

**Reading and
West Berkshire
Branch**

October 2004

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DIARY DATES

Drop-in Meeting **Tues**
19th Oct

Collection at **Sat**
Reading Football **23rd Oct**
Ground

Dinner and **Post-**
Speaker **poned**

Open Meeting **Wed**
10th Nov

Wokingham **Sun**
Winter Carnival **28th Nov**

Volunteers brave the weather

A brave team of volunteers recently braved the wet weather and turned out for our charity collection at the Kennet Centre in Newbury.

In spite of "opposition" from Christian Aid, who were also out in force that day, we raised £397.08.

This was a tremendous result, particularly as the day was gloomy and wet. Many people stopped to speak to us, ask questions, or tell us of their experiences. Well done to Alec Jenkins, who has MND, who collected most cash in his tin on the day!

Among others who braved the weather to collect for us were Kerrie Pearce and Nicky Britton. Kerrie's father, George, has MND and will be at our next Open Meeting to give a presentation on his hobby of metal detecting and the often valuable treasures he finds.

Nicky's grandfather also had MND and both Kerrie and Nicky plan to continue their fund-raising support by taking part in next year's London to Paris bike ride.

Our thanks to them and to all who collected or gave their time so generously that day.

Contributed by Gill Cheetham



Kerrie Pearce and Nicky Britton, two of the brave volunteers who turned out on a gloomy day to raise nearly £400 for Motor Neurone Disease.

If you know of a possible venue for street collecting, please let Gill know, as we are scheduling fund raising for next year and need to raise as much as we can.

BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS



Happy Birthday in this issue to Monnica and Anne, who both celebrated with friends and MND Association members at local events recently.

Monnica is seen here receiving birthday greetings from well-wishers at the recent Drop-in meeting.

More stories and pictures inside.



Exciting New Project

You may already have read about the Specialist Neurology Nurse project but as this nears lift off, your help and support is vital.

The post will be advertised in the near future so will soon to become a reality. Working with the West Berkshire Neurological Alliance and the Berkshire Polio Fellowship, the branch is funding the pilot post for two years.

The nurse will be based in Dr Christine Collin's Department at Battle Hospital (RBBH) but will work 'outside' the hospital to a large degree.

Why is it exciting?

The committee believe that this nurse will provide a service to those living with MND in a unique way. It will add to all the other ways we can give support, improving the quality of care and giving people living with MND a new medical resource. It is probably the first specialist Neurology Nurse in the country.

We are committed to the post and so have to find the funds for it. In addition to our regular work within the branch, we will be asking you to raise funds for this cause - indeed the special fund is already growing. In the near future, we will be suggesting specific ways you might think about to help the Nurse Fund to grow.

We are convinced of the benefit people living with MND will gain. If you're convinced too, then join us in this exciting, ground-breaking venture!

Contributed by Margaret Moss

Happy Birthday Monnica

It was a case of Surprise, Surprise for popular volunteer visitor Monnica Stewart when she attended the recent drop-in meeting at Newbury.

Monnica, who turned eighty the day before, had not expected to be greeted by a large crowd of well wishers clutching flowers, bottles and, of course, a birthday cake.

Afterwards she admitted: "I was totally overwhelmed. It was an incredible party."

Typically Monnica was especially delighted to see people living with MND, their carers and friends who had travelled to the party at Newbury's Charles Clore

Day Centre.

She was also reminded by chair Margaret Moss how grateful the management committee was for her skill in stirring it into action on many issues.

The party included many people who have been grateful to Monnica for her wise words of support and friendship over the years.

Her fellow visitor Joanna Knott and branch secretary Val Pearson were also thanked for the delicious refreshments which are now a feature of the successful drop-in meetings held regularly around the county.

*At the time of the Newsletter going to press Monnica was due to be in a London hospital bravely undergoing tests for possible major heart surgery.

Our thoughts and prayers are with her at this difficult time.

Contributed by Jane Gilbert

Tea Party Celebrations in Royal Gallery

Also at the tea party, supporter Justin Watkins revealed the final figure raised at his fishing match in the Summer.

The delighted dad from Lower Earley brought a smile to the face of our treasurer Barry Clouting when he handed over a cheque for £2,668.20 - much more than he had expected.

Justin, aged 34, said: "I thought it was great for 18 of us." And he praised our new website for helping him to achieve that figure in sponsorship.

The cheque, in memory of Justin's mother Vera, who died from MND earlier this year, is one of the first to be donated to our Neurological Nurse Appeal (see adjacent story).

Contributed by Jane Gilbert

A surprise was in store for Anne Smith as she joined about 30 others in the Long Gallery at Englefield on Wednesday, 8 September. The Long Gallery was built to commemorate Queen Elizabeth 1st's visit and, as Anne started her tea, a birthday cake with candle was presented to her. As she cut the cake a spontaneous rendering of Happy Birthday rang out!

The Long Gallery was chosen for the event in case of inclement weather but the day turned out to be a glorious late summer fling. So when Lady Hallifax invited everyone to 'come into the garden' after tea, everyone did, wheelchairs and all.

Thanks are due to Lady Hallifax and to our patron, Sir William Benyon, for the wonderful surroundings.

As for the weather - well we were just very lucky.....

Anne cuts the cake in the Long Gallery in our photo opposite →



MASKED BALL

at Newbury Racecourse
on

Sunday Oct 30th 2004

7.00p.m.—1.00a.m.

in aid of

The new Jumbulance Travel Trust

- Drinks reception 7.00p.m.
- Dinner
- Raffle and Silent Auction
- Live Entertainment and Dancing

to
**Harbour Lites
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Tickets £50.00 each or
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*FOR DETAILS AND TICKETS, CONTACT
C.S.TURNER,
EVERINGTON FARMHOUSE,
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BERKS RG18 0TH*



The Jumbulance Travel Trust

by Lady Anne Hallifax

The Jumbulance Travel Trust is a new national charity which takes groups of people on days out, holidays and pilgrimages all over Europe. In their specially designed "jumbulance" luxury coaches.

With hydraulic lifts for wheelchair access, 8 beds and reclining seats, an airline type kitchen and disabled toilet facilities, it provides excellent comfort for frail, ill or disabled people.

Local groups are made up of nurses, volunteer helpers and, if needed, a doctor, which ensures that everyone who wants to, can travel.

The Trust has great relevance to the MND Association and the work we do. Chris Cook is one of the trustees of the new charity, a trained nurse and the author of "The Accessible Travel Guide", written for people with life-threatening diseases.

Chris Cook writes:

I have a long-term commitment to improving the quality of life of disabled people and their carers by enabling them to take holidays, pilgrimages and periods of respite.

I am seeking your support to enable us to carry forward our unique mission of making travel possible. I have been travelling as a volunteer nurse for over 15 years and know what a difference these breaks can make."

Chris has in fact already taken two of our local members on holiday, including Gill Howgego, for whom the benefits were enormous.

You can support the Trust at the Jumbulance Masked Ball on 30th October. Contact C.S. Turner for more details (see advert opposite)

About the Association AGM

Berkshire was represented at the recent Association AGM on 19th September by Barry Clouting (our Treasurer) and his wife Carolyn, Margaret Moss (our Chair), Lady Hallifax (as President of the Association) and Lady Howard de Walden (a Patron of the Association).

After the morning's business and lunch, two speakers gave us food for thought. Dr John Smith (Palliative Care) spoke about 'Moving on from Chaos and Crisis' and Prof Hugh Parry talked about 'MND not just about Neurones'

It is always an interesting day providing an opportunity to see

the 'larger picture' both at the 'Top Table' and from other members.

The Committee would be pleased to encourage any members to attend next year. If sharing transport or helping meet the costs of the day would persuade you then we'd be glad to help. Contact one of the Branch officers nearer the time –there will be a reminder too.

I have to say it was a glorious day for the drive. The facilities are excellent and refreshments are provided – think about it?

Contributed by Margaret Moss



Are you interested in local history?

On Wednesday 10 November, the branch will be holding an Open Meeting at the Courtyard Marriott at 7.30, but a meeting with a difference. Would you like to talk to local people who have knowledge of the area?

This idea started at a recent drop-in meeting in Newbury, when I met George Pearce. George has been a metal detector for many years and entertained us all with stories of his finds. He is passionately interested in his hobby, and that enthusiasm was imparted to us all. We asked him if he would be prepared to come to an Open Meeting and talk to other members of MNDA and to our delight, he promised that he would.

At about the same time, I met Alan Hankin, who took part in the Englefield Walk and raised a significant amount of money for the branch. Alan has MND, but succeeded in walking the full distance of three and a half miles, even though he found it difficult. You may have seen his story in the June newsletter. Alan is the expert in local studies at Reading Library and knowledgeable on local history.

As a result of the Englefield Walk, he rekindled a friendship with Linda Green. Linda's own father suffered from MND 24 years ago. She had met Alan some years ago when she sought help from the library in researching the history of Mill Lane, Calcot, where she lives. Between them, they found out so much about the area that Linda was able to produce a small book. She tells me that people reading this book have revived memories of their childhood in the Holybrooke area, scrumping for apples. George, Alan and Linda have all agreed to arrange a small display at the Open Meeting.

At the same time, we are formally launching our branch website. Mary Davidson, who created the website, has kindly agreed to come along as well. We are hoping not only to answer your questions, but to show the website via a laptop and internet link – if I can arrange that, but don't hold me to it!

There will be coffee and tea available and we will run a small competition or raffle during the evening, with a prize to tempt you.

I hope very much to see some of you there.

Contributed by Val Pearson

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Forthcoming Events

Drop-in Meeting Greenfields Day Centre, Calcot, Reading <i>With Val Pearson and Gill Cheetham</i>	Tuesday 19th October 11am-2pm
Collection Reading Football Ground <i>People with MND will be guests of the club</i>	Saturday 23rd October
Dinner and Speaker Courtyard Marriott <i>In aid of the Neurological Nurse— more details to follow</i>	Postponed
Open Meeting Courtyard Marriott <i>Informal display of local history items; Branch website launch; Metal detecting.</i>	Wednesday 10th November
Wokingham Winter Carnival <i>Chocolate stall; cards for sale</i>	Sunday 28th November
Christmas Tea Party St Luke's Church Hall, Theale <i>Open to everyone</i>	Wednesday 15th December 2.30-4.30p.m.

Contact Details

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Chair Margaret Moss 0118 9470871	Publicity Jane Gilbert 0118 9714172	Events Coordinator Gill Cheetham 01344 423440
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