

**Reading and
West Berkshire
Branch**

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www.mndrdgwberks.freeuk.com

Reading Half Marathon runners line up to raise cash

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Guy Bickerton and Tom Cherowbriar line up for a photo call before the Half Marathon

Cash is pouring in from four big hearted runners who took on the challenge of this year's Reading Half Marathon.

Between them they hope to have raised several thousand pounds for the branch in sponsorship. And they have every reason to be proud of their splendid personal achievements.

For all of them, MND is a cause close to their hearts.

Twenty-year-old Guy Bickerton from Sonning Common, ran with good friend, Tom Cherowbriar, aged 21, who lives in nearby Gallowstree Common. Between them they have raised more than £1,500.

Guy explained: "I started running in the New Year to get fitter and decided to carry on and enter the half marathon. I also realised this was a great opportunity to get sponsored and raise funds for MND, a cause close to my heart as my dad Andrew died of this disease in March 2003.

"We trained three times a week and collected sponsors wherever we could. Everyone was very generous especially once I told them why I was running."

At the end of the day the training paid off and they ran a good race in a time of 1 hour 42 minutes.

Nicky Britton, aged 30, from Donnington, near Newbury, managed to cut a whopping 25 minutes off her training time and finished at 1 hour 57 minutes.

She said afterwards: "I was really chuffed. The challenge now is collecting the sponsor money." She has collected about £600 and her bosses at Vodafone will match up to £500.

Nicky, whose grandpa died from MND in 1999, is an active supporter of the branch and has been a great help with collections in the Newbury area.



Nicky Britton

Runner Paul McAllister, aged 26, from Barclay Road, Calcot, was inspired to run by friends Graham and Maureen Hodgetts from Thatcham.

Paul used to work at Ladbrokes in Pangbourne and met Graham, who is living with MND, when he was landlord of the Star pub next door. While at the betting shop Paul organised raffles and collected cash from customers for branch funds.

Despite the absence of training Paul ran his first half marathon in 2 hours 13 minutes and hopes to have collected about £300 with help from Maureen.

He said afterwards: "I would definitely do it again." Paul also admitted he could have improved his time but slowed down to run with a friend who had injured his ankle and helped him to the finishing line. What a hero!

Contributed by Jane Gilbert

DIARY DATES

Branch AGM	Wed 27th April
Drop-in Meeting With the Newtown and Burghclere Handbell Ringers	Mon 9th May
Dubai Race Meeting	Sat 16th April
Sweeney Todd:	Fri 29th April
Englefield Walk	Sun 22nd May

CALENDAR GIRLS WRAP UP THEIR SUCCESS



The charity's president, Lady Hallifax congratulates the girls at the cheque presentation on April 4th.

His widow, Sue, was persuaded to strip off and become "Miss March" to help the West Berkshire branch of the MND Association which supported her and Mike during his illness.

On being presented with the cheque, Lady Hallifax, who lives at Englefield, said: "This

The calendar girls of Hungerford have wrapped up their incredible success story with a bumper cheque presentation to the branch.

Regulars and staff from the Plume of Feathers pub who posed naked for the 2005 calendar raised a whopping £4,150.

And already they are talking of next year's page turner featuring - the boys.

Local artist Sue Arkell, who drew each of the girls, and also posed as Miss August, said: "We have got the men next year. They were so disappointed it was only a female calendar."

Sue and the girls were inspired to make the calendar by Hungerford man, Mike Court, who died, aged 49, from Motor Neurone Disease.

huge amount of money was beyond everyone's expectations." She added that Sue Arkell especially deserved a medal for producing and selling the calendar which contained tasteful pencil and pastel sketches.

Sue also collected £1,500 in sponsorship from Hungerford firms to pay for the calendar's production costs. And despite the anxious moments she has vowed: "I will definitely do another one".

Both she and Sue Court will be revealing a few secrets of their success story when they speak at the branch's annual general meeting on April 27th at the Courtyard Marriott Hotel, Padworth.

Contributed by Jane Gilbert



**Trip-
scope
Can help
you
out!**

If you have not already discovered Tripscope, they come highly recommend for those members wishing assistance in arranging transport.

Tripscope is the nation-wide travel and transport information service for people with impaired mobility. They offer assistance with information about any aspect of travel, whether planning journeys involving private motoring or public transport. They will answer any of the whole range of transport-related questions, including.

- What is the best way for me to get where I have to go?

- Is there transport to take me in my wheelchair?

- Where can I get the help I will need on the journey?

- I have a journey in mind but I'm not even sure if it's possible.

Information alone may, of course, not give a disabled or frail person the confidence to make a journey. So Tripscope does not supply printed lists of information but responds personally to each individual request for advice and information.

**National Tripscope
Helpline:
08457 585641**

For all cinema enthusiasts.....

The Cinema Exhibitors Association Card was recently advertised in *The News*, and is ideal if you are a carer who would like to accompany a person with a registered disability to the cinema.

The card entitles the holder to take an accompanying carer into the cinema free of charge. To qualify, the holder must be in receipt of DLA or AA and/or have a disabled persons railcard.

To get a card, you need to provide a passport sized photograph and a

cheque or postal order for £5.00.

Application forms are available from:

**The Card Network
The Technology Centre
Rossmore Business Park
Ellesmere Port
Cheshire CH65 3EN**

**Tel. 0151 348 8020
Or print a form from the website:**

www.ceacard.co.uk



ROTARACT JOIN THE FIGHT



What do YOU think?...

by George Pearce

Young people from West Berkshire Rotaract Club have chosen the MND Association as their charity of the year.

Claudette Dudley and Jonathan Hoare spoke recently to branch committee members about their organisation and the fun fundraising ideas they have planned.

The group, for people aged 18 to 30, was particularly impressed with the positive and helpful response from the Association's Jools Cook and our own branch website.

One of its first events to benefit our branch was the annual Moonraker Challenge, organised by the Rotary Club of Langley and Iwer. Four West Berks team members navigated their way between checkpoints across the Chiltern's on the sponsored night hike.

The team set off shortly after 7.30pm covering a good ten miles in almost five hours with temperatures down to -1°C.

Publicity officer Jonathan Hoare said they only went off course once for a short distance and managed to get back on track

Claudette Dudley, the charity officer, was delighted they managed to raise more than £670 in sponsorship to be shared with the British Heart Foundation, the official charity on the night

The intrepid team will be taking to the water for their next big event when they hope to make a splash at Newbury's annual Crafty Craft Race on May 2nd.

Contributed by Jane Gilbert

At the recent "Thank-you" lunch at Ufton Court, George told me his story and gave me a newspaper cutting about the banning of creosote. I found his story very persuasive and promised to include it here...what do YOU think? Ed.

George Writes:

On December 23rd 2002 I had a bad bout of flu. In January/February of 2003 I was creosoting a new fence in the garden when I cut my left hand. By April of 2003 I began to show signs of weakness in my left arm and by the September I was diagnosed with Motor Neurone Disease. Could the flu have lowered my resistance sufficiently for the creosote to have done this to me? Particularly in the light of the following newspaper article, dated 15th July 2004, announcing the banning of the household use of creosote.....

"Hampshire County Council's household waste recycling centres have geared up for the ban on household storage and use of creosote, which came into force at the end of last month.

"This follows legislation introduced by the European Union, after research found that old-style creosote posed a considerable health risk, containing dangerous levels of the carcinogenic benzo-a-pyrene, a derivative of coal tar.

"EU scientists felt that people would be at risk if they accidentally inhaled or splashed it. Creosote was banned from sale in 2003, so any wood preservatives, or 'creosote substitutes' purchased since then will be unaffected.

Spring Conferences 2005



The aim of the Spring Conferences is to provide an opportunity for exploration and discussion on issues affecting people with MND and to hear the latest developments in research.

They are also an interesting way to learn more about the Association whilst meeting

others from the region.

All venues have disabled access and there is no delegate fee for a person with MND or one accompanying carer.

This year's conference will include a presentation on each of the days of the following four subjects:

-Highlights of the 15th International Symposium on ALS/MND in Philadelphia;

-The wider role of Care Centre programmes in benefiting

people with MND;

-Your rights as a carer;

-Piecing together the jigsaw that is MND and targeting drugs .



For more information, price and booking details, contact Conferences on 01604 611845 or email conference@mndassociation.org

(Contact a member of the committee if you wish to share transport.)

8 May -
Moat House,
Harrogate

15 May -
Hampshire Centrecourt,
Basingstoke

22 May -
Moat House,
Stratford-upon-Avon



The Branch AGM

Apart from the obvious reporting at the end of the year, the AGM is important.

This is an opportunity to ask each of you to consider your involvement with the Branch. All of those serving on the committee form a team to ensure that the funds raised are used to the benefit of those people living with MND. Some do specific jobs but others contribute by saying what they think about what/how we are doing, by being a helping hand at events and being supportive of the work of the Branch.

Maybe you could help in some way, could see yourself being more involved in a year or two? Of course, none of the officers will be doing their jobs forever! Replacements will need to come forward - we can only assure you that it is such a rewarding job that can be done intermittently, but regularly, and fit in with all the other things in your life!

Give it some thought please? We are happy to talk about what we each do and to explain in more detail if you want to know more.

Are you interested in becoming a volunteer Association Visitor?

In addition we would ask anyone who is (or might be) interested in becoming a volunteer Association Visitor, now or in the future, to get in touch. Have you ever considered this important role? Do you know someone in your circle of friends/acquaintances who would be suited to the job?

As a taster for possible candidates, there is a training programme organised and run in the area. Then there is a period of gradual introduction.

We have a growing need for Association Visitors as the branch grows. It does not always mean frequent visiting, sometimes just keeping in touch by phone or visiting occasionally.

Do help people living with MND by thinking about this and perhaps talking to your friends about it - we do have leaflets if that would help! Thank you!

Contributed by Margaret Moss

The Branch AGM is on Wednesday 27th April

Forthcoming Events

Branch AGM

Courtyard Marriott Hotel, Padworth Lane,
Bath Road, Nr Reading

Wednesday
27th April
7.30–9.30pm

Speakers: Sue Court and Sue Arkle on "The Calendar Girls"

*Light refreshments
will be served*

The Dubai Duty Free Weekend Meeting

Newbury Racecourse

Saturday
16th April

Collection for Branch funds

**Sweeney Todd
by The Sainsbury Singers**
The Hexagon, Reading

Friday
29th April

Collection for Branch funds

We still need volunteers to collect during and after the show. Please ring Margaret Moss on 01189470871 if you are able to help at this important fund raising event, or wish to purchase tickets for any performance of the show.



Drop-in Meeting Charles Clore Centre

Monday
9th May

There will be a performance from The Newtown and Burghclere Handbell Ringers. If anyone would like to come, please let Val know on 0118 9789063 to make sure there are enough sandwiches available!

Englefield Walk

Sunday
22nd May
2pm

Contact Details

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FIGHTING MOTOR NEURONE DISEASE