

 <p>Alzheimer Scotland Action on Dementia</p>	 <p>NHS Dumfries & Galloway</p>
<p>Yes we can - together</p>	
 <p>Ann Hill</p>	 <p>Lochduhar Care Home</p>

Celebrating 'World Alzheimer Day' in our region

The project is collaboration between DGRI's Specialist Palliative Care Unit, Alzheimer Scotland, and Ann Hill - Quilter in Residence at the Dumfries Hospitals.

Throughout the 18 months of the project those participating have been involved in the choice of fabrics, the colour and the design. The quilts have been inspired by the conversations between the quilter, the person with dementia and their families as well as members of staff throughout the various facilities.



Forgetting piece by piece – Ann Hill's interpretation of dementia before the project started

Each block in the quilt has nine squares, and in each block darker squares gradually replace the red squares. This displacement of colour represents the journey experienced by those who live with dementia and the family and carers around them. In the final square there is both a heart and a forget-me-not flower to symbolise the love and memories that can endure in the face of progressive illness.

Memories that blow in the wind

Maggie is an activities officer working at Lochduhar Care Home. When asked how she would describe dementia she said that the dandelion clock reminded her of its effects. When you blow gently on the clock the flowers drift away and she feels this is the same pattern with the memory. It is important to remember how slowly the seeds blow away and how much remains of the dandelion.



Queen of the South

Football plays a large part in the memory trigger activities. Sometimes it's a football, or a ball and sometimes an old rattle. The local team logo can spark a memory. One lady said that she had taken a stranger to a meeting in the local football club and she had brought back her husband.

The black sheep on Fleet Farm

Jack and I discussed the moorit ewes from Shetland but Jack preferred the black sheep on the family farm in Gatehouse where he grew up. The farm produced milk which Jack delivered before going to school. He loves cars and the countryside surrounded by sheep on farms. He grew up to be a mechanic.



Birthday Balloons

In her youth and most of her adult life Mary lived on a farm where she spent her years being a mother and grandmother. Mary's home baking was famed. She has a wonderful collection of teapots which she enjoys washing. When she celebrated her 80th birthday, her cake was decorated with 4 balloons to symbolise her children and 7 for her grandchildren.

John's Celebration Quilt

John was an architect in Dumfries & Galloway. He was involved in the restoration of the mill at Gatehouse and Burns' house in Dumfries. After he retired he took up watercolour painting, specialising in the landscapes and buildings. The paintings in the quilt are all done by John.



The Girl Guides



Marion lives an interesting life. She was a cashier with Glasgow Corporation Transport, was a WAAF during war time working in Bletchley Park – home of the Morse code. She was also a Captain in the Girl Guides. Therefore her quilted wall hanging says “Girl Guides” in Morse code which I am sure she recognised.

Sunshine Holidays

Betty is a very friendly lady with a mischievous streak. She loves to look at the quilting fabrics and every so often one of them would disappear into her pocket! Her favourite was always the lime green fabric. Betty is a keen painter, particularly in water colour. She loved to keep fit in her younger days and it has obviously helped as she has recently celebrated her 90th birthday. Her favourite stories are about her



holidays at the beach where they ate lots of ice creams and lollipops.

Music to keep us smiling



I first met this lady when she came to the day centre at Castle Douglas. She always joined in the music sessions with gusto and I quickly learned that she has been involved in music most of her life in one way or another. These days she is happy to listen and on occasion, she will join in using whatever is at hand as a drum. She is now a resident at Lochduhar where we continue our friendship and I am met not only with a smile, but with a cuddle as well! I like to think that she remembers me.

Dumfries Memory Group

The memory group came to visit me at home. I showed them lots of quilts, described how they were made and asked them which ones they preferred.

They particularly liked the ones entitled ‘Portraits of Nature’. These are small individual quilts which are sewn onto a background. The colour of



choice was to look Scottish so we picked tartan, lilac and green.

Hearts of Love



Of all the quilts I have shown the various groups, the ones with hearts and flowers are always the favourites.

No matter how many times I visit day centres, care homes, personal homes, etc.; there is one common denominator – a cup of tea. This is a sign of being welcome and treated as a friend. Many times throughout my visits I was aware of a simple cup of tea being used to calm people down (including me!) or to simply make them smile.

Cups of Tea





Lilac Hearts

Beryl loves her family. She also liked flowers, the Samaritans, and Sunday school. During her time with the quilting group at Lochduhar she particularly liked lilac flowers and quilts with hearts on them. She enjoyed looking at the colours of the fabrics and regularly picked out the ones she liked. These included red poppies, children's hand prints on fabric, lime jigsaws but didn't much like black and white.

Changing Minds

Football plays a large part in some people's lives. It only takes a glance at a football related photograph to jog a memory and start a conversation. In this quilt each memory is replaced by another in each of the nine squares. Eventually all the familiar memories are replaced with others which may be deep seated but familiar when something triggers them – such as football.



Scottish Flower

Andy is an award winning member of the nursing staff at Lochduhar. He particularly likes any Scottish quilts, as do most of the residents in the care homes. This particular flower was drawn to reflect the Charles Rennie Macintosh designs which are a particular favourite. This design will form part of the 12 quilting patterns project which I will be producing for Alzheimer Scotland during the next few months in order to help with their fundraising. All copyrights and monies raised will go directly to them.

Quilting for Beginners

When I first started this project 18 months ago I encouraged people with dementia to join small pieces of fabric together. Most of them found it quite difficult, not because of their dementia, but because they had never done it before – particularly the men! However, over the past 18 months we have put blocks together. It has been fun, caused many a laugh (and a tear to fall), and the colours have been picked by the participants.



Penguin

Jenny loves to cuddle her furry penguin. She takes him everywhere and shares her sweets with him. It is lovely to see her face light up when she finds her lap quilt which is made with a white fabric textured tummy.

Cissy's Knitting

When I first met Cissy she was knitting and this has continued for many weeks. She loves to talk when I come in and she is always losing her bag. She particularly liked the fabric which looked as if it had been knitted.





Owls

I have a small stuffed Japanese owl which was made for me by a fellow quilter. Its name is “Fukurou” which simply means ‘happiness’. I have since made many of these for the people I have met during this project. I stuff them with washable filling and put ‘smelly stuff’ inside them – pomegranate, roses or lavender seem to be the favourites. A simple squeeze produces a wonderful smell.

Attic Windows

Many in the group like the origami quilts which I have show them. They love to push their fingers into the folds on this attic window pattern.



Sheep

Her husband grew up in South Uist on a croft. The family kept sheep and cows. He talks about his mother making butter and his father cutting peats.



Grandchildren

Beryl’s quilt includes photographs of her three granddaughters.



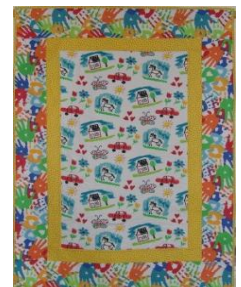
Welcome

Many of the units in Lochduhar Care Home have Scottish names, e.g. Burns Lodge, Armour, etc. ‘Failte’ is gaelic for welcome.



Hands

One of the activity centres is a baby corners which the residents take great interest in. Baby dolls are made especially with their eyes always open.



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Fairies

This is one of the quilts which I would show groups of residents and visitors’ Many of them saw different things in the quilt, e.g. fairies, the Charleston dancer, lollipops, ballerinas, etc.





Football and Books

This quilt is a fantastic memory trigger for some of the older men who have been interested in football in the past. It also starts conversations about books and going to the library.

Landscape

To me this landscape is of Shetland. To others it is Portpatrick, Ireland, Capri, a whale! and many other things.



Marion's 9 Patch

Marion chose this fabric herself. She loved the paisley pattern. From the many quilts I have shown the residents at Lochduhar, Marion liked the simple 9 patch best.

Robert Burns

Many of the residents knew who the man on the quilt was – of course Robert Burns. This quilt fits well with the theme of Lochduhar – Burns Lodge, Old Globe Close, Armour, and Bruce – all names given to the various units within this care facility.



Girl Guide Logo

Marion was a Captain in the Girl Guides gaining many medals and certificates. She particularly loved baking, gardening, sewing, knitting and country dancing.

Lilac Daffodils

Jocelyn loves daffodils best but doesn't like yellow ones. I found some lilac daffodil fabric and made her a quilt. I was excited about showing it to her but Jocelyn had no recollection of the conversation or interest in the quilt. This was an emotional personal learning experience for me as I gained insight into the reality and impact on the family and friends of the person with dementia.



Daisy Floral Quilt

The flowers on this quilt are based on a template that was drawn by Helen at the Kirkcudbright Day Centre. On the day that Helen drew the flowers she was wearing a red butterfly brooch which she kept touching because she said she loved the feel of it. Helen is a keen gardener and likes to spend as much time as possible in the garden, where she can watch the butterflies that flit around.

New Zealand Quilt

One of the group told me her sister was visiting from New Zealand and how this had brought back memories of her mother. The woman talked about having tea with her mother and sister and how her mother would have been making potato scones with the leftovers from lunch.



Heart and Flower Quilt

This quilt was made from photographs of hands printed onto fabric and also fabric which was painted by the day centre groups at Castle Douglas and Kirkcudbright. The Alzheimer Scotland logo features in the centre of the quilt. This quilt will hang in the Dumfries offices of Alzheimer Scotland.

Vegetarian Chickens

She told me about the farm that she grew up on and the animals they kept. She loved the chickens that they kept as pets but refused to eat them. She told me how her mother would hide cooked chicken amongst the vegetables on her dinner plate so that she wouldn't realise she was eating it.



A Cup of Tea



There seems to be two things in life that bring comfort :True love and Tea! Everyone I have had the pleasure of meeting during the first part of the 'Yes we can – together' Project has emphasised the importance of 'Love' – between family members; staff, carers and the the person with dementia; and most importantly that person knowing they are still

loved. Everywhere I have gone we have had tea!

The Accountant's Quilt

Arthur is an accountant, who likes to draw and paint in straight lines and place objects in boxes- particularly numbers. He inspired the design of the quilt by suggesting that it should be made up like a spreadsheet with numbers on it. Arthur has had pet cats all his life and so we used cats as a pattern in the border as well as on the quilting. On the day I visited Arthur said he had felt lonely. We sat and held



hands for a while and talked about both our families and how I had also had cats. Arthur particularly enjoyed the company of the other members of the group and took part in the preparation of the fruit for the afternoon snack.



Black and White Quilt with a red zinger

There were four residents in our group, three ladies and one man, and up until the point when I brought out this black and white quilt one lady had remained silent and I thought she was asleep. However, she shouted "No, no, put it away, I don't like it", then went back to being silent. There were quilts of all colours on show but none of them brought any further reaction.

Confused love

"Life can be a little confusing at times; memories come and go; pieces of the jigsaw don't fit; she is very happy today; he remembers my childhood toys; I was called by my own name; today I feel loved again..." These are comments regularly made to me by families living with a relative with dementia.



Myndin Quilts



“Myndin” is an old Shetland word which means caring, looking after and remembering. For many years quilters around the world have made Linus Quilts for seriously ill children. I have started a similar project making lap quilts, etc., for people with dementia. They love to feel different fabrics and even “smells” in their quilts. The project is extending around

Scotland with Glasgow, Selkirk, Aberdeen, Edinburgh, Shetland and Falkirk. Some of them are used as “comfort quilts” others are used to trigger memories, such as this football quilt.



One of the sons I have met told me that he takes his mother out for a walk in her wheelchair every Saturday and has done this for the past two years. No one talked to them – they were invisible. She now has a lap quilt with teapots on it. Now people stop them on the street and comment on her quilt. This has opened up both their lives.



How easy was that! Keep quilting.....

“Yes we can – together” project 2010

Current exhibitions:

Gracefield Arts Centre – 30 August – 2 October

Midsteeple – 13 – 30 September

The first exhibition in this project was shown in the Midsteeple, Dumfries during dementia week in June. The exhibition will go to Hampden Park, Glasgow in October then onto Aberdeen, Falkirk and Edinburgh.

The aim of the project is to raise awareness of what can be achieved by people with dementia. The quilts are divided between the first and two current exhibitions.



"Yes we can - together"

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A project to raise awareness of dementia among the communities of Dumfries and Galloway. The project is collaboration between DGRI's Specialist Palliative Care Unit, Alzheimer Scotland and Ann Hill - Quilter in Residence at the hospital.

The 18 month project entitled "Yes we can - together" has seen those at all stages of dementia being involved in the production of quilted banners which will hang in the palliative care unit at Dumfries and Galloway Royal Infirmary, the Crichton Hospital, Lochduhar Care Home and various care facilities throughout Dumfries and Galloway. The project highlights the fact that although dementia is a life limiting illness great achievements are possible by working together.

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Project partners:

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