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Tributes pour in for Monnica

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Tributes have been pouring in for much admired Association Visitor Dr Monnica Stewart who died on October 14th while recovering from major heart surgery.

Monnica, as her death notice in The Times so aptly described, shared a love, compassion and wisdom with many.

She recently celebrated her 80th birthday with her MNDA "family" at a surprise party for her at Newbury's Charles Clore Day Centre. With the threat of major surgery looming we were all so pleased she felt strong enough to join us for the celebration.

Monnica also managed to visit her older brother Bryce, who was seriously ill, before going into hospital herself. He died six hours after her.

Her funeral at St Mary's Church, Kintbury, was packed with people who were grateful to Monnica for her practical help and caring support. At a celebration of her life afterwards at the Bistro Roque restaurant Monnica was summed up by one of those present as the family "glue".

Monnica's foresight with others in identifying ways of working in the future have motivated the branch to work towards fundraising for a specialist nurse who will be available to people living with MND in our area – a fitting testimony to her.

Contributed by Jane Gilbert



"She was not only an outstanding visitor who understood the traumas and worries of the carer as well as the moods of the person affected by the progression of the disease, but she also understood the way the NHS and Social Services worked. ... She was a remarkable friend to so many..."

Lady Hallifax

More on Monnica and her amazing legacy to MNDA and many others on our tribute insert page.

THE MONNICA STEWART NEURO NURSE APPEAL —PAGE 4



Could this be our youngest fundraiser so far?

See page 2 for Rachel's story

DIARY DATES

Drop-in Meeting	Mon 15th Nov
Mayor's Market Reading	Thurs 25th Nov
Wokingham Winter Carnival	Sun 28th Nov
Carols with Harps	Sat 4th Dec
Christmas Tea Party	Wed 15th Dec
Monnica Stewart Neuro Nurse appeal collection	Thurs 23rd Dec

GOAL-DEN DAY DESPITE RAIN!



Our picture shows Alan Hankin (left) and Graham Hodgetts (right) in front, and in back, from left, Jane Gilbert, Andrew and Richard White and Damian Clintworth (Graham's stepson).

Soccer mad Alan Hankin and Graham Hodgetts, who both have Motor Neurone Disease, will always remember their half-time fixture with the Royals.

The fans drew out the winning tickets in Reading FC's Golden Gamble draw as special guests of the club on a day when there were goals galore.

Alan, aged 47, who has supported Reading for 29 years declared afterwards: "It was magical being part of the whole thing."

He was especially chuffed to shake the

hand of promotions boss Mike Kearney whom he remembered from his time as a player on the pitch. An added bonus for the fans was meeting chairman John Madejski before the 4-0 win against Crewe Alexandra.

Sadly for loyal Royal Bill White of Wooshill, who died recently from MND, the fixture was too late. But his sons, Richard and Andrew, both season ticket holders, proudly represented their dad on the half-way line. Their mum Sandie braved the torrential rain outside the Madejski Stadium with other volunteers who collected a magnificent total of £680.

For Alan it was his first match in a wheelchair and he and Graham, who has a motorised chair, paid the price of being celebrities at the match. While they were getting to and from the hospitality box to the Golden Gamble spot they missed most of the goals.

Alan said afterwards: "I thoroughly enjoyed it apart from missing three goals in a 4-0 win!

"The experience of being out there was wonderful. It was my first football match in a wheelchair and I think it went very well."

Alan is waiting to get a motorised wheelchair but his bosses at Reading's Central Library have already provided a special mobile chair so that he can carry on working in the local studies department.

Both Alan, of Kensington Road, Reading, and 59-year-old Graham from Station Road, Thatcham, have inspired a lot of support for the MND Association.

Graham was taken to the ground from Duchess of Kent House, where he was spending a week being cared for, by one of its volunteer drivers. He was joined for the day out by his stepson Damian Clintworth.

After the game Graham said: "I thoroughly enjoyed it and wish to thank Reading FC for having us and for a very enjoyable game."

Branch publicity officer, Jane Gilbert, who arranged the special day thanked Reading FC for the invitation.



The Golden Gamble half-time draw - under umbrellas!

The MNDA party shared the limelight at half-time with South Korean ball juggling genius Mr Woo who thrilled the crowd with his amazing skills. She added: "We are also grateful to all the fans who dug into their pockets on a very wet day."

Contributed by Jane Gilbert

RACHEL'S FUN RUN

Ten-year-old Rachel Smith deserves lots of brownie points for taking part in a charity fun run.

The sprightly schoolgirl collected £140 in sponsorship for her efforts making her probably our youngest fund raiser so far.

Rachel was inspired to do the run at Newbury Racecourse by her grandpa Terry Smith who sadly died, aged 61, from MND just a month later. His wife Val, of York Road, Hungerford, is justifiably proud of their grand-daughter's efforts and sent us



this lovely picture.

Mrs Smith took one of Rachel's sponsor forms to the P C Cox factory at Turnpike Industrial estate where Terry worked. A collection at Terry's funeral also raised nearly £700 for the MND Association.

Contributed by Jane Gilbert

WESSEX CLARSACH PLAYERS

**CAROLS
WITH
HARPS**



**SATURDAY 4TH DECEMBER 2—5 PM
IMMANUEL CENTRE
UNITED REFORM CHURCH
TADLEY**

PLAYERS OF ALL STANDARDS WELCOME WITH THEIR GUESTS

ENTRANCE FREE

**RAFFLE IN AID OF MOTOR NEURONE DISEASE
COME AND JOIN US AND SING ALONG WITH SOME
TRADITIONAL CAROLS**

CARDS FOR GOOD CAUSES

MND Association Christmas cards are now on sale at the multi-charity shop in Newbury.

The Cards for Good Causes shop at St Nicolas Parish Church in Bartholomew Street is open from 10am till 4pm, Monday to Saturday (closed Thursdays 10am - 10.45 am for church service).

It stocks cards and goods sold in aid of a wide variety of charities and is staffed by volunteers. It does a huge job in raising awareness and vital funds for all the charities represented.

Every card bought raises cash for our local Branch.

You can also get your cards at the Mayor's Market in



The Hexagon, Reading (25th Nov.) or at Wokingham Carnival (28th Nov).

The Branch has stocked up on cards this year and buying cards direct in this way ensures extra cash from each sale for our local branch, so we are hoping for your support.

Christmas card catalogues are available from Val Pearson on request

Contact Val on 0118 9789063

THE MONNICA STEWART NEURO NURSE APPEAL

The branch has dedicated its appeal to help fund a specialist nurse in West Berkshire for two years to Monnica who was the driving force behind it.

As her key project is about to become reality the branch has now to complete the job of raising the £45,000 it has pledged.

West Berkshire Neurological Alliance, which has masterminded the project, is set to advertise the post soon.

Our first event dedicated to the appeal is a collection at Thatcham's Kingsland Centre on December 23rd organised by Nicci Clintworth and her family who were given daily support by Monnica.

Donations to the appeal can be sent to branch treasurer Barry Clouting, Milbourne House, 3 Deerhurst Close, Mill Lane, Calcot, RG31 7RX. Tel: 0118 9410186.

Please specify the donation is for this appeal and make cheques payable to MNDA. Application forms are available for Gift Aid which increases the donation you make.

Contributed by Margaret Moss

"Wet" Volunteers raise £680



Our photograph shows Alec Jenkins (front) with (l to r) Jane Gilbert, Frank Watkins, Sandie White, Margaret Moss, Barry Clouting and Val Pearson.

Praise indeed goes to our team of brave collectors, seen here outside Reading FC's Madjeski Stadium recently. They may have got a soaking but they still managed to raise £680 for MND.

As well as stalwart volunteer, Alec Jenkins, they were joined by Frank and Paul Watkins, father and brother of Justin, who raised so much at this summer's charity fishing match, and Sandie White. Committee members, Gill Cheetham, Wendy Gouldthorpe and June Whelpton also braved the weather to raise the much-needed cash.

Grace Sarjeant

The committee were saddened to hear the news of the death on 2nd November of Grace Sarjeant.

A spirited advocate of those living with MND, she served the branch as Chairman and committee member for many years. She remained a loyal supporter watching as the branch grew and developed over the years.

In the summer, on the occasion of her 90th birthday, she received the Association's 15 years Long

Service Award, and she was delighted when she appeared in the July Newsletter this summer!

When her husband had MND there was no support. She became a founder member of the Reading Branch as it was then called and took over the Chairmanship some years later with reluctance and trepidation, when there was no one else forthcoming. She must have been nearly 80 at the time, but she led the Branch with diplomacy and tact.

Our sympathy and thoughts are extended to her family. Her contribution to the Association and the Branch will not be forgotten.

Contributed by Margaret Moss and Lady Hallifax

"I have always had enormous admiration for Grace. She was always kind and considerate and, even during the great pain and serious discomfort from the arthritis she suffered, she managed to remain cheerful to the end."

Lady Hallifax

Drop-in Meeting

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You are warmly invited to the next Drop-in meeting on

Monday 15 November 2004

11.00 am – 2.00 pm

at

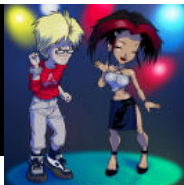
Thatcham Baptist Church,
Burdwood Centre, Wheelers Green Way,
Thatcham, Berks RG19 4YF

Joanna Knott and Val Pearson
will be there to welcome you.

Light refreshments will be available.
All venues have wheelchair access—parking on site.

Contact Val Pearson for more details and/or directions

After Dark Celebrations



A Charity Special held on Friday 8th October at the **After Dark Club** saw the MND Association benefit handsomely from the celebrations.

The club, located in London Street, is Reading's best and busiest independent night-club and the celebrations marked their 31st birthday.

Resident DJs Dan and Andy of Fools Gold, had chosen the MND Association to benefit from the evening and manager, Neil Richards, hoped to have about £1000 to donate to the branch. The final total raised - **£1814.18** - astounded everyone, and we are tremendously grateful to be on the receiving end of such generosity, which will be put to good use to support and care for those living with MND.

This amazing, unexpected donation is yet another demonstration of the generosity of the people of Reading.

(If you are not familiar with the **After Dark Club**, then neither were most of our committee, although there were *several* members who *professed* familiarity with the club, saying their 'youngsters had often gone' to events there. We believe you!)

Contributed by Margaret Moss

Forthcoming Events

Drop-in Meeting
Thatcham Baptist Church

With Val Pearson and Joanna Knott

Mayor's Market,
The Hexagon, Reading

Christmas Cards & Gifts



Christmas cards for sale

Wokingham Winter Carnival
Wokingham Town Centre

Chocolates and cards for sale

Carols with Harps
Immanuel Centre
United Reform Church,
Tadley

Christmas Tea Party
St Luke's Church Hall, Theale

Invitations from Val Pearson

Collection in aid of The Monnica
Stewart Neuro Nurse Appeal

The Kingsland Centre
Thatcham

More details to follow

Monday
15th November
11am-2pm

Thursday
25th November

Sunday
28th November

Saturday
4th December
2-5pm

Wednesday
15th December
2.30-4.30p.m.

Thursday
23rd December

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FIGHTING MOTOR NEURONE DISEASE