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motor neurone disease association

Reading and West Berkshire

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News Letter

'Our' Mary is the Pride of Reading

We are all super proud of our long-standing volunteer Mary Dodds who has been recognised for her outstanding work at a prestigious awards ceremony.

Mary was over the moon to be hailed Community Champion at this year's Pride of Reading Awards' sparkling 20th anniversary celebrations.

"Everyone in this room has heard the name of MND, which has always been so important to me," she said afterwards.

"Whoever nominated me, deserves a hug."



The 300-strong audience saw Mary receive her award sponsored by Reading Football Club with video tributes from BBC Radio 2 presenter Jeremy Vine, Coronation Street actor Peter Ash and the MND Association's Luke Robson.

The Association had secretly arranged video messages for the event on October 25th at the Select Car Leasing Stadium, Reading, and it came as a big surprise to Mary and her guest Branch Publicity Officer Jane Gilbert.

Relationship Fundraiser - Central West, Luke Robson, said he was thrilled to see Mary recognised for her unwavering dedication and years of volunteering work. She was one of the founders of the Branch 37 years ago when her husband Derek Prior was living with MND and there was no local support available.

Luke said: "Mary's incredible commitment to supporting those affected by MND and her tireless efforts to raise awareness and funds have made a profound impact in the community."

Mary's big day included a Champagne reception, delicious three-course lunch, a goody bag, a bouquet of flowers and interviews with local TV, radio and news reporters.

She was also congratulated by TVs Chris Tarrant, who has been hosting the Pride of Reading Awards since they began in 2004, singer Danyl Johnson of The X Factor and People's Postcode Lottery fame, and former Reading FC Captain Ady Williams.

The MND Dream Team shared the happy news recently with a sparkling toast to 'our gem' Mary at the October Drop In Support meeting.

Mary, who was presented with flowers and a cake, was overwhelmed by all the fantastic messages she has received since collecting her award.

"I had a fabulous day and I'm still on a high," she said while enjoying a glass of Buck's Fizz.

The Branch is very grateful to Mary's nominator, who asks to remain anonymous, and to her award sponsors Reading Football Club for highlighting both her work and that of the MND Association.

Many congratulations Mary! As Jeremy Vine said: "You're incredible!"

Jane Gilbert

More pictures taken during and after Mary's fantastic achievement at Pride of Reading Awards can be found on the separate sheet enclosed with this newsletter.

Registered Charity No 294354

A generous Christmas gift from Hungerford shoppers

Shoppers flocked to the popular Hungerford Christmas Fair helping to raise nearly £4,000 for the fight against MND.

We are hugely grateful to the organisers, generous customers and our hardworking Dream Team of volunteers who worked in shifts during the two-day event.

Thank you to everyone who came knocking at the door of The Town Hall and Corn Exchange on November 1st and 2nd. They included singer Danyl Johnson of TVs People's Postcode Lottery and Pride of Reading Awards fame as well as former Newbury MP Laura Farris.

The cash was raised thanks to organisers Sally Poltimore and Caroline Preston who chose the MND Association Reading and West Berkshire Branch to benefit this year from all the £3 entry and raffle ticket sales. They even sold sixty packs of MND Association cards for us with a value of £262.75.

Mary Davidson, who organises the card sales and volunteered on the door with Steve Baugh, said it was a wonderful result.

She said: "Steve and I thoroughly enjoyed Hungerford, and the icing on the cake was when we both won raffle prizes!"

Sally and Caroline are hoping they are able to make an extra donation once they have collected all the money from stallholders at the long-running fair.

Jane Gilbert



Friends Chris Fielding and Marian Hall working hard selling entry tickets



Volunteers Newsletter Editor Mary Davidson, Claire Maslen, Tracy Purser and Steve Baugh

MND Christmas cards

Since August we have been busy selling MND Christmas cards and other merchandise. To date we have sold a massive 210 items but there is still plenty of stock left.

You can visit our table at Tadley Christmas Market, Ambrose Allen Centre, Franklin Avenue, RG26 4ET on Friday 29th November from 6pm to 8pm where we will be selling cards and craft items or wait until the Christmas Tea Party at Purley Barn on Tuesday 10th December.

Alternatively you can view our selection of cards on the branch Facebook page or on our website **mndrwb.org** and order by emailing mary@rfdg.org.uk. Cards can be collected from Burghfield Common, posted to you with postage added or I may be able to deliver locally,

Beerfest cheers all round!

Cheers to Bucklebury Beerfest which has raised £800 to help fight MND.

Thanks to our hard-working volunteers the tea hall takings were the highest they have ever been. Take a bow, Dream Team!

And John Brims, Chair of the Beerfest committee, has given a big shout out to all the helpers who made the event such a success.

The organisers, the Bucklebury Victory Room Trustees, recently hosted 'thank you' drinks for volunteers and presented cheques to two charities at the Cottage Inn, Upper Bucklebury.

Despite the atrocious, wet and windy weather on the day, the event made a profit of £3,600. The largest donation of £800 was made to the Reading and West Berkshire Branch of the Motor Neurone Disease Association and presented to Publicity Officer, Jane Gilbert. A second donation of £500 was made to the Thatcham Support and Welfare Society and presented to its Chairman, Bob Champion.

The trustees will be making some smaller gifts including £150 to the Dogs Trust, which equals the profit from the fun dog show, and to some parish good causes.

Jane Gilbert





Top picture: Lindsey Clark, Sally Baynham, Carol Baynham and Gary Baynham are pictured enjoying a cream tea

Bottom picture: John Brims, centre, presents cheques to Jane Gilbert and Bob Champion

Paddy's amazing cake and cards sale



Paddy with teapot at the ready is pictured with some of her guests and helpers

There was a great turn out for Paddy's cake and cards sale with lots of her friends supporting the event and enjoying her delicious cakes.

Branch supporters Margaret Moss, Gill Schuller, Linda Green, Jan and Ed Gryglaszewski, Netta Thorne and Barry and I were there to share a fun afternoon.

Paddy's jars of marmalade and chutney as well as her Christmas cards and notelets sold really well.

There was an awesome raffle filled with lots of lovely handmade gifts kindly donated by Simon Pink, The Village Hamper, Tonder and Tonder, Brambles and Claire Maslen.

The total raised was a whopping £815 which left our lovely Paddy speechless. Fabulous afternoon!

Mary Dodds

Deb's Diamond Race Night

MND Association Visitor Debbie Webb celebrated her 60th birthday with an exciting race night raising a magnificent £2,400 for a cause close to her heart.

Debbie, from Emmbrook, Wokingham, lost her close friend Jane Griffin to MND and is now one of our local trained volunteers supporting other families affected by the disease.

Here Debbie shares her special big birthday celebration with Newsletter readers:

My 60th birthday was approaching, and I was keen to push the boat out and celebrate, not least, as we all know too well not everyone has the privilege of getting there.

I lost one of my best friends to MND six years ago and ever since have been keen to do whatever I can to help other people who are affected, to help raise awareness as well as funds for research to understand more about the disease; why it occurs, and to help find a cure.

So, I decided that I'd like to celebrate the occasion with family and friends but also take the opportunity to raise funds at the same time.

I organised a race night and some live music at Wokingham Cricket and Tennis Club. The evening was a great success raising £2,400 for our local branch.

Racenight UK supplied the races and terminals for the betting - it was just like being at the Racecourse. Big thanks to my son, Mitchell, and friend Neil for being the jolliest bookies for the evening.

There was only one controversial winner in Race 3 - Up the Gunners! I am an Arsenal fan - but I promise there was no fix.

The racing was fun, each of the 13 tables was named after a racecourse and we were able to provide our own race card for the eight races.

Mozzarella Mare, the 12 to 1 winner in the Cooper Hill Cheese Chase was the most lucrative bet of the night. Half of the takings were donated to the MND Association and totalled £1,600.

Further funds were raised by donating £10 into a pot, with half going to charity and two of the donors, randomly picked blind by my dad, winning 25% of the pot each. Another winner was playing a twist on Heads and Tails where you pay £5 to play and guess whether a fact about myself was true or false. Three-quarters of the funds raised were donated to MND Association with the last person standing winning 25% of the pot.

Wokingham Cricket and Tennis Club provided a fabulous hot buffet of curry and lasagne and the bar was kept busy with drinks flowing all night.

Live music was provided by Luca, who regularly plays Covent Garden with his guitar, seamlessly mashing one hit to another to keep the dance floor full all night.

On reflection, I was pleased that everyone seemed to enjoy themselves at a great venue, had fun betting on the horses, danced to the music and were able to remember Jane.

I'm delighted they raised much needed funds for our local branch and have supported further research into MND.

Jane Gilbert

If, like Debbie, you are interested in joining our team of lovely Association Visitors who do so much to help local people living with MND then please see the next page - we would love to hear from you!



Wow! What a cake!



Could you become an Association Visitor?

Our branch currently has three specially trained Association Visitors (AVs) - Debbie, Jan and Wendy. They are all based locally and offer emotional support, advice and information to people living with MND and their families with contact by phone, via email and/or home visits.

Do you enjoy listening to and helping people? Are you looking for a volunteering role where you can do just that to fit in around your family, studies or other commitments? By becoming an Association Visitor and donating your time, energy and skills, you can make a real difference to the lives of people affected by MND. If you are interested in knowing more about becoming an Association Visitor and would like an informal chat with one of AVs then please contact us by phone on 07760 854975 or by email to **contact@mndrwb.org**.

Alternatively please visit the MND Association website:

www.mndassociation.org/support-and-information/local-support/association-visitors

If you are living with MND and would like to be supported by an AV, please contact our information and support team, **MND Connect** on 0808 802 6262 or via email **mndconnect@mndassociation.org**

There's always time for coffee and cake

Another busy morning at the fun Art Café raised a whopping £384 for branch funds from coffee, cake and raffle ticket sales. In addition almost £80 was collected from the sale of MND Christmas cards and other donated items, including the beautiful robin prints donated by Derek Hince.

Organiser Katie Cooper said all the seats were filled within minutes of opening at The Old Rectory Stables, Whitchurch-on-Thames, near Reading, on August 31st.

"It was lovely to see our regulars and some new faces," said Katie. Massive thanks to the Dream Team for their hard work and dedication."

Come and join us at the next community Art Café, RG8 7DF, on December 21st, from 10.30-12.30, when the team are certain to be feeling festive.

Jane Gilbert



Photo: Mei Tan and Paddy Lunn busy in the kitchen



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

Tributes to racing and MND 'hero' Steve Jobar

Our thoughts are with the family and friends of 'remarkable person' Steve Jobar who has sadly lost his hard-fought battle with MND, aged 75.

Tributes have been paid to the popular Cheltenham Festival-winning jockey who became an accomplished glider pilot and craftsman after retiring from the saddle.

Steve, from Wickham, near Newbury, spent his last two years living with motor neurone disease and, while gradually becoming unable to speak and robbed of his strength, he became the centre of a major fundraising campaign.

Despite his illness, Steve inspired a committee to raise a staggering £193,000 for the MND Association during his big race day at Newbury Racecourse in March.

Attended by 450 people, the day consisted of a fundraising lunch, both a live and silent online auction as well as the Steve Jobar MND Handicap Hurdle.

Half the money raised went towards funding research for a cure, while the remainder went to MND Association Reading & West Berkshire which supported Steve and his wife Dottie Channing-Williams following his diagnosis.

"He was a remarkable person," said seven-time champion jockey John Francome, a close friend of Steve.

John told the Racing Post: "Steve was extraordinary. He could barely talk at the time of the fundraiser at Newbury but he was there and communicating through an iPad. I drove past his house about three months ago and he was outside cutting his hedge. He was a grafter with a great attitude."

Racing author Jonathan Powell, who chaired Steve's Newbury fundraising committee, tweeted: "Racing has lost a true hero.



"He rode 132 winners over jumps but will be remembered for his astonishing toughness of spirit since being diagnosed with the brutal disease MND in April 2022. His stubborn defiance knowing what was coming an inspiration"

The MND Association Reading and West Berkshire Branch 'family' remains here to support Dottie and all his loved ones during this difficult time.
RIP Steve

https://www.racingpost.com/news/britain/cheltenham-festival-winner-and-remarkable-person-steve-jobar-dies-at-75-avfPt1o0TlZ3/

Jane Gilbert

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

Incredible Ray of Hope team smashed it again

A massive thank you to everyone who helped to make the second Ray of Hope Family Fun Day and Walk such a resounding success. A whopping £15,514 was raised at the event inspired by the incredible Ray Dalfsen, who is living with MND.

This money will make a real difference to the support we give to local families affected by motor neurone disease. None of this would be possible without the kindness and generosity of everyone involved.

Branch Events Co-ordinator Mary Dodds told the organising team: "Thank you from the bottom of our hearts."

The Ray of Hope team says the support it has received over the last two years has been unreal, £10k raised in 2023 and an unbelievable £15k this year.

"Wow! what a day, we asked you to come out and, in your numbers, you did." said the organisers. "With all your fantastic support we absolutely smashed it. We blew last year's total away which was amazing."

The event at the Westwood Club, Downs Way, Tilehurst, in August, began with a 5k walk joined by popular Ray, his wife Ruth, and their family.

A small army of volunteers provided an afternoon of fun and games including a BBQ, tea tent, ice cream, teddy bear hunt, wellie throwing, stalls and attractions plus a raffle and auction with fabulous prizes.



Andy Findlay and Ray Dalfsen on the home straight



Ray surrounded by his amazing family

The man who inspired it all - Ray Dalfsen - said it was an amazing day with people laughing, having fun, coming together and forgetting about their troubles.

"Thank you to everyone who came to help raise awareness and much needed funds for families living with MND, "he said.

"So from the bottom of my heart, a big THANK YOU."

Jane Gilbert

Memories of a fabulous day from David Ling, of the incredible Ray of Hope Family Fun Day and Walk Committee:

Firstly, I would like to say a huge thanks to committee member and resident comedian Gary Baynham for bringing to our attention that the date chosen for this year's Ray of Hope Fun Day just happened to coincide with the football Euros and that should England be doing well in the competition then a lot of people would stay at home in front of the television instead of venturing out to the Cotswold Park. As it happened had we gone ahead with this day we would have been so disappointed with the turnout as it tipped down with rain for much of the day.

So, the second choice of the 17th of August was perfection - a beautiful, sunny day from dawn to dusk and the locals, family, friends and so many supporters of the MND Association turned up in their droves!

Huge thanks go firstly to the volunteers who arrived early in the morning to help with the setting up of all the food tents etc. To name just a few - Chris Millard, Gary

Continued on next page

Incredible Ray of Hope team smashed it again - cont

Baynham, Andy Findlay, Peter Cole, and of course .....Mark and Kutch Dixon who manage the Westwood Club.

The Dream Team – Lin Jenkins, Mary Dodds, Linda Green, Emma Dalfsen and Becka Dalfsen, and their helpers worked tirelessly throughout the day. The Walk was once again this year a huge success with more walkers (and Ray on his scooter) than ever completing the course.

A huge thanks to the companies and individuals who were kind enough to donate prizes for the tombola and raffle, as well as major items which were up for auction. Special thanks go to Paul Jennings for donating two very large brand-new televisions and to Huw Grays (site radio), Willmotts for their kind donation and Bruno Giametti of Marc Antoni hairdressers for cut/colour and hair products; similarly to Kim Hambridge from Paul Francis hairdressers for her hair cut/colour etc auction item. I know many more people donated and overall, once all the monies had come in, the Ray of Hope Day raised a whopping £15,500 - well done everyone!

Without saying, Ray Dalfsen is a very popular guy, and it was great to see that so many of his old friends and footballing mates had come from far and wide to support both him and the MND cause on the day. It was great to see so many of my old football players too and to reminisce about old times.

Late afternoon it was time to call it a day and this was achieved quickly and swiftly with old friend Martin Hunt on the mic in the Westwood Club Garden murdering Mack the Knife - only joking Martin - you were great!



Ray of Hope committee members Katherine Dixon, Gary Baynham, Mark Dixon and Ray Dalfsen

Gail and her friends are All Stars

Congratulations to diet consultant Gail Pearce, pictured second from the left, and her colleagues who smashed a ten-mile charity walk around historic Oxford raising nearly £2,000 for Branch funds.



Gail, from Bradfield, near Reading, was also raising awareness of the "awful disease" that her husband Paul has been diagnosed with.

"The MND Association Reading and West Berkshire Branch have been amazing with their support that they have given Paul and our family. We are so grateful.

"Thank you to everyone who donated, it is very much appreciated."

Gail was joined along the way by four fellow consultants for The 1:1 Diet's Team All Stars Fundraiser which received online donations of £1,598 plus £351 Gift Aid.

Editor's note: If, like Gail, you would like to raise funds specifically for the Reading and West Berkshire Branch or for Research please state your intentions in the wording of any online donation page. Otherwise, the funds are automatically channelled to the MND Association nationally.

Jane Gilbert

Snooker player Jon breaks his 24-hour challenge

Snooker enthusiast Jon Hawkins has nailed his tough 24-hour challenge raising nearly £6,000 for the MND Association's Reading and West Berkshire Branch.

His incredible achievement in support of a friend was inspired by Graham Attridge of Newbury who is living with MND.

Jon, aged 52, played a total of 86 frames with 18 friends, losing only nine of them, at Trinity Snooker Club in Henley.

He was determined to help raise awareness of MND when he found out his friend and fellow golfer Graham had been diagnosed with the disease last year.

And Jon was delighted when Graham and his wife Angela turned up to support all those taking part in the marathon on September 28th.

Jon said: "It meant a great deal to those taking part to meet who had inspired me to want to do this challenge in the first place."

He and Graham first met when Jon was Captain of Donnington Grove Golf Club in Newbury where they both played. They lost touch when Jon put the clubs away and concentrated on the green baize instead.

Now his awesome challenge has given Graham a huge boost and he is enormously proud of his friend.

Graham described Jon as an "absolute superstar with such a huge heart."

He said recently: "The outpouring of love and support Jon has shown to both me and the MND community is brilliant. I am so grateful to both Jon and his fellow players. They are all totally amazing."

Jon, from Abingdon, said none of it would have been possible without the support of Trinity Snooker Club, all the well-wishers, sponsors, his partner and family as well as the dozen players who kept him busy at the table, especially the nightshift crew who kept him awake and entertained during the eight hours after midnight up to the final frame.



And to sum up after the event Jon has ticked a few boxes:

Emotional ✅

Proud ✅

Tired ✅

Overwhelmed ✅

Would I do it all again tomorrow? ✅✅✅✅👍

Memories for life ✅

Well done to him! There's still time to pledge your support here:

www.justgiving.com/page/jonathon-hawkins-1717535106993

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

Caversham rocks again for MND



Young supporter Bobby who attended with his family

Caversham has been rocking again and raising funds to help support local people affected by MND.

Now in its incredible 13th year at Our Lady and St Anne School Playing Fields, the family-friendly Rock 'n' Ale Festival has become the annual September go-to gig for live music fans.

It is organised by close friends of Angela Fung, an inspirational mum-of-four, who died of MND in 2012 and held in her memory.

Three great bands - Code Red, The Skavengers and Dino's - tasty food, two bars from the Last Crumb, children's entertainment and a raffle were all on the bill in support of the MND Association Reading and West Berkshire Branch.

And several of our Dream Team were there rocking the night away and soaking up the atmosphere.

One of them, committee member Linda Green, said: "We had such a great evening and would like to thank the organisers of this event who raised £2,000 to help our local branch. Thank you all so much."

Jane Gilbert

Supporter Panda gets swept up in the Rock 'n' Ale rhythm

Despite a brief rain shower at 6pm, spirits remained high as the clouds cleared just in time for Code Red to kick off the festival with an amazing set of hits spanning the decades. From the first chord, the crowd was swept up in the rhythm, setting the perfect tone for a night of music, laughter, and support for motor neurone disease.

The energy kept building with The Skavengers, who brought their upbeat ska tunes, inspiring everything from toe-tapping to full-on ska dancing. Their infectious sound turned the field into a sea of movement and smiles.

A family-friendly vibe welcomed even the youngest festival goers, with Mr. Bigfoot keeping kids entertained with juggling, balancing acts, and challenges that kept them smiling and engaged. His circus equipment and friendly approach ensured everyone had something fun to do between musical acts.

Keeping everyone fuelled and refreshed, The Last Crumb was a hit, offering a fantastic selection of drinks served up by an enthusiastic team of bar staff. There was no shortage of "dancing juice," keeping the crowd going strong all night! And when it came to food, the hog roast was a star attraction, disappearing quickly alongside a variety of delicious sides (if you could still fit them in!).

The night reached an unforgettable crescendo with The Dinos. Dynamic, powerful, and truly incredible, they commanded the stage from their first note, filling the packed tent with rock energy that had everyone on their feet.

The highlight was undoubtedly their show-stopping Queen medley - a moment that brought chills to everyone. Their heartfelt words and music were a tribute to those affected by MND, striking a chord that resonated deeply throughout the crowd.

Panda Phelan



Barrie Wells and Panda Phelan

The Reindeers' Ray of Light is back shining brightly



Follow the herd to the spectacular Reindeers' Ray of Light which will be shining brightly again raising funds to fight MND.

Businessman Andy Findlay is ready for the big switch on of his stunning festive lights display outside his home off Overdown Road in Tilehurst on December 6th.

Last year the 24 illuminated prancing reindeer lit up the faces of admiring passers-by who donated £1,685 to branch funds.

Company director Andy lost his dad Malcom to MND more than five years ago and has since raised funds in his memory. Andy's friend Ray Dalfsen is also living with the disease, and he was part of the Ray of Hope MND Family Fun Day and Walk team.

Andy said: "As a kid, and as a father to my children when they were young, we always went 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 faces as others had in the past for my children.

"Thanks to my company Thames Valley Cleaning for buying so many of the reindeer and lights that seem to grow each year."

Help Andy spread the word and raise funds for the branch here:

https://localgiving.org/fundraising/xmasrol2024

Jane Gilbert

Looking for accessible holiday accommodation?

Here are some helpful suggestions from an experienced carer!

They come with all you might require for peace of mind.

Shrewsbury		www.cheeseroomcottage.co.uk
Isle of Wight	Atherfield Green Farm Cottages	www.agfcottages.co.uk
Blackpool	Bond Hotel	www.bondhotel.co.uk
Buckfast Devon	Northgate House Hotel	www.buckfast.org.uk
Jumbulance	Holidays and Day trips	www.jumbulance.org.uk

ANSWERS

1: Top Cat (Boss Cat) 2: Puss In Boots (Shrek) 3: Kitty (Hello Kitty - video game) 4 & 5: Si & Am (Lady & The Tramp) 6: Custard (Roobarb & Custard) 7: Cheshire Cat (Alice's Adventures In Wonderland) 8: J.Thomas O'Malley (The Aristocats) 9: Duchess (The Aristocats) 10: The Cat In The Hat 11: Garfield 12:Tom (Tom & Jerry) 13: Bagpuss 14: Crookshanks (Harry Potter) 15: Sylvester (Sylvester & Tweety Pie) 16: Mr Jinks (Pixie & Dixie & Mr Jinks 17: Mr Mistoffelees (Cats - the musical) 18: Felix The Cat 19: Figaro (Pinocchio) 20: Snowball (The Simpsons)

A crafty idea raising funds and MND awareness

After very heavy rain overnight, we all had interesting journeys through floodwater early on Saturday, October 19th, to get to the Thatcham Leisure and Craft Fair for 8.30am. Thankfully, somebody was looking out for us and the rain stopped just as we parked up in the town. Phew! What a relief. We were able to get both tents up and all our stock unloaded in the dry.

The fair officially opened at 10am but we had our first customer shortly before then. Things were looking good but unfortunately, I think everyone was out and about early and the footfall decreased throughout the day. However, it stayed dry with lots of sunshine, and we did manage to sell a reasonable amount of stock. Between our two stalls we took more than £220, met some lovely people and hopefully raised awareness of MND.

Thank you to everyone who donated items to sell, to those who came along to shop and chat and to all the helpers - Katie Cooper, Julie Dix, Kim Facer, Lin Jenkins and Kerrie Newton. The money raised all goes towards helping people affected by this horrendous disease.

Mary Davidson



Katie Cooper and Mary Davidson all set-up and ready to welcome customers

Berkshire REMAP – 60 years of making things possible

Have you heard of Berkshire REMAP? – it's a branch of a national charity that provides custom-made equipment and adaptations for people with a disability.

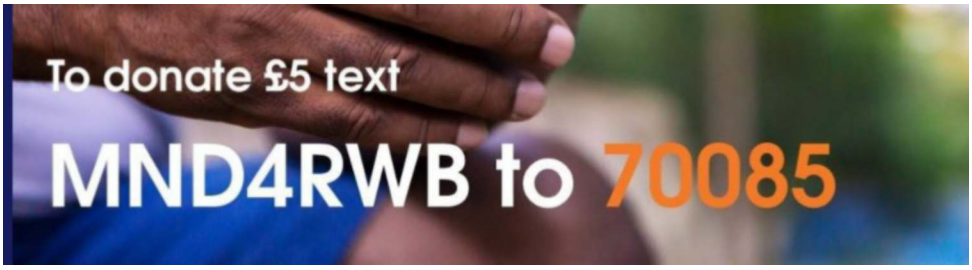
Andy Pinkard, Chair of the West Berkshire and North Hampshire area, visited the Branch's October Drop- in support meeting to highlight its services.

And he explained how dedicated volunteers can help those with disabilities overcome everyday challenges where no commercially available product exists.

While sixty per cent of Berkshire referrals are via Occupational Therapists people can also refer themselves. An engineer will visit the client and agree what is required, then make and deliver it. No fuss, no forms, no fee!

How to engage with Remap:

- Contact Berkshire Case Officer Robert Monk by email: Berks.CaseOfficer@remapgroups.org.uk or by telephone: 077901 27123
- Online: https://remap.org.uk/referral-form/



Golfers' whopping third round in memory of Micky

Big-hearted golfers have scored another winning round for their beloved pal Micky Denny raising a whopping £12,524 for the MND Association.

This year's golf tribute day was the third event held in honour of the popular former player who died of motor neurone disease two years ago, aged 63.

Sportsman Micky, who lived in Earley, had inspired his many friends and family to help other local people affected by the disease.

And they all rallied in the Autumn sunshine on October 5th for another glorious event held at his golf club, De Vere Wokefield Park, near Reading.

Micky's proud family joined a record 107 players for a day of golf, dinner, an auction and a raffle of fabulous prizes, all in aid of the Association's Reading and West Berkshire Branch.

One of the delighted organisers and star auctioneer, John Mann, is already looking forward to next year's tribute event.

Despite struggling with cold symptoms on the day, he had managed to achieve an amazing £5,950 in auction bids at the dinner.

John said: "A massive thank you to all the golfers, friends, sponsors, donors and helpers who have made this event so special. We couldn't have done it without their support. Here's to next year's event!"

The Branch was also thrilled to be part of the incredible day. Publicity Officer Jane Gilbert and Association Visitor Wendy Gouldthorpe had been invited to speak about the vital work of the MND Association and were extremely impressed by the heartwarming support they received.

They gave a big shout out to the brilliant organisers - John Mann, Tony Stanley, Dave Cooper, Sharon Mann, and Allison Reynolds-Stanley – and all who so generously supported the Branch funds.

Jane Gilbert



Micky's Dream Team with Branch Publicity Officer Jane Gilbert (4th from left).
Ali Reynolds-Stanley, who worked tirelessly in the background, was unable to attend the golf day due to recent surgery



Rising star! Micky's nephew and Chelsea Under 21 midfielder Reiss-Alexander Russell-Denny with his dad David Denny supporting the golf day

Can you support those who support us?

There's still time to order your Christmas tree from Glenvale Nurseries at Bradfield Southend, near Reading, where owners Helen and Duncan Varley are flying the flag for MND during the first two weekends of December.

The branch is very grateful to them for their continued support for the work of the Branch.

www.glenvalenurseries.com

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

Another bumper year for fundraiser Lin

Branch stalwart Lin Jenkins has announced that her year of fundraising has raised an amazing £7,713 to help local families living with MND.

And her total includes the £2,000 cheque she received in May for winning the Edwards Lifesciences' Senior Changemakers: Volunteering Champions Award.

She admits it has not been easy with so many outdoor events cancelled due to water-logged ground and thunderstorms.

Lin said: "I have never had so many events cancelled in one season. Luckily, the car boot sales have been very successful with some lovely, donated items for me to sell. I also sell more and more from the house these days."

Over the years, Lin has built up a solid client and dealer base and people contact her to buy specific items. Equally, when certain goods are donated, she knows who might be interested in buying them. She also has the support of two auction houses to advise where necessary.

Many of the branch supporters will have seen Lin and her Washing Line Game at various fetes and fairs during the summer.

With the items for these now packed away and the clean-up of unwanted items left behind at Reading Festival done and dusted, the unstoppable Lin is now keeping busy attending Christmas events as well as the odd jumble or car boot sale at Woodley Shopping Precinct on a Sunday morning.

"I am not exactly hibernating for the winter months, said Lin.



"I have to thank my friend Julie Dix for her help this year, plus other family and friends who have been supportive as well."

And she finishes the season on her usual determined note adding: " Keep Fighting Everyone – we WILL beat this."

Jane Gilbert

And relax . . . .



Our hard-working Dream Team found time to be pampered by lovely therapist Amanda Munday at a busy Drop-in support meeting during the summer.

Amanda, who provides the branch's relaxing treatments for people living with MND at their home, came up with the idea of 'Volunteering for the Volunteers'.

We think she is one of our unsung heroes always going the extra mile in her approach to her work and we hope she enjoyed a bottle of fizz and some chocolates with our thanks.

The MND Association Reading and West Berkshire Branch can offer a course of relaxing therapies such as reflexology and massage thanks to you, our amazing fundraisers and supporters. Together, we are making a difference to people's quality of life.

Jane Gilbert

Thanks to Kall Kwik Printers, Reading for your ongoing support.

Christmas Tea Party

You are invited to our annual Christmas Afternoon Tea Party which will be held on Tuesday 10th December from 2pm to 4pm at Purley Barn, Goosecroft Lane, Purley-on-Thames, RG8 8DR.

If you would like to attend and you have not already received an invitation then please contact Kerrie by email to secretary@mndrwb.org or call 07760 854975.

Please RSVP by 26th November if you plan on coming so we have an idea of numbers for catering.

Dates for 2025:

4th February

18th March

29th April

3rd June

15th July

19th August

23rd September

28th October

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

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,

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

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

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