Issue 112
January 2024

motor neurone disease association

Reading and West Berkshire

www.mndrwb.org

Tweet to @MND_RWB

Join us on Facebook -
MND Association Reading & West Berkshire



News Letter

Coming together to find a cure

It was an emotional moment for volunteer Liz Haworth when she discovered her brother's gift of his body to research had made a difference to others living with MND now and in the future.

Richard Haworth died in 2017, aged 50, from an aggressive form of the disease just a year after he met Dr Alexander Thompson, a scientist and consultant neurologist at the Oxford MND Care and Research Centre. The father-of-three daughters had been apparently very fit, running marathons and cycling until he got the devastating diagnosis.

Liz believes Richard decided to donate his body to research after meeting Dr Thompson and the team and being impressed by their progress in the laboratories.

Now she has been able to see how her brother and many others living with MND are coming together to help scientists find effective treatments and an eventual cure.

She says: "I felt very overwhelmed when I spoke to Alex, especially telling him that after they met Richard decided his body was always going to the John Radcliffe MND team.



Richard Haworth , wearing his MND Association T-shirt, with Dr Alexander Thompson at the John Radcliffe Hospital in 2016.



Richard's sister Liz Haworth and Dr Thompson also coming together to find a cure

Continued on page 2

Coming together to find a cure - cont

"He would be so glad that donating his body has helped so much in furthering research and hopefully bringing a cure. "

Liz, from Reading, was part of a group invited by the MND Association to Meet the Researchers and tour the laboratories at Oxford, one of its 22 care centres.

Dr Thompson's research uses measurements of proteins and chemicals in blood and spinal fluid to study changes in the nervous system of people with MND as well as people at risk aiming to speed up effective treatments.

He told Liz: "We are so grateful for Richard's contribution which will without doubt have made a difference to those with MND now and in the future."

During Richard's illness Liz had attended a few drop-in support meetings with him in Bournemouth and met the wonderful volunteers who inspired her to eventually become an Association Visitor for the Association's Reading and West Berkshire branch.

She and five other local volunteers – Mary Dodds, Debbie Webb, Lin Jenkins, Derek and Jane Gilbert - spent a day hearing about the latest research methods from Professor Kevin Talbot, Professor Martin Turner and their teams. The group was privileged to see that some of the brightest minds are working on the case. And their message was clear: with research comes hope.

Thanks to legacy gifts and donations the Association is currently funding 113 research grants like those at Oxford. From gene sequencing to growing stem cells, scientists are discovering new things every day. Their aim is to turn the remarkable progress in understanding motor neurone degeneration into treatments that improve the life of patients.

Methods using laboratory models, including motor neurones from patient skin samples, can spot genetic mutations to identify targets for therapy. Another team is trying to identify markers of disease activity across the different types of MND. These 'Biomarkers' might be able to shorten the delay to get a firm diagnosis which could allow potential therapies to be introduced earlier.

All these studies are part of a massive global collaboration working together to bring hope from research.

Dr Nick Cole, the MND Association's head of research, said: "We're really making good progress. We won't rest until we find a treatment. We are on the cusp of being able to do something about it."

If you would like to attend one of the Association's future events and hear what gifts in Wills can achieve visit:

www.mndassociation.org/wills

Jane Gilbert



During this visit Branch Fundraiser Lin Jenkins presented a cheque for £3,500 to Dr Nick Cole and Professor Kevin Talbot. She also donated a similar amount to branch funds from the proceeds of her sterling efforts last year.

Little Lily eyes up the cakes!

Little Lily was not the only one who had her eyes on the cakes at volunteer Paddy Lunn's brilliant Bakeit! event.

Paddy raised a whopping £845 by selling home-made cakes, chutney, and marmalade as well as greeting cards featuring designs by her husband Rodney, who died of MND in 2009.

A delighted Paddy said: "I'm so pleased with that, well worth all the baking. I know Rod would love to think his paintings are still going far and wide."

Committee member Paddy's pre-Christmas event at her Sonning Common home has become a firm fixture for the last 11 years as a tribute to Rod. It included a raffle featuring prizes generously donated by her friends and family and more donations have been received following the successful fundraiser.

We're all very proud of Paddy, our star baker.

Jane Gilbert



Barbara Langdale chats with Sue Lunn and Paddy Lunn while little Lily has her eyes firmly on the cakes!



Paddy is pictured busy in the kitchen (as usual!) with her daughter Jo Lawson

We can help in so many ways . . .

We are the Reading and West Berkshire branch of the Motor Neurone Disease Association, and we are your local point of contact. You might be surprised at how we can help you and people living with MND, their families and carers. We do a lot more than just providing voice banking, fundraising and organising the social events you read about in this newsletter.

We are all volunteers and most of us have had a close connection with MND. We work with professional health care providers to try and ensure people living with MND get the best possible care and advice. We also have a few hard working trained volunteer Association Visitors (AVs) who can offer guidance and support.

Don't be shy, use the contact details so we can discuss with you how we might be able to help.
Email: contact@mndrwb.org Tel: 07760 854975

We loved sharing the magic of Christmas

Our local MND community enjoyed a fun-packed Christmas Afternoon Tea Party at historic Purley Barn, near Pangbourne.

A record attendance of one hundred people was treated to a sit down spread, some great Elvis tunes from singer and guitarist Simon Williams and a fiendish quiz devised by Alec Jenkins who is living with MND.

Simon, from Wokingham, lost his 72-year-old mum Barbara to MND in 2020, and remembers how the family was helped by the Association.

He said: "It's lovely to do something like this and pay it back. My mum was a massive Elvis fan too."

The successful event run by our dedicated Dream Team of volunteers rounded off a bumper year of MND awareness and fundraising to help support local families and boost research. A raffle raised £500 to kickstart the work ahead in 2024.

Committee stalwart Margaret Moss thanked Events Co-ordinator Mary Dodds and her small army of willing helpers – catering for one hundred people and setting up a hall from scratch in a few hours was no mean feat.

To round off the happy afternoon guests were given a cyclamen plant to take home thanks to supporters Helen and Duncan Varley from Southend Bradfield's Glenvale Nurseries.

Jane Gilbert



Fundraiser Lin Jenkins, standing, with Kathy Madden and Kate Sloan



Valerie Henshall and Ellen Colvin tackle the quiz



Ruth and Ray Dalfsen with their great-grandson Cailo



Online MND support group

A monthly Zoom drop in for people affected by MND, carers and families who may be unable to attend face to face support groups has been running in East Midlands and Central Midlands for some time and is now extending to include the Thames Valley.

These take place on the third Wednesday of the month from 11am-12.30pm

Everyone is welcome.

The link for these meetings is https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88620076584

Upcoming dates: 21st February, 20th March

For more details please contact:

anne.anderson@mndassociation.org 01604 611893

rachel.pitzettu@mndassociation.org 01604 800638

matthew.hollis@mndassociation.org 01604 800632

Andy's light show was an amazing eye-deer!

Did you follow the herd to see The Reindeers' Christmas Rays of Light in Tilehurst?

Andy Findlay's stunning display on his front lawn lit up the faces of admiring passers-by who have donated more than £1,685 to help fight MND.

What started as a small display grew to 24 prancing reindeer as word spread and families headed to his house off Overdown Road to marvel at the lights.

Andy, who lost his dad Malcolm to MND five years ago, was delighted with the response and has already pledged "to go bigger next year".

He said: "Absolutely amazing – thank you so much. This will make a big difference to local families suffering like my family did from the effect of this horrendous disease with no cure."

Company director Andy, whose friend Ray Dalfsen is living with MND, was part of the team that organised the Ray of Hope Family Fun Day and Charity Walk in honour of Ray, the late Micky Denny and Malcolm Findlay.

As a child Andy was taken out for a drive to see Christmas displays that people had arranged at their homes.



"I wanted to give some of the young children something to see and hopefully put a smile on their face as others had in the past for my children," he added.

Andy and his wife Kerry are pleased the display brought joy to so many people and hope that the funds raised can help families affected by this "horrific disease and find a cure".

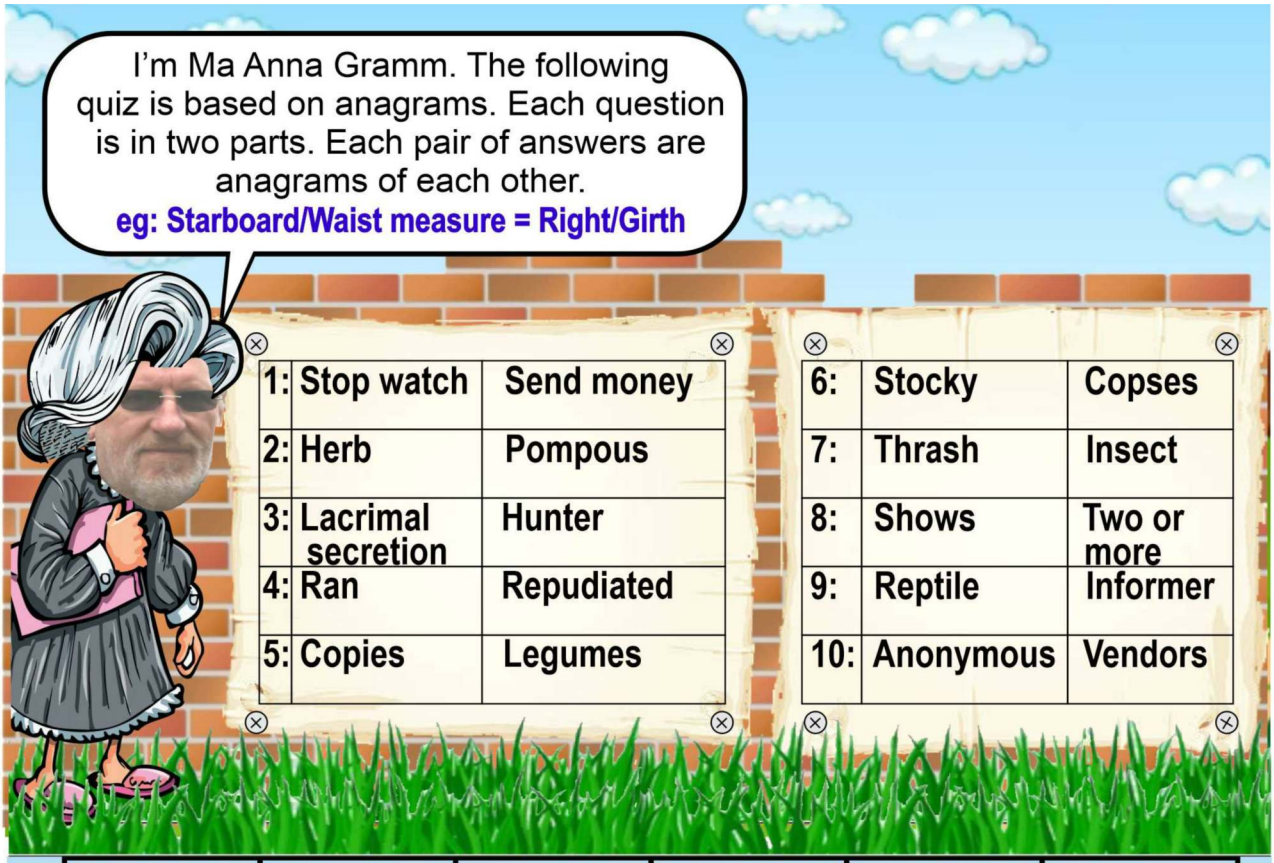
Jane Gilbert



Newsletters

If you would like to change the way you receive newsletters (post or email) or if you do not currently receive your own copy and would like to be added to our mailing list (post or email) please contact

Kerrie Newton: secretary@mndrwb.org



1:	Stop watch	Send money
2:	Herb	Pompous
3:	Lacrimal secretion	Hunter
4:	Ran	Repudiated
5:	Copies	Legumes

6:	Stocky	Copses
7:	Thrash	Insect
8:	Shows	Two or more
9:	Reptile	Informer
10:	Anonymous	Vendors

TV	IS	DA	AN	~~PE~~	NA
~~SY~~	PA	JO	IT	CE	AN
EL	RD	AN	UG	ME	LA
KU	IA	~~DC~~	RA	EE	CO
MA	GR	DA	XI	WA	RW

Make the names of ten six-letter countries using these pairs of letters, and fill in the answers in alphabetical order.

11: CYPRUS		
12:	13:	14:
15:	16:	17:
18:	19:	20:

I have filled in the first answer to give you a start

Thanks to Alec Jenkins for another fiendish brain teaser. Answers on page 12.

Place your bets for Steve's big race day

The big race day in honour of ex-jockey Steve Jobar, who is now battling MND, will soon be Under Starter's Orders.

Plans are being finalised for the fabulous sell-out lunch and auction being held at Newbury Racecourse on March 22nd. And every penny raised will be split between the Association's Reading and West Berkshire branch and MND research to help find a cure.



Steve and Dottie are pictured with Dottie the dog in front of Peter Curling's magnificent oil painting of Steve riding 1980 Triumph Hurdle winner Heighlin. (Dottie the dog had already been named when Dottie rescued her in Greece where she was branded a "rubbish guard dog"!)

Racing author Jonathan Powell, who is leading the organising committee, said the lunch for 45 tables of ten at £1,000 a table is sold out.

"Such is the demand that we could have sold half a dozen more if we had the space," he said, adding that some big names in racing have made very generous donations to help cover costs.

The lunch features a live auction conducted by the comedy duo of former champion jump jockey, trainer and broadcaster John Francome and Richard Phillips, who is a racehorse trainer.

One of the coveted lots will be tickets for four people to enjoy exquisite fine dining and Champagne with Chez Roux at Epsom's Blue Riband restaurant on Derby Day, June 1st. This has been generously donated by the Jockey Club and normally retails at £1,099 a head.

Steve, who is also an experienced glider pilot, and his wife Dottie Channing-Williams, are thrilled beyond words that top artist Peter Curling has donated his superb recently finished oil painting of Steve riding 1980 Triumph Hurdle winner Heighlin.

Star cricketer, Stuart Broad, who recently retired, has donated a signed ball, hat, shirt and miniature bat to the auction.

There will also be about sixty tempting items for the silent auction stretching from a day's cleaning in your home to tickets to various big sporting events including hospitality and the use of a two-bed flat for a week on St Helier Harbour in Jersey.

The Silent Auction will be open to those not attending the race day and will be available two weeks before for online bids. Check out the branch Facebook page for the link or contact the branch if you are not on Facebook.

A trophy for the winning owner of Steve's race has been commissioned by Steve's stepson, Nicholas Channing-Williams, who is an international showjumper and trainer in Kuwait. It aptly depicts a winning post with a glider flying through it.

The organisers of this special tribute day are leaving no stone unturned in their bid to raise record funds to help fight MND. Their exciting car raffle of 1500 limited tickets to win a new Dacia Sandero has proved an astounding success with tickets costing £20 each being snapped up at those odds. One of the committee members has sold 15 to a friend in Oman! The raffle will be drawn on Friday, 22nd March, at Newbury Racecourse. Contact Dottie by email to buy one of the few remaining tickets: dottiecw@hotmail.com.

Finally, those unable to attend the race day can also donate to Steve's online fundraising page which is currently just shy of an amazing £8,000.

justgiving.com/page/stevejobarmnd

Jane Gilbert

A brave and honest New Year message from Steve

Steve and Dottie have worked tirelessly to raise awareness of MND since they got the devastating diagnosis in 2022.

They have appeared on Racing TV and the Skybet Sunday TV series to talk about how it has impacted their life. And Steve's story also featured in Racing Post.

Steve has his own Facebook page – Steve Jobar 23 – where he regularly posts powerful and positive updates on the reality of living with MND.



Now he has decided to share this message, with Dottie, his partner of 45 years firmly behind him saying: "I think it is a good thing that people realise what a horrible disease it is. No-one knows what happens, no-one says anything about the impact it has on your life."

"We need people to know that the Association is here to help everybody."

Steve writes:

"Wishing everyone a Happy New Year with this little update as I have been a bit quiet.

MND has now robbed me of my speech which is now no longer understandable in most circumstances.

My eating is now confined to liquids.

Swallowing ability is now worse.

My strength has gone downhill quite fast in the last two months. I would say I am about a quarter of the strength I was this time last year.

My left arm is weaker than my right with the articulation of it limited.

My general energy levels are now limited.

My neck has been the latest addition to this condition. It now feels very weak, it's like my head can snap backwards and I can't stop it, turning from side to side is very awkward and lifting myself up from laying down I almost need to pull my hair first to get the weight of my head up.

Clearing my throat is difficult so I may have to use a cough assist machine.

My weight has gone down to between 9 stone 1 and 9 stone 4, I think mostly from my muscles.

Despite all this we remain very positive and determined to fight this all the way and we are so very grateful for all the help and support from our wonderful MND Association and MND Association Reading & West Berkshire."



Drop-in Meetings - An open invitation

You are warmly invited to our Drop-in Meetings

The Calcot Centre, 3 Highview, Calcot, Reading RG31 4XD

12.30 - 2.30pm

Please note we have a new much bigger venue!

These meetings are an opportunity for you to share experiences and thoughts, meet with friends who understand. We would be very pleased to see you. Please feel free to bring a relative or friend - all are welcome.

RSVP to secretary@mndrwb.org or call 07760 854957.

A selection of sandwiches will be available.

The venue has wheelchair access, toilets and car parking on site.

From junction 12 of the M4 head on the Bath Road (A4) towards Reading. You will pass Sainsbury's/IKEA on your left and in a few hundred yards at the next roundabout take the first exit onto Royal Avenue. Take the 4th road on your left, Highview, and the centre is on the left (signposted). Click here to view venue in Google maps,

Goldie's cracking Christmas countdown

Clever Jacqui Warbey knitted 24 different Christmas jumpers for her little pal Goldie to wear for his 2023 advent calendar raising more than £500 to fight MND.

The little bear's escapades in festive outfits were a daily delight for followers of his very own Facebook page in memory of Jacqui's husband Richard, who died in 2017, aged 56.

Now Richard's old teddy is helping Jacqui continue the fight against MND with ingenious fundraising and awareness initiatives.

Jacqui, from Woodley, near Reading, says: "Goldie is now planning a dry January, a few weeks of dieting and thinking up new ideas.

"Thank you for following Goldie's Advent Calendar and generously donating £450 plus £95 Gift Aid and hopefully some matched funding from my employer.

"It means a lot to me to support those living with MND and their families and to help fund research into finding a cure."

Jane Gilbert



It's 1st December and Goldie is making his Christmas pudding - bet he had a swig from the bottle as well!

And on 6th December he is already getting the sprouts on to make sure they are cooked in time for Christmas lunch.

Does he need a cookery lesson or two?

Panda and friends' Walk to d'feet MND

Supporter Panda Phelan will be starting the New year on the right foot raising funds in memory of her beloved mum Linda Wells.

Panda and her friends Debbie and Gill are challenging themselves to nail the London Winter Walk Half Marathon on January 27th/28th starting and finishing at The Oval.

The self-styled Walkaholics and Wine will be donning their MND hats and scarves to walk past some of the sights of London in aid of the MND Association Reading and West Berkshire Branch which supported Linda from her diagnosis until she passed away last April, aged 74.



Panda says: "I'm aware this month is tough, emotionally and financially for all. If I can ask you to help just by spreading the information on MND and remembering my Amazing Mum, this is the most precious gift.

"MND affects up to 5,000 adults in the UK at any one time. There is a 1 in 300 risk of getting MND across a lifetime and still NO cure.

"Mum always found fun and positives in the hardest of days.

"We shall forever be grateful to the MND Association and the support they gave Mum and our family.

Thank you."

Check out Panda's fundraising page here:

https://localgiving.org/fundraising/Panda-WinterWalk/

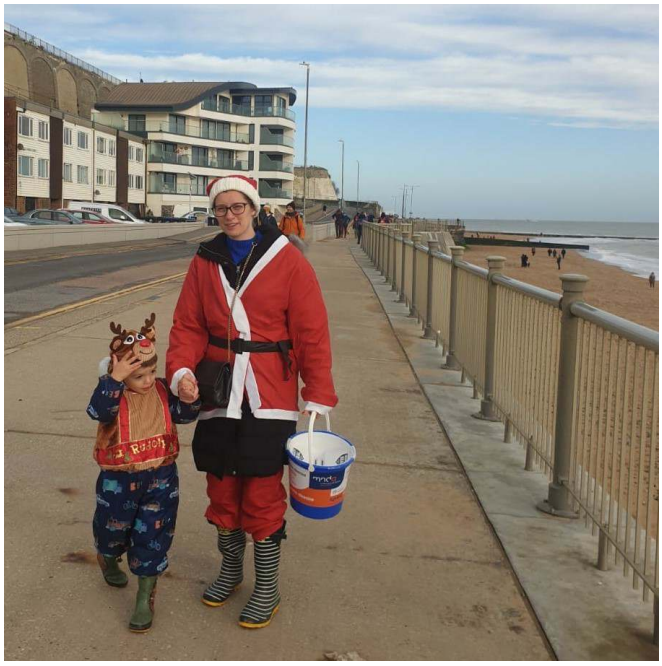
Jane Gilbert

Mum and son Walk to d'feet MND

Young mum Lucy Srai and her three-year-old son Lochlan stepped out on New Year's Day with a 5k Santa Walk to d'feet MND.

Lucy, from Purley-on-Thames, was raising funds and awareness for the MND Association in support of her beloved mum Linda, from Kent, who is living with the disease.

The branch provided Lucy with a collecting bucket for the seaside walk, and she has agreed to share her inspiring story with Newsletter readers here:



"My mum was diagnosed with bulbar onset MND in August 2022. Her symptoms of slurred speech started during Lockdown, but we didn't take too much notice as we felt like she may have had a wine or two due to stress!

Her symptoms then got progressively worse and she lost her ability to speak around January 2023 which has been really upsetting. I really miss just speaking to my mum and my siblings and I all say we are not sure we can remember what her voice was like, although I am lucky as I have lots of videos of her.

My mum was an incredibly active person frequently going on long walking holidays with my dad to the Lake District and Dorset. To see this horrible disease attack her activeness is brutal. She could walk 20 miles in a day and now has been reduced to around 20 minutes before being completely exhausted. It makes me really reflect on what I have and be grateful that I can still walk and talk.

From a personal point of view, MND has affected me in many ways:

1. Feeling upset at whether my boys, aged two and three, will remember their nanny.

2. Feeling guilty of living in Reading whilst they are in Kent. Although I go down as much as I can, the guilt of watching my dad and my sister being completely exhausted even though they have been incredibly strong.

3. Being upset at having just had my last Christmas with my mum and getting my last birthday present from her. We did make lots of memories though and took a lot of photos for my boys to look at when they are older, so they know they were very much loved by their nanny.

4. Not wanting to wish my mum and dad Happy New Year, knowing what will happen this year.

5. Grieving for my mum for who she was as a person.

Anyway, my mum brought me up to be strong and positive at whatever life throws your way. As such, I always try to turn a negative into a positive. So I decided to do the Santa 'Run' with my three-year-old son. Inviting him meant I didn't have to run it!

I'm really pleased that we managed to do the walk on New Year's Day, and he walked the whole 5km with the encouragement of the beach, and bribery of a burger waiting for him at the end. He did so well.

The support and love I have had from my friends has been out of this world and makes me realise how lucky I am even in this rubbish situation. So far, I have raised over £1,700 for the MND Association and I am so chuffed that everyone wants to find a cure for this horrible and brutal disease.

I think anything each of us can do to help raise awareness and increase donations is so beneficial, not just to the MND Association but to each of us for our own well-being and mental health".

#TakeOverMND this January. Are you ready to help?

Visit: https://fundraising.mndassociation.org/get-involved/take-over-mnd

Chris' birthday cycle adventure for pal Ray

Security guard Chris Millard found a wheelie good way to celebrate his 62nd birthday – he and three friends went on a sponsored cycle ride from Bristol to Reading.

The foursome, who all survived the trip despite a few mishaps, have now raised more than £2,500 in support of their friend Ray Dalfsen.

Chris said: "It was a great couple of days with three top chaps. Most importantly, a good few pounds were raised for Ray of Hope MND fronted by the inspirational Ray Dalfsen."

Ray and his wife Ruth were at the finish in Tilehurst to congratulate the cyclists when they returned home from the weekend-long adventure on September 25th.

Chris said: "What started out as an idea at the Ray of Hope Charity Day, after a few beers I hasten to add, became a reality as the four of us boarded the 08.20 Reading to Bristol train."

Day One from Bristol to Devizes was relatively uneventful and after forty miles they settled down for the night after a couple of pints and a good roast dinner.

On Day Two, which was Chris's birthday, the terrain was very wet and slippery.

Chris said: "Unfortunately, Shepps went headfirst into the river losing his sunglasses and sustaining a nasty leg injury in the process.

"After we had dried Shepps out we got going again and thanks to some amazing navigating by Jarvo we managed to go through some little towns and end up in Hungerford."



Chris Jarvis, Kevin Sheppard, Chris Millard and Dharmesh Mistry

From Hungerford they rejoined the river and headed to Newbury to refuel before beginning the last leg. Luckily, there was no damage done after two punctures and an encounter with a hornet's nest on the final stretch.

"The whole adventure was amazing," said Chris, "and to hear Shepps say, after he sustained his injury, 'if Ray can fight like he does every day, then there's no way I am giving up' was just incredible.

"We raised in excess of £2.5K and I would personally like to thank my fellow cyclists Dharmesh Mistry, Chris Jarvis and Kevin Sheppard for a wonderful two days and also the MND Association Reading and West Berkshire people for all their encouragement."

Jane Gilbert

Get in touch with MND Connect on 0808 802 6262

MND Connect is available Monday to Friday between 9am - 5pm and 7pm - 10:30pm.
Calls to this number are free from landlines and mobile phones within the UK and do not appear on itemised bills. You can also email mndconnect@mndassociation.org

ANSWERS

1: Timer/Remit 2: Tarragon/Arrogant 3: Teardrop/Predator 4: Cantered/Recanted 5: Apes/Peas 6: Thickset/Thickets 7: Tan/Ant 8: Reveals/Several 9: Snake/Sneak 10: Nameless/Salesmen 11: Cyprus 12: Greece 13: Israel 14: Jordan 15: Kuwait 16: Latvia 17: Mexico 18: Panama 19: Rwanda 20: Uganda

The Dream Team puts the fun into fundraising

Volunteer Katie Cooper and her Dream Team had so much fun at two recent Art Café mornings in Whitchurch-on-Thames, near Reading.

"The atmosphere was buzzing on November 18th", says Katie. "And despite the rain we had a record turnout. We managed to raise an amazing £270 all made possible by our wonderful Dream Team. "We had some mouth-watering cakes (we thought maybe too many at the start) but the table was almost empty at the end of the day!"

On December 9th everyone was feeling festive, and the venue was packed to the rafters, she said. This time the team raised a fantastic £343.50.

Katie added: "It was lovely to see so many locals, friends and family coming together.

"We're having a little break now and hope to see everyone at the next Art Café - 10.30am-12.30pm at The Old Rectory Stables, Whitchurch-on-Thames, RG8 7DF, on Saturday March 9th.

"There is always a spare apron if any of our supporters would like to help!"



Volunteers Paddy Lunn, Mary Dodds, Carol Coker, Mei Tan and Mary Davidson with Kim Facer and Katie Cooper sporting their festive hats at the front

Some dates for your diaries

27th January 1pm - 3pm	Mum2Mum at St. Anne's School, Washington Rd, Caversham, Reading RG4 5AA
22nd March	Steve Jobar MND Race Day at Newbury Racecourse, Racecourse Road, Newbury RG14 7PN
23rd March	Easter Fayre at The Grange United Reformed Church, Circuit Lane, Reading RG30 3HD
20th April	Beanpole Day at Caversham Court Gardens, Church Road, Reading RG4 7AD
17th - 19th May	Fawley Hill Steam and Vintage Festival, Fawley, Near Henley-on-Thames RG9 6JA
25th - 26th May	Island Farm Donkey Sanctuary Country Fayre, Old Didcot Rd, Brightwell-cum-Sotwell, Wallingford OX10 0SW
30th June	Thatcham Family Fun Day, Henwick Worthy Sports Ground, Thatcham RG18 3BU
6th July	Ray of Hope MND Family Fun Day and Charity Walk, Westwood Club, Tilehurst, Reading,
7th July	Theale Summer Fete - to be confirmed
26th - 28th August	Salvaging from Reading Festival, Richfield Avenue, Reading
4th October	Mike Denny Memorial Golf Day, De Vere Wokefield Estate Golf Club, Goodboys Lane, Reading RG7 3AE
19th October	Thatcham Leisure and Craft Day, The Broadway, Thatcham

An aerobic blast to start the New Year!

Nearly 100 people had a New Year fitness blast in Wokingham while raising fantastic funds to support families affected by motor neurone disease.

The fun two-hour Charity Aerobathon was held at the FBC Centre on January 13th in aid of the MND Association's Reading and West Berkshire Branch.

Organiser Melissa Buckle of SimplyFit Berkshire was thrilled that a whopping £2,396 had been raised with more donations coming in after the event.

Linda Green, who volunteers for the Association and took part, said: "What a great day! This was so much fun and enjoyed by all. Huge thanks to everyone who attended."

Melissa chose the charity to benefit as several members of SimplyFit had been supported by the local branch over the years including Valerie Henshall and Ellen Colvin, who both lost their husbands to MND.

Friends, Jacqui Warbey from Woodley and Julie Young, were also delighted to have completed the aerobic challenge which took off as the music ramped up.

They were thinking of Jacqui's husband Richard, who died of MND, aged 56, in 2017 and their friend Deborah Hayhurst with whom they used to do Zumba. Sadly, inspirational Deborah, from Earley, lost her tough three-year battle with MND just two days after the Aerobathon.

Publicity Officer Jane Gilbert, told online news site My Wokingham:

"We are very grateful to Melissa for organising this amazing fundraiser and to all the people who made the challenge so much fun.

Their very kind donations will help us enormously to improve the quality of life for local families affected by MND and to boost research into finding a treatment and eventual cure.

"Our trained MND Association Volunteers were available on the day to answer questions and offer support to those who had lost loved ones."

Thanks to all our volunteers who took part in the aerobics or on the sidelines and for these great photographs.

If you weren't able to attend and would like to make a donation visit:

https://www.justgiving.com/page/simplyfit-berkshire-1704226111929

Jane Gilbert





Friends Julie Young and Jacqui Warbey

To connect with us on Facebook please click on the following link:

https://www.facebook.com/mndrwb/

We can't do it without you, says the MND Association's CEO



Tanya Curry, (second left) with Becky Carey, Liz Haworth, Sally and Derek Hince



Alec and his wife Chris who were celebrating 51 years of marriage as well as Alec's 80th birthday



Tanya meets Ray Dalfsen, his great-grandson Cailo and Lin Jenkins

The Association's CEO Tanya Curry has praised our amazing local supporters for all helping to "bang the drum" in the fight against MND.

It was her first opportunity to visit the branch after a busy introduction to the Association which has seen a massive rise in its profile spearheaded by rugby legends Doddie Weir, Rob Burrow and Kevin Sinfield.

"My team have let me out to see how well you are working together, "said Tanya. "We are all banging that drum to use Kevin's phrase.

"Thank you to the amazing committee for all you do. We genuinely couldn't do it without you".

Tanya was thanked by branch stalwart Margaret Moss who also announced her decision to return as Branch Chair after a little over a three-year break. Margaret, who had previously led the Committee for 20 years, has agreed a fixed period while the long-term role is filled.

Nearly fifty people attended the Drop-in at The Calcot Centre, near Reading, and congratulated regular Alec Jenkins on his 80th birthday the previous day. He was presented with a cake and a card signed by friends at the Drop-in.

Alec, from Newbury, who has been living with MND for more than 25 years, had also recently celebrated 51 years of marriage to his wife Chris.

Double congratulations to them both from all at the Association's Reading and West Berkshire Branch.

Jane Gilbert



Tanya meets the Dream Team

Would you like to help?

If so there is an ideal opportunity for you to get more involved with branch activities.

We need a Minute Secretary - someone who can attend bi-monthly committee meetings which take place on a Thursday evening at 7.30 in Calcot and then write up and distribute the minutes. That's it! Nothing too onerous but it is an excellent opportunity to become part of a friendly, successful and dedicated team who give their time to benefit people living with MND and their familes and friends.

If you would like to volunteer or just have an initial chat with somebody about this position please email contact @mndrwb.org or phone 07760 854975



Branch Contacts

Chair
Margaret Moss
contact@mndrwb.org

Secretary
Kerrie Newton
secretary@mndrwb.org

Branch Contact
07760 854975
contact@mndrwb.org

Publicity
Jane Gilbert
contact@mndrwb.org

Events Coordinator
Mary Dodds
events@mndrwb.org

Treasurer
Ed Gryglaszewski
treasurer@mndrwb.org
07973 875506

Newsletter
Mary Davidson
mary@rfdg.org.uk