



Front Lines



A Short History of the Kipnes Centre

When World War II ended, thousands of Canadian servicemen came back home. They came from all over the world, from Germany, Holland, France, Britain, from Italy, Africa, the Mediterranean, from the prison camps of Hong Kong and Singapore. Many were ill.

In Edmonton, the official residence of the Lieutenant Governor of Alberta (an elegant mansion located next to the Royal Alberta Museum), became the first Veterans' Centre in Edmonton. Along with the Wells Pavilion at the University Hospital, it provided nursing care for former servicemen with disabilities or illness. If a veteran required hospital care he would be transferred to the Colonel Mewburn Pavilion, a wing of the old University Hospital.

In 1964 the Department of Veterans Affairs, with the Provincial Government, agreed to establish a permanent veterans' centre, on its University campus site. Construction began. Then, in November 1966, the veterans moved into the Edmonton Veterans Home. This was a 140-bed facility, imaginatively designed with window walls along its corridors to draw in the landscaped gardens and patio settings, and a large main area known as the Arts & Crafts Room. In 1982 the name was officially changed to the Mewburn Veterans Centre, which was named after Colonel Frank Mewburn, a decorated military surgeon of the First World War.

The Mewburn remained in that location for 39 years, from 1966 to 2005, when the newly-built Kipnes Centre opened and the residents were transferred to our new location on the North side of the city.

The Kipnes Centre for Veterans is a 120-bed facility. It is spacious and airy, with a Great Room for the many daily events. The veterans live in Houses, each named after great Canadian rivers, i.e. Columbia, Frazer, Nelson, Thompson, Athabasca, Pembina, McKenzie and Saskatchewan. All veterans have their own room. Several patios are included in the design, each blooming colorfully in summer and sparkling in winter with twinkling Christmas lights. Once the construction in the area is completed, the surroundings will be fully landscaped.

*Renee Volman
photo by Jelena Sivic*

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Angie

photo by
Deborah Melanson

From the Front Lines

About our Newsletter

From the Frontlines is published quarterly for staff, volunteers, residents, families and our community. It will be filled with news, interesting facts, exciting events, and anything else you would like to read about! Submissions are welcome. To make a submission, please contact the Editorial Committee at 780.442.5709.

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Administrator's Message



Welcome to our inaugural edition of *From the Front Lines*. We hope you will enjoy reading the stories and all the many events happening at Kipnes. I would like to give you a bit of background about some of the services we provide and the beliefs that guide us in our daily work with the Elders who call Kipnes home.

"The Dianne & Irving Kipnes Centre is a welcoming home, serving those who served, in an environment that embraces respect, recognizes individual uniqueness, and provides a flexible and interactive environment for veterans". This vision statement for the Kipnes Centre was developed in consultation with Elders, staff members, families, and community members, who gathered together before Kipnes opened to develop a vision for what we all wanted Kipnes to be like.

The Kipnes culture is a unique facility in many aspects: the majority of our Elders have a military service background, we have a children's daycare on site, our Elders are mostly male, and we have a wide variety of animals that reside in our centre, some full time, some part time. We believe that many Elders in continuing care have feelings of loneliness helplessness and boredom. Our central focus is to alleviate these three feelings by providing consistent staffing as much as possible, offering a variety of leisure programs, and trying to have our Elders do as much as possible for themselves to provide a sense of purpose in life. We aim, as much as possible, to make this the Elder's home in the food we serve, the activities we offer and the surroundings the Elder's live in.

By encouraging our Elders, families, staff and community members to provide us with feedback and suggestions on how we can achieve our vision of making Kipnes a welcoming home. We want to foster an atmosphere that respects individual differences and feelings, so that we can make "life worth living" for the Elders who call Kipnes home.

Thank you for all you do to help us achieve our vision.

Betty Kolewaski

Day Program Report

Hi Everyone! I'm Christie Sharun, the Day Program Manager. The Day Program allows seniors from the community to come in and socialize with each other. It incorporates fun activities that brighten their day. This April we will be having our Bell Choir concert on the 9th at 11:00 am in the great room, everyone is welcome to come and watch! We are looking forward to outings to the Multicultural Heritage Museum, Gibbons Museum, Hawrelak Park, and more in the upcoming summer months!

Christie Sharun

Care Managers' Corner

Jan's Report

Hello all, winter is finally in its last clutches and I'm certainly looking forward to spring! My name is Jan Cooper and I'm your Care Manager of the first floor. I arrived temporarily, on December 8th, 2008 from CapitalCare Lynnwood (in the West End) and will return to my unit there in April.

Your new Care Manager will be Dorothy Cochrane, who will start on March 30th 2009. Welcome to Kipnes, Dorothy!

What a pleasure it's been to meet so many of you. The Veteran culture, enhanced by the Eden philosophy, offers such a friendly and welcoming atmosphere. It took Angie a few days to get used to me but now I get a "Welcoming Woof" from her as well.

Being that the First Floor is a Neighborhood unique unto itself, we have been working on a number of things:

- Maintaining a home atmosphere
- Looking for ways to provide a "good day" for each Elder
- Providing a respectful workplace for all those we come in contact with

I've certainly appreciated all the input from each of our hardworking staff and so many of our family members. Stop by anytime. I look forward to saying "Hi in the Hallways."

Live well,

Jan Cooper, Care Manager 1st Floor

Sherry's Report

Will winter never end? Yes, it will and very soon! Hi everyone, my name is Sherry Schaefer, Care Manager for the second floor at Kipnes.

There are many things that make the second floor different. Besides the four houses, there is a spacious arts and crafts area. Made by the Elders, the completed crafts are for sale, and can be seen in the great room display cases. Inside the arts and crafts room there is also a door that leads to the rooftop garden.

The second floor includes a small guest suite, where out-of-town family members of Elders can stay near their loved ones. We are also proud to have the Resident Advisory Committee, which meets regularly to discuss items of interest and concerns in the Elder community.

As always, a thank you to our dedicated 2nd floor nursing staff for the caring attention you provide to our Veterans. Lastly, a thank you to our second floor pets – Disco the bunny, the budgie birds and daily visits of Rosie the Basset Hound. You brighten our days!

Sherry Schaefer, Care Manager 2nd Floor

Animals at Kipnes

The tradition of having pets in the centre goes a long way back to the Mewburn. Cats were a favorite there, in fact the first one, Browser, simply wandered in one morning and decided to stay!

Here at Kipnes animals are part of the fabric of daily life, using the Eden Alternative. Almost every House has a bird cage, or rabbit hutch, and two dogs wander the halls. Angie, a German Shepherd, lives here permanently, while Rosie the Basset Hound comes in every day Monday to Friday with her owner, a staff member, for the benefit of the Elders.

Through the summer we also have new summer "residents", two Shetland ponies, and a pot bellied Vietnamese pig named Mabel. They spend their summers in a crafty little barn with an enclosure around it, in the patio outside of Fraser house.

The philosophy behind our pets is strikingly simple: making homes where the elderly live habitats for human beings, not sterile institutions.

As the core Eden philosophy puts it, loneliness, helplessness, and most of all boredom are the main issues associated with long-term care facilities. The presence of animals and plants creates a more meaningful environment; and it has proved to be better medicine than any pill out there!

*Tracey Mann, Jelena Sivic,
Renee Volman*

Rosie photo by Tracey Mann



Upcoming Events

Volunteer Appreciation Breakfast

April 18, 2009 10:00-12 noon

(A CapitalCare Foundation event). For ticket information contact Rob McConechy at 780.442.5720.

Mother's Day Tea May 7, 2009 2:00 pm

Raised Garden bed Adoption

May 11, 2009

Leave your name with Recreation Staff if you are interested in having a raised garden bed this year. They go fast!

Garden Planting May 25- 29, 2009

Horses & Mabel June 6, 2009

Our miniature horses and Mabel (pot bellied pig) move in for the summer!

Father's Day Social Hour

June 19, 2009 2:00 pm
Hosted by All Service Clubs

Look for the feature story
"Portrait of a Veteran" in our
summer issue.

Kipnes Community Update

Arrival of Our New Bus!

The wait has been long, but we're very excited about the arrival of our new bus early April. It is a 12-passenger state-of-the-art vehicle.

We owe sincere thanks to the dedicated fundraising efforts of the CapitalCare Foundation, the generosity of the Edmonton Poppy Fund, Korean Veterans Association, and Wetaskiwin Royal Canadian Legion.

Our first bus was donated in the early 1980's by the Army Navy & AirForce Unit, Sir Winston Churchill Unit #3 in Edmonton, plus Provincial Command and other ANAF units throughout Alberta.

Having our own bus means we can provide transport for many enjoyable outings, from country drives, shopping trips, Oiler Games, lunch and dinners out (often at the Legions), seasonal, theatre and cultural events.

With the addition of the new bus we can now provide safer, warmer and more comfortable transportation on out-trips for the Veterans. It is all time well spent.

Arrival of the Horses and Pig

The two miniature horses and Vietnamese pot-bellied pig, from Hearts & Hooves, will move into their summer quarters outside Fraser House on June 6. Prior to this, every Monday in May, the horses will come for a visit – in the afternoon. Watch for them!

Renee Volman

Remembering Our Heroes

V.E. Day May 8th, 1945. On March 23rd 1945, the Allies crossed the Rhine at Remagen, Germany. The 3rd Canadian Infantry Division and 1st Canadian Parachute Battalion participated in this great operation. By May 1945, part of Holland was liberated. On May 7th, 1945, the Germans signed the official surrender to the Allies at Reims, France, and May 8th was then declared the official Victory Day in Europe.

The Battle of Britain was the name given to the conflict between the German Luftwaffe and the British and Allied Air Forces. It took place during the summer and autumn of 1940 when, in spite of huge losses of pilots, crew and aircraft; the Royal Air Force won their air battles in the skies over Britain.

The Battle of the Atlantic was the longest continuous military campaign of World War II. It lasted 6 years, involved thousands of ships and vast expanses of ocean in more than 100 convoy battles and many more single ship encounters.

Renee Volman, Jelena Sivr