron of World War Two and a coat-of-arms photo frame from his grandson. Most touching of all was a tea mug printed with his late wife’s image, given by Kim and June from the domestic staff.



Birthday girl Joan Davidson celebrated her 90th and really enjoyed herself, even though she had to make do with singing and dancing in her own room! Having fun, too, have been our residents of the week, who have relished being pampered with a box of chocolates and a bunch of flowers. Like all our residents, each has their own individual back story.

Maria Cabrera, resident of the week at Springview, hails from Spain. She worked as a translator and loves music and singing, especially the songs of Julio Iglesias. American Rachel Vroom at Spring Lane is looking forward to being treated to her favourites of fish and chips and chocolate, while Rosalind Mendel, our Scrabble champ at Spring Grove, is always enchanted by her large family and, as well as clocking up treble-letter scores, is an avid reader of books by her favourite author Patrick O'Brian. Well done, all!

Last word goes to Rose Murphy and her family who wrote a charming card to the staff at Springview praising the care given to her late father, Laurence Kelly: "I would like to express my most sincere thanks for the care you gave to my dad. Springview is a family and you made a warm and welcoming home for him. The care he received, especially at the end of his life, was second to none. Your support was a great comfort to us."

Stay safe and stay well.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jeremy Balcombe', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Jeremy Balcombe
CEO Springdene Group

