

**Reading and
West Berkshire
Branch**

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ISSUE NO 29

[www.mndrdgwberks.
freeuk.com](http://www.mndrdgwberks.freeuk.com)

NEURO NURSE FUND PASSES £77,000

In this issue

A short summer version of the Newsletter this month, but you can catch up on all the latest news and photographs on our website, plus see current and past editions of the newsletter in full colour. Enjoy the rest of the summer.

DIARY DATES

Next Drop-in Meeting –Charles Clore Day Centre	Mon 27th Sept
Summer afternoon TEA PARTY	Wed 8th Sept
	The Brew House, Englefield
MND Association AGM, Northampton	Sun 19th Sept
Charity Golf Day at Marlborough	Tues 21st Sept
Collection at The Kennet Centre, Newbury	Sat 25th Sept
Charity Golf Day at Calcot	Fri 1st Oct
Dinner and speaker at the Courtyard Marriott Hotel	Sat 6th Nov

A further pledge from the Institute of Our Lady of Mercy, Orion Pharma and Eli Lilly, have taken the fund for a local specialist neurological nurse past the £77,000 barrier, which is well on the way to the £90,000 needed to establish this position for rare and aggressive neurological conditions in this area.

Since our local branch and the West Berkshire Neurological Alliance agreed the need to establish such a position in this area, we have been working together for some considerable time to raise the funds to make this happen.

The nurse will support patients and their carers from the moment of diagnosis of the illness. Speed in accessing the appropriate care is crucial with motor neurone disease and all neurological conditions. An experienced professional with in-depth knowledge of both the condition, its treatment and the resources available in the community and the NHS will be an invaluable resource.

After it was established that the two-year post would cost in the order of £90,000, the Neurological Alliance and the MND Association have now succeeded in raising pledges of £77,000 towards funding this post, with guarantors committed to cover the shortfall of £13,000 until all funds are finally in place.

Watch out for a fuller report on this exciting new development in our next newsletter. Contributed by Val Pearson



“We are on course to advertise the post within a matter of weeks.....a huge thanks to all who have supported us this far.”

John Holt of the West Berkshire Neurological Alliance

HATS OFF TO PUB'S PATRONS

Hat's off to the customers of Thatcham's Old Chequers pub for their eye-catching headgear. They got ahead in the fashion stakes by creating their own designs for a garden party that raised £300 to help boost our appeal for a neurological nurse.

Pub manageress Sandy Clark came up with the idea of a Hat Affair to mark the opening of a new garden area at the Broadway hostelry. She chose the charity to benefit, as pub regular Graham Hodgetts has inspired huge support for the charity since he was diagnosed with the disease three years ago.

A raffle and auction helped the creative customers to collect the cash. One generous patron paid £150 in the auction for a European flight kindly donated by Graham's wife, Maureen, who won it in the raffle.

Sandy Clark said: "It was fantastic. We have some customers who love making things and we had a whole table full of hats. There was a great awareness of Motor Neurone Disease too – Graham and his step daughter Nicci are so well known and so loved."

Contributed by Jane Gilbert



Drop-in Meetings a huge success



In the Spring of this year we began a series of Drop-in Meetings for people living with MND, their carers and anyone else who thought they would like to come along for a casual chat.

Each of these meetings has been hosted by one of our volunteer visitors. Three of these meetings were held at the Charles Clore Day Centre, Newbury and I would like to express our thanks for all the help and support given us by the staff based at the Day Centre. Monnica Stewart, Joanna Knott and I were able to meet people living with MND in a relaxed, comfortable atmosphere where they felt free to talk to others in the same situation.

They have been exchanging stories about football, metal detecting etc. as well as giving each other tips on how to manage certain situations. The volunteer visitors were able to offer advice and help if a particular problem was identified during the course of the conversation. We also had a demonstration on massage, which was very much appreciated!

At the second meeting, a group called Mind's Eye came to talk about their role in developing capabilities and artistic expression for people whose daily lives are affected by health issues and we are looking to see if this could be of help to us.

The third meeting was the most successful with a dozen people coming to see us. We learnt the art, with practical demonstration, of hypnotising a chicken! At the same time, the inner man, or woman, was not neglected, with a constant supply of

hot cross buns, sticky cake, sandwiches and quiche salad offered to anyone who felt hungry.

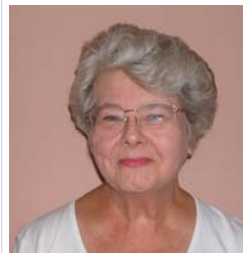
The most important thing, however, is that the group are beginning to support each other. It is the people who are living through this experience, day by day, who can best understand the other person's needs.

The other meetings were in a very different place, at the Henry Street Garden Centre, Arborfield. Wendy Gouldthorpe and I were in the café area, supplying coffee and cake to anyone who came to join us. One couple made a special effort to come and express their thanks, personally, for the help the organisation had been able to give them with equipment. They were particularly impressed with the speed with which it had been arranged!

I am, therefore, passing their thanks on to you all, because without your constant support we would not have been in a position to help.

Many thanks!

The next drop-in Meeting has been arranged for Monday 27 September at the Charles Clore Day Centre from 11am – 2pm.



Both Monnica Stewart and Joanna Knott will be there to meet you. We hope to see you also at the Summer Afternoon Tea Party which is open to everyone on Wednesday 8 September 2.30-4.30 at The Brew House, Englefield

Val Pearson, Secretary



You are warmly invited to our

Summer Afternoon TEA PARTY

Wednesday, 8th September 2004
2.30 – 4.30pm

at

The Brew House, Englefield

We would be very pleased to see you

*The Brew House is in the grounds of Englefield House.
There is a car park on site.*

*Please call Gill or Val if you have any special needs
and Val if you intend to come so we can know numbers.*

Contact Details

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