

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT FOR THE YEAR APRIL 2020 – MARCH 2021

Little did I know when I sent out my last Annual Report in June 2020, with our AGM cancelled, that we would be holding our Annual General Meeting on Zoom in 2021. What a very different year it has been for us all and I hope that you have managed to remain safe and well.

The way the Friends have worked has changed completely with no fundraising events taking place within the hospital since January 2020. Our only outdoor fundraising event last year was a Tombola and Cake stall organised for us by Dean Wilson, Funeral Directors at Locksbottom, outside their premises which raised just over £600 for which we were most grateful. We arranged two fundraising events on Zoom during the year, a Fun Christmas Quiz raising £1,122 and a Speaker Evening with Penny Brockman from the Central Beacons Mountain Rescue Service giving a most interesting talk with slides which raised £932.

A large part of the year has been taken up with providing items for the staff during the pandemic. We had a break of about six months following the first wave of the coronavirus and then in late December it became apparent that we would need to start up again. This time it was more snack food that was required, oat fruit bars, pot noodles and other small ready meals. We made two deliveries a week to the staff hub with these and a large tray of mixed fresh fruit and they were always very well received. We know that the staff in the hub worked hard doing deliveries in rotation to the Wards so that staff who did not visit the hub were not forgotten.

Jayne Calvert, one of our helpers, an Avon Representative and Leader of St Giles Farnborough Mothers' Union, once again, along with the Orpington Trefoil Guild organised a collection amongst members and customers and raised £905 which we spent on face and hand cream and lip balm for the staff along with other toiletries for both staff and patients.

The local Rotary Clubs namely Chislehurst, Bromley, West Wickham, Ravensbourne and the Orpington Clubs once again responded, pledging money to be used for the specific project of "Providing what is needed during the Covid 19 pandemic". We are so grateful for the support that they have given us and I enjoyed my weekly contact with the Rotary members informing them of the items purchased from their funds. All the various gifts sent into the hospital have been very well received and much appreciated.

During this last year we have only had one major project within the hospital, which was delayed due to the coronavirus, but we are delighted that 22 Activity Trolleys were finally rolled out to the wards and departments on March 24th. They include games, dominoes and draughts, colouring and painting activities, crosswords and sudoku to name a few and a CD Player. These will provide activities for the patients whilst visiting is still restricted.

We are pleased to have facilitated or donated the following gifts: -

- 40 Talking Books were presented to the hospital by brothers Sam and Nicky Woolf from a new Charity they set up following their father's stay in hospital with coronavirus.
- Sensory Equipment was presented by "Our little Hero" Olive who came to the hospital in September following her 3K fundraising run.
- A Laptop and iPad were purchased by a donation from the Brethren of Plumstead Lodge for the Children's Asthma and Allergy Clinic.

- Donations made through Facebook have helped us to buy a Specialist Reclining Chair for the Intensive Care Unit.
- The specialist Sorrento chairs we purchased last year have proved so successful that we are buying another one for the Stroke Unit.

All the presentations were conducted outside the hospital under Covid social distancing rules but the weather was kind to us on each occasion.

We were successful in winning a Co-op Local Community Fund bid to provide an Activity Room for patients and refurbish a waiting area on the Stroke Unit. An interim payment has been received and the furniture has been delivered.

We are delighted that the Paediatric Oncology Travel Scheme has restarted after a new Community Team are once again working closely with us and Cannon Cars.

We are so grateful for the generous donations that we have received over the year from both local organisations and individuals. This has enabled us to be in a better financial position than we had envisaged at the year end, but the coming year will remain a challenge for fundraising opportunities.

Our two virtual projects of the photographs and the fabric wall hanging are being framed as I write this, ready to be presented to the hospital.

Our latest fundraising project is to write a poem or prose on the theme 'Pandemic Memories and Hopes for the Future'. We will be working with Rotary and Orpington 1st who are organising a Literary Festival at the end of May.

Bernard Jayasundera, our website co-ordinator, has enabled the Friends to promote ourselves over this difficult time and has been updating our website and Facebook page regularly. Our interim newsletter went out again in both November and January to all our members on e-mail. If you have an email address, please let us know so that you can be included in future emailings.

Our committee has seen some changes over the year with the resignation, due to his retirement, of the Reverend Canon Tim Mercer. Trustees Carole Sissons and Anne Edwards have resigned after many years of service to the Friends and also a committee member Kay Ash. We thank them all for their contribution to the workings of the Friends. Since our last AGM in 2019 we are pleased to have welcomed new committee members Leigh Bozdan, Sue Simpson, Lyn Wheeler and Diane Perry. I should like to offer my sincere thanks to the officers, Vice Chairman Wendy Reeves, Treasurer Sally Panton and Secretary Pam Thomas for all the help they have given to me over this exceedingly difficult year.

Pauline Allard

Chairman, Friends of the Princess Royal University Hospital