

Aurora Resthaven celebrates 40 years serving the community ?family?



By Brock Weir

Aurora Resthaven ? now Chartwell Aurora ? was founded as a family business to serve the needs of a growing community. Now, four decades on, that family atmosphere was in the air as the seniors residence celebrated its 40th anniversary.

Staff, support workers, local dignitaries, and the dozens of 235 people who call Chartwell Aurora home were on hand to help cut the celebratory cake, enjoy live music, enjoy a barbecue whipped up by the Aurora Lions Club, and indulge in popcorn, cotton candy and sno-cones over the course of the afternoon bash.

?We're amazed to be celebrating 40 years here in Aurora,? said Greg Boudreau, administrator at Chartwell Aurora. ?We have been a long-standing part of the community. Myself, I am relatively new, only having been here for nine months, but I have known about the home growing up in Newmarket. I was just really amazed by the staff and their commitment to the home we have. We have staff who have worked here for more than 35 years and I am just amazed by the commitment it takes from our staff to care for the residents, and care for some of the most frail and vulnerable people in our community

?They devote such a huge portion of their lives to making residents' lives better.?

Friday's celebration, he said, was not only to celebrate their significant milestone, but also to recognize the staff and residents for the contributions they bring to the Chartwell community, as well as the surrounding neighbours.

?Everyone I run into has some story about Aurora Resthaven,? says Mr. Boudreau. ?Everyone here has a family member or a friend who has been in the home and I hear nothing but great comments about the staff and the care they have received.?

The party brought together a wide cross-section of the community, including Mayor Geoff Dawe, who brought greetings on behalf of the Town, as well as Brent Binions, President and CEO of Chartwell, whose family lay the foundations for Resthaven.

For Mr. Binions, Friday's celebration was something of a homecoming. Coming into the family business on the ground floor, starting out in one of their homes in Sutton, he charted the evolution of the company.

?We had a lot of great times and stories, but you always remember the people you grew up with here,? he said. ?We had great people looking out for our residents for 40 years and that is the key to a great place. You can have bricks and mortar, but it is the people inside that deliver the services to our residents who are the reason we're here.?

From those early days, Resthaven was driven by a sense of community and addressing the change within it. As the community

expanded, so too did the walls of Resthaven. Needs have changed; a convalescent care unit has been added to address gaps in care locally, and the facility has grown to meet the community's needs.

“It has always been a family business,” explains Chartwell’s Rachel Smith. “This was the original Binions home. It very much followed along with the philosophy Chartwell now has of making people’s lives better, very much in the community, and in family love.”

Over the next decade, Chartwell Aurora is looking at various stages of development. In conjunction with the Ministry of Health, they are looking at capital redevelopment to “have the physical environment match the level of care our residents receive,” said Mr. Boudreau.

“The needs of the residents are becoming more acute over the years, requiring different specialized equipment, more spaces and, as more residents have mobility challenges, to be able to make the building meet all the current design standards so the entire building is state of the art.

“It is humbling to know I am a small cog in the machine that is doing such great work for the residents, that I am here to help them do what they do best, which is to provide compassionate care for the community. The residents and staff are an extended family for all of us. We are proud to be a part of the community for 40 years and we look forward to another 40 more.”