

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



History of Irene House



by Edward Kellett

Registered Charity number 1044658

A period of about six years had elapsed before the opening of the Guild's fifth Residential Home for the elderly. This came about quite suddenly as a wonderful surprise and, as it were, "like a bolt from the blue" through the auspices of a very kind and generous benefactor, Mr Tom Gowland. It was described as a dream come true and the story of how this came about is of great interest.

It started many years ago during Mrs Effie Methold's period as Hon Secretary to the Council (Guild) from 1936 – 1957. It appeared that Mrs Gowland had lived in the town with her mother until her marriage in 1942. She helped as a voluntary caseworker covering the rural parishes to the East and North of the Borough.

After their marriage, Mr and Mrs Gowland lived in Worthing. When his wife died in 1966, Mr Gowland wished to set up a tangible and worthwhile memorial to his wife and so he created the Irene House Trust. The trust deed aimed at using funds towards the purchase of construction and support of a Home in Worthing for old people unable to support themselves by reason of poverty or infirmity.

Some years went by before the terms of the Trust were implemented. In the spring of 1974, the Council (Guild) was approached by four of the trustees to see whether it would be willing to take over the Trust, which at that time was valued at £153,000 (but was eventually increased to £165,000). After careful consideration the offer was most gratefully accepted and a small sub-committee was set up to look into the matter.

Initially the items that would have to be investigated were the possibility of developing an entirely new home or purchasing an older building which could be adapted and extended. And in that category one property was mentioned which might prove suitable.

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

The property which was quite large was known as the Marlposts Nursing Home in Parkfield Road. It was built in 1924 and was at first a private house before becoming a nursing home.

Digressing for a moment, it might be interesting to know how the property became known as Marlposts and this possibly came about in an unusual way which is somewhat complicated and so will be dealt with very briefly.

In the 13th and 14th centuries, when copyhold was in existence, it appeared that the village of Tarring was in some way connected with a small hamlet called Marlpost, just south of Horsham. There is a possibility that these two places were connected by some form of road. Today the Ordnance Survey map only shows that there is a Marlpost Wood and a Marlpost Road, both near Southwater. It would be interesting to know if this is how Marlposts Nursing Home got its name.

Returning to the property, it would have to be greatly altered to include a singledeck extension in order to take 20 residents, men and women in single rooms. There was also the possibility of a further 10 rooms at a later stage.

As a consequence, after negotiations, the property was purchased and included furniture and fittings. This took place early in 1974. Immediately an architect was instructed to prepare an outline plan for the necessary alterations and extensions for accommodating 20 residents. Also, looking ahead, to plan for further extensions to provide accommodation for eventually up to a total of 30 residents.

At this stage, consultations were held with the donor and trustees to inform them of the prepared plans. They were impressed with the scheme. Mr Gowland had expressed his preference for the scheme of 20 beds as this would give a family atmosphere. After his decease, the Guild could do what they liked with it.

A tender was accepted for the work which started in July 1975. It was envisaged that the work would be completed in August 1976 and the home ready for residents in the autumn.

On 26 September 1975, Mr Gowland laid the foundation stone to the extension in the presence of the Mayor and Mayoress of Worthing, Councillor and Mrs R Clapp, the President, Mr Frank Cave and Chairman, Mr R Cushing.

The Mayor in his short speech commented, "People who think the world has passed them by will now be able to spend the evening of their lives in comfort and in the company of each other." No doubt these words had a happy effect on Mr Gowland.

As the work was progressing satisfactorily, it was felt that the time had now come to form a House committee and so, the membership having been agreed, the first Irene House Committee meeting was held on 23 March 1976.

The first item to be dealt with was the setting up of sub-committees to deal with staffing, furnishings etc. It was hoped that Mr Gowland would perform the opening ceremony towards the end of the year and it was agreed that a suitable plaque would be unveiled. In the meanwhile a gift of £50, and a television set were received. Mrs R Dawson was appointed as the first matron.

Towards the middle of October all was ready to receive the 20 residents and all were in residence by the beginning of November.

Mr Gowland officially opened the Guild's fifth Residential Home, Irene House on 27 October 1976. To him this must have been a poignant occasion on seeing his great personal ambition fulfilled. It is quite certain that many of those at the ceremony must have shared his feelings. Incidentally, a photograph of Irene Gowland used to hang in the lounge.

The following few weeks saw the Home settling down and eventually its first Christmas was celebrated. It was an occasion of great happiness. A letter had been received from Mr Gowland in which was included his pleasure at receiving a grateful letter from the residents.

Since the opening of Irene House in October 1976, two further extensions were carried out. The first, in 1980 (completed in 1981) consisted of 9 bedrooms, lounge, bathroom and toilet facilities and was officially opened by Her Grace, Lavinia, Duchess of Norfolk on 23 April 1981.

The second extension took place in 1988. It was to include a lift and a number of extra rooms. This later extension was opened by the Guild's Patron, the Duke of Richmond on 29 November 1988.

And so, today, Irene House which has 39 beds is registered as a Nursing Home. Everything has been done to make the residents as happy and as comfortable as possible. A great attraction is an enclosed patio garden with fountains, an amenity very much enjoyed by the residents.

Before we close this short history, we must go back to 1981. Mr Gowland was now becoming frail and needed some nursing care, so he naturally applied to go into the Home. His application was granted and he moved in on 5 March. He had a small suite and wanted to be treated like the other residents in that he paid rent. Here he lived in peace, receiving every care and attention. Sadly he died on 20 September, 1983. There could be no better comfort and surroundings to end his days than in the Home that he gave for the benefit of the elderly and named in the memory of his wife, Irene.