

Winter 2004

# MARTHA NEWS



*Making the most of the late autumn sunshine in the Martha Garden.*

## Two giant steps forward for our new Hastings home

### *Funding received and contracts signed!*

We are getting closer to starting work at our new home in Hastings. Our fundraising team has had tremendous success raising nearly £500,000 for the first phase of development and we have now signed contracts to enable the Trust to go ahead with construction.

Trust director Graham Simmons said: "This is a very exciting time for us all as we venture into the next stage of Martha's growth. I am pleased to say we are on course for opening next summer."

Check our website - [www.marthatrust.org.uk](http://www.marthatrust.org.uk) - to keep up to date with developments.



# FLOATING OFF WITH A WIN

*Martha Trust chose Noah's Ark as the theme for its float in Deal carnival this year.*

Residents spent a busy morning donning their costumes, leaving just enough time to dash to Deal in the minibus to decorate the float before the start of the parade. The hard work was well worth the effort as the colourful display won first prize in its category. Martha Trust joins in with many local events and this year's carnival was a great success.



*We don't need an excuse to party at Martha!*



# MY LIFE AT MARTHA

*– voiced with help from my Supportworker*

I have lived in Martha House for many years now. Before arriving here I lived in America and northern England.

I stay in touch with family and friends through my keyworker sending cards and letters. I also receive cards and presents back.

As I have lived at Martha since its earliest days I see myself as Queen Bee and I like to cast a watchful eye over all that goes on! My favourite place to do that is just by the kitchen which has a glass door, so I get to see all the activity going on there, not to mention tasting the cook's new recipes! I have to watch my weight so I try and have healthy food including fruit but I really love anything with chocolate.

I enjoy using the hydro pool, which I like to go to at least three times a week, as this is where I have my physiotherapy exercises. I have great fun relaxing in the warm water and the bubbles of the Jacuzzi.

My bedroom is wonderful with lots of pictures of family and friends, CDs of my favourite music, my own comfy chair - which I love to relax in to watch my TV or videos in the evening before going to bed.

When the weather is good I enjoy a trip into Deal, my local town, and like having hot chocolate drinks in a restaurant on the pier. On the days I stay at home I quite often spend time in the sensory room listening to relaxing music while having a hand or foot massage.

Another of my favourite places is the day centre where I get to meet my friends for sensory cookery or craftwork while listening to a story.



*Deal in Summer..a favourite place!*

# JENNY HAS IT ALL SEWN UP!

With so many dressing-up activities, Martha Trust is lucky to have Jenny Bushell as one of the team.

She has been a full-time care worker at Martha for 4 years and has become the 'official' costume designer and seamstress.

Away from work, Jenny is a busy mum, but somehow she still manages to find time to run up the odd dozen or so costumes!



You will see some of her creations in this newsletter including Indian squaws tabards (looking suspiciously like old sheets!) to the wonderful Disney costumes made for Deal carnival.



*In the space of 10 years Martha Trust has grown tremendously. Here our chairman, Humphrey Clarke, reflects on our small beginnings, our rapid growth at Hacklinge and the imminent build of our new Hastings home.*

Ever since I became a trustee of Martha Trust there seems to have been construction work on the Hacklinge site, preparation for it, or clearing up afterwards.

I recall it started with the need to enlarge one room in Martha House to meet a new regulation and enable us to take a very young new resident. Next came the extension of the house to provide additional adult spaces. Suddenly there was the need to build the children's home, Frances House, to comply with a change in regulations compelling us to separate children from adults. In a flurry of action we sped, with local and Naval assistance, to create the new garden. Barely pausing for breath, we created the new wing of Martha House to enlarge and improve the lounge area and to bring the décor upto the standard of Frances House.

It appeared the construction industry had taken root in Hacklinge until suddenly there has been an unusual hush; no builders, no cement mixers, just Mike carrying out routine maintenance.

### **AND NOW THE DUST HAS SETTLED . . .**

It must be bliss for staff and residents to have the place to themselves after the ordered chaos of building and decorating. The results have been wonderful but we know they were hard to live through.

I want to take this opportunity of saying thank you to all the staff and residents for putting up with all this with so little complaint. I hope you now find it as



*Architect's drawing of our future new Martha home in Hastings.*

worthwhile as we from the outside world see it to be. May I also give a huge Thank You to all the generous donors, individuals, companies and trusts who funded the work. Having said all that you will realise from the pictures that the trustees and senior staff have not relaxed.

Life is about to take on a new urgency as we finish raising funds for, and starting on, the new project in Hastings. This gives us an opportunity to fulfil the vision we had at a management brainstorming session several years ago.

We concluded at the time that although we do not have a perfect organisation or facilities we have enough so that we can be a blessing to many other families and residents - but how to achieve that?

We prayed and pushed on several doors and suddenly this one opened. The hinges creaked at times but now we are moving forward and are excited at the

opportunity it brings. We know it will create challenges as we increase the size of the organisation by around 40 per cent - but that also raises the numbers of individuals and families we are able to help.

### **LOOKING AHEAD TO HASTINGS**

Hastings is not the only new opening. We have also been presented with some other opportunities but at this moment we're concentrating on reorganising ourselves to better manage the existing homes in Hacklinge while providing proper support to, and control of, the new Hastings home. May I reassure the staff, parents and carers that we are determined not to grow any faster than we can provide proper support to existing staff and residents. You, our residents and visitors, are more important to us than just the size of the organisation.

### **WELL DESERVED THANKS**

May I take this opportunity of saying thank you to all of you who support us with prayers, with funds and by generally making people aware of our work. We are immensely grateful to you and without you we could not make such a difference to the lives of so many families.

Please keep doing what you are doing, you really are making a huge difference to a group of people who in many cases were in desperation before we were able to offer them help.



## **SENSORY DELIGHTS IN FRANCES HOUSE**

Remember your childhood days and think of your favourite place. It might have been your bedroom, a garden den or a secret room where you could relax and day dream.

Well, the redecorated sensory room in Frances House is just such a place! It has an abundance of lighting effects, exotic fabric textures and fibre optics that synchronise to musical beats and rhythms. It's all very exciting!

Also visitors to Frances House can't fail to notice the new multi-coloured canopy adorning the day room. We would like to thank Laura Roots for her time and for all the effort she put in to making this such a wonderful place for the children to relax.





## In-house training at Martha

Training plays an important part in life at Martha. Pictured above is Alison Berridge, a nurse in the children's home, conducting a training session with care workers enrolled in an NVQ course, and a student nurse from Canterbury Christ Church University College.

Congratulations to all who have completed their NVQs and we wish every success to those about to start their training courses.

## Ways to help us

There are so many rewarding ways in which you can become involved in Martha – and fundraising is one of the most important.

Why not have some fun by getting friends, family or work colleagues together to stage an event. You could become a regular donor by monthly direct debit gifts or your company could get involved in sponsored activities and the Give As You Earn scheme. Everyone can help: schools, churches and other community groups, friends and individuals can all gain and have fun fundraising and supporting Martha Trust.

So far this year various groups and clubs have raised more than £15,000 to help Martha in its work.

Please call us if you would like to be involved and help us achieve our aim of providing a home for life for this special group of people.

## Martha in the Community

It has been a busy and fruitful time on the fundraising front lately thanks to the hard work of our fundraisers Jackie Flynn and Angela Lumley. Farming World at Faversham chose Martha Trust as charity of the year to benefit from its Farming and Country Festival held in September.

During November Jackie and Angela were invited as guests to a lunch with the festival's organiser Maggie Johnson and her team of stewards when they were presented with a cheque for £2,000 by Michael Terry, a partner of accountants Reeves & Neylan, who had sponsored the two day festival.

Its committee was delighted to hear the money raised will be used to help equip the new sensory room in Martha House. Work on this project is expected to start in the new year.



## Contact us

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