



THE FRIENDS OF BLANDFORD COMMUNITY HOSPITAL

Milldown Road, Blandford Forum, Dorset, DT11 7DD

Tel: 01258 450095 (General Office) 01258 451456 (Shops and Fundraising)

www.friendsofblandford.org.uk

Charity No. 800482

Newsletter No. 60

AUTUMN 2020

Matron's Update...

Oh my goodness what can I say, except Covid 19!

As expected all of the staff at the hospital have been amazing and shown brilliant teamwork. Most of our services have stopped suddenly apart from Tarrant ward so staff from our theatre and out-patient services have moved to working on the ward along with our cleaners and have also been carrying out portering duties.

When Covid first struck us, the guidelines for wearing personal protective equipment (PPE) kept changing which was a big challenge but fortunately we did always have enough PPE for all staff. Big thanks go out to all in the community who dropped off or designed PPE for us to use at the hospital, we were very grateful. We also had fantastic donations from local companies - there are too many to name them all but among them we received hand creams from LUSH, Easter eggs from Morrison's and cans of Rio to drink from Hall and Woodhouse!

Thank you too to all those who came out and clapped for the NHS on Thursday nights, it meant a lot. One week the police and fire services came to the hospital and clapped with their blue lights flashing. We found these shows of support very moving and they made us all emotional as we are so proud to be working for the NHS.

Our inpatients and their families were amazing, at the height of shut down they were very understanding as to why loved ones could not visit or be visited, although special exceptions were allowed to be made for our end of life patients. I would like to pass on my sincere thanks to all that this affected for your support and

understanding. We are now allowing visiting on Tarrant ward but only one visitor at a time. This needs to be booked via the ward and visitors must wear the provided PPE. We are now restarting some out-patient appointments. Please follow the instructions on your letter if you have an appointment here and follow the guidelines to wear a face mask before entering the hospital. Enter the hospital just prior to your appointment - please do not arrive early. If you arrive early can we request you wait in your car, thank you.

Unfortunately, at the time of writing our MIU is temporarily closed and staff have been moved to Wimborne MIU, with opening hours extended there. Presently there is no update on when MIU at Blandford will reopen. But when a decision is made, we will inform the public. The redesign of the Out-Patient Physiotherapy and Muscular-skeletal department is now complete and looks amazing thanks to the support of the Blandford Friends, alongside NHS funding. This will improve the experience for our patients.

Currently I am providing Matron cover at The Yeatman Hospital, Sherborne until further notice. I am working with their lovely Friends Group as well. What an amazing amount of work the Friends do. We are very lucky to have them and their support at both hospitals. It has certainly been a strange spring/summer and Covid is something none of us have ever experienced. But we have taken on the challenge and we are coming out the other side to a new "normal". Take care all and hopefully see you at the hospital soon.

Helen Hunt, Hospital Matron

Another way to support us...

It is now possible to donate to The Friends of Blandford Hospital online via our website. Please visit www.friendsofblandford.org.uk and click on the link on the home page. Your donations make a real difference to our charity during a difficult year. Thank you.

Fundraising News...

2020, What a year! One that we all hope will never be repeated. In terms of our Fundraising, the only event that was able to go ahead was our final Fashion Show in March and unfortunately, growing concerns about COVID 19 had a major impact on its success. Full details below.

Another way to support our Fundraising Activities...

It is now possible to donate to The Friends of Blandford Hospital online via our website. Please visit www.friendsofblandford.org.uk and click on the link on the home page. Your donations make a real difference to our charity during a difficult year. Thank you.

The Fundraising Committee has now taken the difficult decision to suspend all events now until 2021. We will regroup in the New Year and review all our future events planning in line with whatever Government Guidelines are given at the time. We look forward to sharing details with you in the Spring newsletter.

GRAND RAFFLE

The Autumn Fair may be cancelled but we are still going ahead with the annual Grand Raffle with amazing prizes. We hope that you will be able to offer support by buying tickets and encouraging your friends, neighbours and family to also do so. Thank you.

Fashion Show Finale!

On Friday 13th March we held our final Fashion Show in Sturminster Newton. The decision to go ahead with the event, or cancel, was a difficult one and audience numbers were greatly affected by the rapidly changing updates on the Corona Virus situation. However, despite a significant number of "no-shows" support was strong and there were still 108 in the audience enjoying the display of top-quality preloved clothing by the group of volunteer models. Feedback was great after some of our models really played to their crowd and with the generosity of the audience and a sale of clothing, the show made a profit in the region of £1250.

This show, and several others before it, were primarily organised by Linda Prior and a group of her friends and fellow helpers in the Hospital shops. The charity is extremely grateful for the work put in by Linda and the whole team who staged the show, modelled, helped on the night or with the logistics. As with all Friends of Blandford Hospital events it was a great team effort. It couldn't have run without the good humour and efforts of a lot of volunteers or the support of so many local people who donated all of the wonderful items we had on display or came along to the show and sale the next day. Thank you most sincerely to everybody involved.

As we move forward, we now plan to focus on selling all these wonderful "New to You" garments and accessories throughout the year in our 2 charity shops in Blandford and Sturminster Newton.



(Images courtesy of Courtenay photographic)

Shop News...

Well, so far 2020 has truly been an extraordinary year for us all and as we look back we count our blessings that our shop volunteers remain in good spirits despite lockdowns and huge changes to their lives.

As I write this in mid August we are so pleased to have been able to reopen both of our charity shops, albeit on reduced hours for now. The Blandford shop reopened on 27th July and Sturminster on 10th August, both recording amazing takings in their first few days. Our regular customers gave us such a warm welcome back after 19 weeks in Blandford and 21 in Sturminster.

Although we would like to call this, "getting back to normal", it is far from normal and we thank our customers for being patient while we all adapt to the necessary changes. We thank you for your good humour if you are asked to wait before entry, we thank you for your understanding when we have been unable to accept your donations, we thank you for sanitising your hands, wearing your masks and keeping your distance. Most of all, we thank you for your smiles and kind words which have made such a difference to us all at this time.

Like most charity retail operations, we have many shop volunteers that are not able to return at this current time and we fully understand their concerns. Their regular shifts will always be there for them when they are ready to come back to us and they will be welcomed with "virtual" open arms. In the meantime, we are actively looking for new volunteers to join our shop teams. Commitment can be as little as a few hours a month. It is a great opportunity to meet new people, make new friends, learn new skills, keep busy and give something back to such an important local charity. If you are interested, give me a call on 01258

Current opening hours can be found on our Facebook page or in the shop windows.

To arrange a collection of goods for our shops, please call Emma on 01258 451456

451456, leave a message if necessary and we can have a chat about the opportunities available. As this Newsletter makes its way to you, we will be holding our huge summer clearance sales in both of our shops which this year will be better than ever. Our summer season has been cut very short and we will have a beautiful range of Autumn Clothing ready for you very soon.

With quarantine procedures in place on all donated items and limited space available, we do periodically have to limit what we are able to receive in the shops, so please do call ahead if you have items to give us. The shop numbers are at the bottom of this page, as is the number and email address should you wish to arrange a collection by van.

Usually our opening hours are on this page, but as we are still finding our feet and bringing our team back together, they are subject to change. Weekly hours will be published on our Facebook page and in the shop windows. For any queries, do call the shops and they will be happy to help.

When you are next in either town we very much hope to see you. Pop in and say hello, bring us your beautiful Pre-loved items, grab yourself a bargain and know you are supporting your local hospital and health related projects across the community.

We thank you, our customers and donors and of course our amazing shop volunteer team for such wonderful ongoing support.

Emma Sisson, Fundraising Co-ordinator, August 2020



If you may be interested in joining our shop volunteer team, give me a call on 01258 451456 or pop in to one of the shops for a chat with our volunteers and an application form.

FOLLOW US ON FACEBOOK TO KEEP UP TO DATE WITH THE FRIENDS OF BLANDFORD HOSPITAL, OUR NEWS, SHOP SPECIAL OFFERS AND EVENTS.



@friendsblandfordhospital



A message from our Chairman...

LIFE DURING LOCKDOWN

I wanted to write this report without mentioning Covid19 but as the Coronavirus has had so much impact on the Friends and all of us it will probably be very hard to avoid it. The doom and gloom we have all read and listened to everyday on the news has not helped our emotional and mental well-being, so I thought I would like to share the positives of the lockdown and discuss how it affected me and my family and the Friends.

Firstly, at home, we were forced to do online shopping and got to know our delivery man, having many conversations over the gate. We soon realised that as we only bought what we actually 'needed' we saved more than half of what we would normally spend! We also took the opportunity to use all our stock in the freezer, giving us more space for our garden produce. The weather, of course, was fantastic with wall to wall sunshine. It gave us the opportunity to concentrate on all those jobs we never had time for before. We religiously took our new pup Ollie - a Cocker spaniel (pictured here), for his daily walk and found several



new walks that we had never found before. When reading the world news, it sounded like the Earth breathed a sigh of relief when everything shut down. It was a time we never thought possible, but of course the negatives were horrendous with so many affected by the virus and so many deaths and so much sadness.

We got used to talking through Zoom, Microsoft

Teams and online communications which kept us in touch with our family and we even had a Friends Board meeting through the Zoom platform, which brings me on to how the Friends coped with the lockdown.

Although, our shops had to close, our transport came to a halt, and befriending ceased, the people behind the scenes kept working from home catching up on all those jobs and keeping in touch with our volunteers. Of course, we had to postpone our usual annual July AGM, rearranging it for September. But unfortunately since then, we have made the decision (following both government advice whilst keeping in line with the charity commission ruling) and cancelled our AGM for this year.

Emma has been extremely busy preparing the shops for the new 'normal' to make them Covid safe. Our Blandford shop opened in July and Sturminster in August, but on reduced hours initially due to a limited number of volunteers. Emma is looking for volunteers to help in both shops, so if you have any spare time – even a couple of hours a week – then please do get in touch with her.

As you are aware the transport service is temporarily closed following government guidelines with regards to social distancing. However, at present, the majority of routine hospital and doctor appointments are conducted by telephone or video link.

The Minor Injuries Unit at Blandford Hospital has been temporarily closed and the staff have been redeployed to Wimborne and Shaftesbury to boost their staffing numbers. The Friends are currently lobbying the Trust for a date when it will be returned to Blandford.

So how will things change? My view is that this new 'normal' is going to be with us for a while. We are all going to have to adapt to the new way of life and I do hope we maintain the wonderful comradeship and appreciation of the NHS which was so apparent during the lockdown. I wish you all well and stay safe.

Steve Cole, Chairman



Project Manager's Report...

Unfortunately, the coronavirus epidemic took its toll on the MSK / GYM project in the Physiotherapy Department, leaving the contractor struggling to obtain many items for the construction which were manufactured in factories off site. And as a result, the original completion of March was not achieved.

But I can now report that the removal of the old hydrotherapy pool followed by internal alterations created a particularly useful location and new room for the new physiotherapy gymnasium. The old gym area was then converted into three MSK Clinics and on Friday the 24th July I attended a "handover meeting" for the completed project.

Since my last report, the Management Board also received a request for financial support for providing the couches and ancillary furniture for each of the new clinics which we agreed to support and can now be seen in the photograph here.

Finally, I will continue to pursue the refurbishment of our theatre / treatment suite area once everything returns to some sort of normality for the hospital and the Trust after the "lock down".

The photos show the air handling plant being craned from the front hospital entrance, over the hospital roof to be placed on the roof of the new gym. The second photo shows the rear part of the new gymnasium looking towards the rear of the hospital and a view towards the internal courtyard, finally, one of the new MSK Clinic Consulting Rooms.

Mac McLaughlin



Community Services and Volunteering with the Friends....

Well, I think you will all agree we are currently living and experiencing strange times during the Covid pandemic. I am sure you have all found it rather difficult and most probably quite a lonely period. Unfortunately, it has meant all of our community services have come to a halt. We are taking advice and guidance through this period via the Government website. Obviously, we are all anxious to get going again and resume our normal lives (whatever that is) but the safety of both our clients, who use the services, and our volunteers is paramount. You can rest assured that once we are up and running again I will be in contact! It would be lovely to think that by Christmas we might be in a safe position to organize some Christmas outings which I know you all enjoy so much. Again, watch this space. In the meantime, please keep safe and well.

Lisa Deverell, Community Services Coordinator

Meet some of our Trustees...



PETER RICHELL

I joined the management board as a Trustee of the Friends in 2011. This followed my retirement as Senior General Manager of integrated Mental Health Services in Dorset Health NHS Trust and the County Council. I originally

trained in London as a Social Worker and moved to Dorset in 1977 and have worked in the North and West Dorset areas since that time. As a trustee, I have responsibility for the Community Services, including transport and companionship and I line manage the Community Services Co-ordinator, Lisa Deverell. I am married and have two children and six grandchildren. My interest are, amongst others, Guitar Making, Cooking, Cycling, Hill Walking, Opera, Old-time Appalachian Music & History.

MIKE WOOD

I was born in Guernsey, Channel Isles in October 1945. I joined the Royal Navy as an electrical engineer and left as a Petty Officer after 12 years service. I then worked with a company in Poole as a Ministry of Defence contractor, dealing with Radio Frequency interference testing and consultancy. This was followed by a moving to a company in Essex in 1983 as Technical Director. After 2 years I was made redundant and so formed EMC Projects – where we were based in Ringwood and subsequently moved back to Blandford. The company was a UK military and EU commercial testing and consultancy company. Testing all types of electrical / electronic equipment and carrying out installations, including ships, aircraft and army vehicles. Associated companies in Hong Kong and Japan were set up and we became a major EU test facility for commercial products, toys and factory installations. We also designed and installed MRI rooms which require a very high level of interference protection. I was also an active member of an EU specification committee attending regular meetings in Brussels. The company was sold and I left in 2007 and became an independent consultant involved in the design and testing of a crane facility in Devonport for removing



nuclear rods from submarines. I joined the Friends as a volunteer driver taking patients to appointments. Then also took on being a driver for the Friends mini bus, for shopping and social trips. I in turn became a Trustee and was chairman of the Fund raising committee. Where I assisted in both of the charity shops. I moved from Blandford to Southbourne in March 2018 but continue as a Trustee, for what is a fabulous and well worthwhile cause for the community. I will continue to keep my link with the Friends, as long as I am able and still enjoy both supporting the Friends events and visiting the many friends and acquaintances that I have made over the years.

JACKIE STAYT

I was born and brought up in London and educated in London and East Sussex. I worked for a hotel management and consultancy company for fourteen years, which was mostly based in the Middle East and East Africa.

On my return to London, I set up a 'corporate refurbishment' company which I was able to do thanks to many years working with architects and interior designers. During the recession of the early nineties I closed my business and decided to make a complete career change. I went to work for Pet Plan Insurance in their high value equine department. I spent six years doing this. When I married my husband, John, I decided to retire and we came to live in Blandford in 1999. One of the first things we did after moving was to become Friends of Blandford Hospital. I then became a volunteer driver taking people to hospital and other medical appointments. The rest is history...

How to contact us...

The Friends' Office at the Hospital is usually open from 10am until 4pm, Monday to Friday.

Tel: 01258 450095 (General Enquiries)
01258 451456 (Shops and Fundraising)

Email: dhc.friends.blandford@nhs.net

Website: www.friendsofblandford.org.uk

Meet some of our Trustees...



MAC MCLAUGHLIN

I was very aware of the activities of the Friends of Blandford Community Hospital through our friends, Margaret and Frank Pike, and as soon as retirement arrived in 1997, I was invited to meet some of the Trustees and then joined as a member and a Trustee.

My initial role was as Project Manager, a position I still fulfil today. I became a member of the Finance & Projects Committee and appointed chair a few years later, again a position I still hold and enjoy. Peter Fale, our Chairman at the time, appointed me Deputy after Joe Izzo stepped

down and I relinquished only recently on my election to President by the Trustees.

From my first introduction to the Friends I have been impressed by the professional management structure, the constitution, the hospital car/mini-bus and community service, and the fund raising. The never ending enthusiastic volunteering support in our shops, to the inspiring annual fund-raising events and the drivers for our hospital car / mini-bus service. Finally, the financial support we give to our hospital and to the health-related community groups. I am honoured to have been elected President and I will continue to support you all in your continued volunteering and ensure that our charity lives up to its motto – "We make a difference".

Our shops can be found at:

Innes Court, Sturminster Newton

Tel: 01258 471245

Barnack Walk, Blandford

Tel 01258 458390

To arrange a collection, please email us at dhc.friends.blandford@nhs.net or call 01258 451456 and leave a message.

Another way to support our Fundraising Activities...

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MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTIONS

Annual membership subscriptions were due in April. If you have not already done so, please pay your subscription as soon as possible. Please consider paying by Bank Standing Order/Direct Debit which will help significantly to reduce our administration costs. Please note the minimum subscription amount is £5.00 per year. **Thank you for your ongoing support.**

FOLLOW US ON FACEBOOK TO KEEP UP TO DATE WITH THE FRIENDS OF BLANDFORD HOSPITAL, OUR NEWS, SHOP SPECIAL OFFERS AND EVENTS.



@friendsblandfordhospital



CHRISTMAS CARDS

Our 2020 Christmas Cards (as pictured below) are now available in packs of 10 at £3.00 per pack. There are 9 different designs and the cards are available from either of our charity shops in Blandford or Sturminster Newton. Alternatively, they can be ordered through the Friends' Office by returning the slip below.



SKATING SANTA & FRIENDS

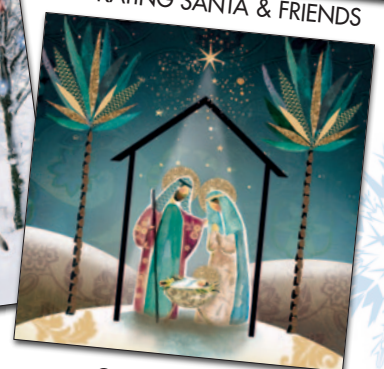
ENCHANTED WOODS



WINTER WALK

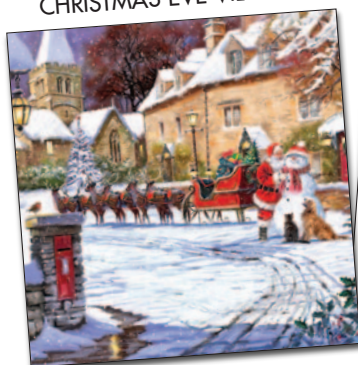


PARTRIDGE IN A PEAR TREE



CHRISTMAS NATIVITY

CHRISTMAS EVE VILLAGE



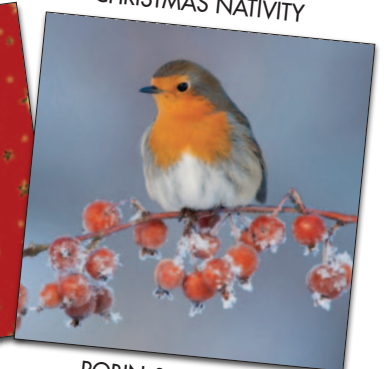
PUDDY CAT



TWELVE DAYS OF CHRISTMAS



ROBIN & BERRIES



Please send me Christmas Cards as detailed below. I enclose my cheque for £3 per pack plus £1.00 per order towards packaging and local delivery.

(Cheques should be made payable to "Friends of Blandford Hospital")

_____ Packs of Enchanted Woods

_____ Packs of Christmas Eve Village

_____ Packs of Partridge in a Pear Tree

_____ Packs of Twelve days of Christmas

_____ Packs of Winter Walk

_____ Packs of Puddy Cat

_____ Packs of Skating Santa & Friends

_____ Packs of Robin & Berries

_____ Packs of Christmas Nativity

Please return this order slip to the Friends of Blandford Community Hospital, Milldown Road, Blandford Forum, Dorset DT11 7DD.

NAME

ADDRESS