

November 2010



**Birch Green Care Home**  
your care, your way

# Activities

*As part of everyday life*

## VISITING DONKEYS BRING BACK SEASIDE MEMORIES AT BIRCH GREEN



Although the days when they could ride them are long gone, elderly residents were thrilled to welcome two donkeys when they visited Skelmerdale's **Birch Green Care Home** recently.

**Moses** and **Tula** put in a surprise appearance and brought back some happy memories of holidays spent on the beaches of **Southport, Blackpool** and **New Brighton**.

The donkeys - owned by **Paula Grogan** - were invited to the home by **Activities Co-ordinator Karen House** who looks after a horse at livery stables in Bickerstaffe, where the animals are kept. *"I'm always on the lookout for new ways of entertaining people here and thought it would be a great idea to bring the donkeys. Paula very kindly agreed,"* she said.



The donkeys proved a hit as residents queued up to pat and feed them treats in the courtyard. For a brief time they were even allowed into the day room to meet people who couldn't get out.

*"Soon everyone was reminiscing about happy days riding on donkeys. It was a real tonic!"* said **Karen**.

**Paula** added: *"It was great! The donkeys behaved perfectly and enjoyed the gentle fuss. They're very social animals but are also sensitive because of their past."*



While undoubtedly a happy day for **Birch Green** residents, it was an even happier one for **Tula**. Had she not been rescued on Christmas Eve 2008 by **Paula** from a 'fattening' farm in France, she would sadly have been transported to Italy and slaughtered to put her meat in salami. Her companion **Moses** was brought over from **Ireland**.

# MYSTERY DANCER

Her secret's out! The mystery dancer who entertained residents with a dazzling routine was none other than **Birch Green's** own health care assistant **Janette Kelly**.



Admitting that she's become more confident with age, **Janette**, 50, decided to treat residents and fellow staff with a performance she's been practising after purchasing a dance costume on holiday in Spain this year.



Disguised by a wig, veil and heavy eye make-up, nobody recognised her out of her **Birch Green** uniform.

*"It was a bit of an impulse buy and didn't expect I'd ever wear it but I like to think I am a good sport and decided to have a go. My husband Stephen even came in specially to watch me dance."*

*"It was nerve wracking at first but then I started to enjoy it. I'm now thinking of buying a Shirley Bassey or Abba outfit*

*and coming up with another routine."*

Residents who fear they may be deserting them for brighter lights have no need to fear though. *"I'm won't be giving up my day job! Birch Green is a really nice place to work and I love all the residents and staff,"* she added.

*Activities co-ordinator Karen House said: "She went down a bomb!"*

## PARTY TIME!

Her Majesty the **Queen** was among well-wishers who sent cards congratulating **Eric and Mary Nicholls** who celebrated their **60th wedding anniversary** in July.

A family party was held at **Birch Green**, where **Eric**, 90, and **Mary**, 82, have lived since March last year.



It was party time again when **Norman Elliot** celebrated his 90th birthday. Family and friends tucked into fresh cream cakes and toasted his big day with beer while entertainer **Nuala Duxbury** played guitar. As an extra surprise **Karen House** produced a **'This Is Your Life'** script chronicling events that happened the year he was born.

*Congratulations to all three on reaching such milestones!*

