

An inspiring gentleman proves it's never too late to learn!

An inspirational gentleman, who has been busy undertaking computer lessons at his Armagh Residential Home, has proved that even at the grand old age of 97 - it is never too late to learn!

Ronald Heasty, who has been a resident at Sunnymead Residential Home since last October, is eager to use the World Wide Web, to keep up to date with 21st Century life.



The former Army officer, used a computer for the first time last year, at his then home in Harrow London.

At this time Mr Heasty had two computer lessons and with this knowledge he was able to 'Google' Sunnymead Residential Home and decided to relocate here and this is where he now calls home.

Originally from Monaghan, Mr Heasty joined the Army in Armagh in 1936, and following his first posting at Salisbury Plain, Beauford and Lark Hill, he was sent to areas such as East and West Africa, over the years.

After 22 years in the Army, he returned to live in Harrow, with his London born wife Joyce in 1958.

Mr Heasty, who speaks fluent Swahili, is a talented letter writer; this will undoubtedly prove useful when sending emails!

"I've got friends around the world, who I am now able to contact by email," added the sprightly gentleman.

"The pleasure from all of this is communication.

"I have contacted one company to request a brochure and have had an email from one of my relatives in Monaghan.

"I'm looking forward to learn even more about the computer. In my Army job, I was in the office and I got used to my typewriter and typing with one finger at a time, so that has been a great help.

Speaking to the Ulster Gazette, Mr Heasty, who was widowed in October 2010, said he hopes that by using the computer he can keep in contact more with family and friends.

"As I am now, I can't get out very much, so I can contact people by computer.

This inspiring gentleman said he hopes his latest computer lessons, which are being provided by Richhill Computer Club, will enable him to retrace some of his history over the years.

“I only had one or two computer lessons when I bought my computer last year, so I thought I would carry on taking lessons again now.

“I was about 96 at the time when I first started - I’m now a young 97,” laughed Mr Heasty.

And it was from reading his newspapers and noticing World Wide Web addresses increasingly appearing with advertisements, that Mr Heasty became curious to find out about the internet.

“I think I can learn it alright you know. I find it very interesting,” he said.

For many older people, making that first initial step to learning the computer, can be an extremely daunting experience, but Mr Heasty’s advice to everyone is - “Have a go!”

Over the coming weeks, Mr Heasty hopes to learn more about ‘Google Maps’ during his computer lessons and hopefully to view some of the areas around the world, where he used to live, before moving to Sunnymead.

As I left Sunnymead last Wednesday, Mr Heasty was busy logging onto the computer to check out the latest news headlines on the BBC website.

The proprietor of Sunnymead Residential Home, Linda Nesbitt has supported Mr Heasty with his computer adventure and believes that Residents should be empowered to live happy, fulfilled and purposeful lives from Sunnymead.

Mr Heasty is an example of how the Sunnymead team actively deliver on this commitment to their Residents by means of their daily practise and by using the My Home life Project, for which they have won the Royal College of Nursing award for excellence.