

# Guild Care's Services

## Care Homes with Nursing in Worthing

**Ashmount**, Southey Road, Worthing 01903 528500

**Caer Gwent**, Downview Road, Worthing 01903 536649

**Irene House**, Parkfield Road, Tarring 01903 529060

**Linfield**, Wykeham Road, Worthing 01903 529629

## Sheltered Accommodation

**Dolphin Court Sheltered Housing**, Shelley Road, Worthing 01903 529222

## Healthy Living Services

**Healthy Living Centre for Older people and Carers**

including **Time Out for Carers and Time Out & About**

Methold House, Worthing BN11 1DU 01903 528600

**Community Partnership Team** 01903 528627

One-to-one support for vulnerable older people in the community

**Ashdown Club** 01903 528607

Activities for children and young people with special needs

**Lovett and Durrington Clubs** 01903 505236

Community Clubs for older people in Maybridge and Durrington

**Transport Service** 01903 528608

Over 40 volunteers drive our minibuses over 54,000 miles each year

## Home Care & Intermediate Care

In Worthing and from Shoreham to Rustington 01903 528637

## Charity Shops & GreenHouse Charity Superstore

39/41 Rowlands Road, Worthing 01903 529777

The Strand Parade, Goring-by-Sea 01903 524090

35 Broadwater Street West 01903 209111

82 The Street, Rustington 01903 773704

54 High Street, Shoreham 01273 464793

The GreenHouse, Meadow Road, East Worthing 01903 205302

**Head Office Methold House, North Street, Worthing BN11 1DU**

**01903 528600**

**[www.guildcare.org](http://www.guildcare.org)**



# History of Ashmount



by Edward Kellett

Registered Charity number 1044658

A period of several years had elapsed since the opening of the Guild's second Residential Home, Caer Gwent in 1947.

This being the case, the Executive Committee started to investigate the possibilities of opening a third home and a sub-committee was formed to consider such an important matter. It was felt that there was a great need for a home for the elderly men and women who could afford to pay a higher residential fee than that being paid in the existing homes – a figure between four and a half to five guineas was suggested. Further, the property should accommodate 30-35 residents in single rooms.

Regarding the financial aspect, there was about £10,000 in a special fund for the acquisition of a new home. The cost of purchasing and equipping it was estimated to be in the region of £32,000. Obviously it would be necessary to launch a public appeal. It was finally decided to go ahead with the project and the sub-committee was empowered to look for a large property standing in its own grounds. Six such properties were inspected, one of which could have been made suitable. Unfortunately the price required was very much in excess of the affordable amount and this was a great disappointment. However, the first half of 1961 brought good fortune and hope. A lady who had been resident in Worthing for about ten years donated a cheque for £5,000 towards the purchase and equipment of a new home. It was the donor's wish that she should remain anonymous.

This very kind gesture was received with great pleasure. As a result it caused the Executive Committee and the sub-committee to redouble their efforts to obtain suitable premises. Donations received amounted to £6,000, legacies £4,000 and the Rotary Club of Worthing had offered to lend £10,000. The decision was taken to make further enquiries of the owners of the hotel premises in which great interest had been taken and to endeavour to agree a suitable price.

number of rooms were of inadequate size and as a result these were enlarged. It is only fair to mention that the majority of this work would not have been possible without magnificent legacies and donations given with the express condition that they should be used for enlarging any of the homes.

This short history of Ashmount would not be complete without mentioning that in the Guild's Jubilee year, Her Royal Highness Princess Alexandra visited Ashmount, as well as Methold House, on 29 April, 1983. This was a very memorable occasion and she spent a great deal of time talking to residents, members of day centres, volunteer workers, committee members and staff.

It is perhaps very fitting to conclude this short history of Ashmount by quoting an extract from Dame Sybil Thorndike's speech in which she said "With the kindness around them, I think the people of Ashmount are going to have a wonderful time."

Our grateful thanks to the late Edward Kellett for all his time researching the information which enabled us to reproduce this History of Ashmount. Mr Kellett was associated with the Guild for over 31 years.

they would be able to move in during early December. It was also decided that the premises should be open to special visitors and the public prior to admission of residents. This proved highly successful in that a large number of people visited Ashmount and a useful amount of money came in from an unofficial collection.

The move-in by the residents in early December ran smoothly and everyone had settled in comfortably in time for the first Christmas tree, which cost approximately ten shillings, and the first card.

At the Home's Committee meeting 17 January 1963, a very nice letter of thanks which had been signed by all the residents was read, saying what a very happy time they had all enjoyed at Christmas.

And so, 1963 was to be an important one of the Guild's history.

During the months leading up to the official opening every effort was made to have the Home ready as soon as possible and to iron out any of the problems which were inevitable in the taking over of such a large building and all that this involved.

All was set for the official opening on 12 June by Dame Sybil Thorndike. It was highly successful and well attended and would be a landmark in many people's minds for a long time to come. Addressing a very large gathering in a marquee in the grounds of Ashmount, Dame Sybil said "I cannot tell you what an honour I feel at having been asked to open this wonderful home for old people and I think it is quite appropriate that you should ask an old woman to open it".

All this happened nearly thirty three years ago, wrote Edward Kellett in 1996. Since then Ashmount has undergone extensive alteration including an additional sixteen single rooms, a second lounge, a lift, new oil-fired boilers and a new boiler house, the demolishing of the old conservatory and its replacement by a sun lounge. Also, a

In the meanwhile a special Building sub-committee had been formed. As a result, several recommendations had been presented to the Executive Committee, amongst which was that a qualified surveyor should survey the premises and a preliminary inventory be made of the furniture and effects. All this was done and an extensive report was submitted. This involved a great deal of discussion and investigation which took some time and entailed further negotiations with the owners concerned.

It was estimated that the total cost of purchase, repairs and alterations would work out at about £32,000 and the possible number of residents would be 34.

Although weeks went by without any progress being made, there was always that glimmer of hope in that their might still be a chance of obtaining the property which the Executive Committee had for so long been negotiating over.

At a special meeting of the committee on 15 September, the great news was announced that agreement had been reached on the purchase of the Ashmount Hotel on the corner of Shelley Road and Southey Road, the price to include the contents. It was said that "it really is a dream come true!"

It was immediately decided to set up an Appeals Committee to consider the timing and method of launching an appeal. In the meantime another anonymous donation of £1,000 had been received. Finally it was agreed that a Home's Committee should be set up immediately which met for the very first time on 26 October 1961.

The first matter to be discussed was the name and it was decided that it should be called "Ashmount" and that it should be described as a Residential Club.

It may be of interest to say something about the building. In 1918 it was known as St Bede's School for Ladies and remained so until 1937-1938 when it became the Palace Court Hotel. It is understood that the Canadian Army occupied it during the war. When it was subsequently sold the new owners wanted to change the name but they could not think of anything suitable. They then remembered that at their previous premises, 68 Richmond Road, which they had just sold, there was a wooden front gate into which the word "Ashmount" had been burnt and so the problem of a suitable name was solved.

Incidentally, some time ago there was an article in the magazine of All Saints Church, Findon Valley, in which the Bishop of Chichester in describing a visit to the USA mentioned that one of the places he visited was a church in Ashmount. In spite of exhaustive searches through various gazetteers and telephone directories, including London, there was no trace of Ashmount. Curiously, there was an Ashmount at 7 Westbourne Avenue, Worthing in 1915 and remained so until the end of the 1920's. Whether there is any connection between the small town Ashmount in the USA and our own Ashmount is something which may never be known.

And so back to the first Management Committee meeting. Plans of proposed alterations were submitted and sub-committees were formed to deal with these and other important matters.

It was also announced that the appeal would be launched on 9 November.

During the following months a great deal of hard work was put in by the various committees. The Home's Committee had to deal with the suggested alterations, repairs to the flat roof, overhauling and updating the central heating system, kitchen layout, etc. The sub-committees dealt with such matters as curtains, furnishing the rooms, the garden, and most important of all, the engaging of the Matron, Miss Vines, and other senior staff.

However, very special mention must be made of the very hard work and dedication put in by the Appeals Committee, who were set a task of raising £35,000, which was a great deal of money in those days. Due to great public interest donations were received immediately. Mention should be made of some of the various fundraising schemes: a Market Day; a Midnight Matinee at the Connaught Theatre; Gymkhana and Dog Show and a Charity Auction of objets d'art. The final aim of the Committee was reached after about 19 months from November 1961 to June 1963.

The next important matter was the official opening. It was hoped this would take place between late April and June in the next year. The big question was, who would be available to perform the opening ceremony. This was discussed at a number of meetings, among personalities mentioned were Royalty and well-known members of the entertainment world. Unfortunately none were available. The problem however had a very happy ending ...

The Appeals Committee endeavoured to arrange for a well-known personality to do one of the BBC Appeals in the New Year. Dame Sybil Thorndike had been approached and had accepted, as a result of which this appeal, which took place 2 January, brought in just over £300.

A member of the Appeals Committee and the Secretary went up to the BBC Headquarters and met Dame Sybil when she made the appeal. She was very friendly and well disposed towards the whole project. Everyone concerned was so delighted and pleased when she agreed to perform the opening ceremony in early May.

After many weeks and months of hard work put in by all those concerned, particularly the various committees, it was decided that the most important decision to be made was to select 34 residents, men and women. This was, by no means, an easy task for there had been at least 300 applications. After a considerable amount of heart searching the final selection was made and it was hoped that