



Nightingale Hits 100

Stuart Katz

As a trustee of Nightingale, the South London care home has a special place in my heart. I'm incredibly proud to be a part of such a fantastic organisation that is this year celebrating its centenary. Few things stand the test of time, but Nightingale has gone from strength to strength as the decades have passed on.

But reaching 100 isn't as rare an occasion as it used to be and at Nightingale there have been seven in the last year! Eight if you include the centenary Nightingale is celebrating this year. It is 100 years since the first residents moved into the Wandsworth site in early 1908. And Nightingale has gone from strength to strength recently reaching a new high when it was awarded the highest ranking of 3 stars by the regulator, the Commission for Social Care Inspection.

The charity's origins actually go much further back than this current site. In 1840 the organisation's forerunners were the very Victorian 'Hand-in-Hand Asylum for Decayed Tradesman' and the 'Widows Home Asylum'. As time went on the institutions merged with a nearby Jewish Home and became known as The Home for Aged Jews. Just two years later the Home had 105 residents, and through the generosity of Lord Wandsworth, a property was purchased on Nightingale Lane, Clapham for £5,200.

Lord Wandsworth laid the foundation stone of the new building in 1906 at a ceremony and just over a year later it opened its doors to its first residents.

The war years brought difficult times for the charity, where it found itself hit by increasing prices and a decrease in income. As the War ended, the home began to recover and normal life continued.



In the late-1960s a generous benefactor bought some adjoining land, and from then the residential wing now known as The Gerald Lipton centre was born. This development made Nightingale stand out and be recognised as the jewel in the community's crown.

Today, Nightingale bears little resemblance to its early beginnings a century ago. The Home is truly that – a real home and community for those entering the later years of their lives. Nightingale boasts unrivalled facilities and cares for 250 residents, making it the largest care home of its kind in the UK. With residential care, advanced nursing facilities, a dedicated dementia unit and short stay respite facilities, Nightingale caters for the entire spectrum of need for older members of the Jewish community.

Any visitor walking through the Home will be genuinely surprised at what they find. A buzzing café, a large synagogue, a volunteer run shop, a full medical centre on site, a popular hairdresser and beautician and a relaxed, warm and friendly atmosphere.

The staff realise the importance of keeping the residents' minds as well as their bodies active to keep them healthy. So with a monthly book club run by Edwina Currie, a concert hall, a dedicated arts and crafts team and regular trips out, the residents are encouraged to participate and spend time with their friends.

It doesn't take the Commission for Social Care Inspection to prove what a wonderful establishment Nightingale is – all you have to do is look around at the content, smiling residents. We can only hope that Nightingale thrives in this fashion for another century and continues to provide a safe, secure and caring home for the older generations of our community.

If you would like to enquire about permanent or short stay residence at the Home, would like to make a donation, or find out about volunteering opportunities please contact LeonSmith@nightingalehouse.org.uk or 020 8673 3495