

# Newsletter



Issue 40

Summer 2009

## 'THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT'

### **BREAST FRIENDS SUTTON COLDFIELD, TRUSTEES REPORT YEAR END 30<sup>TH</sup> APRIL 2009**



The Breast Friends Breast Cancer Support Charity has continued to meet its objectives to provide ongoing practical and emotional support to breast cancer patients and to promote breast awareness in the community.

Receipts from donations and fund-raising totalled £78, 841, which was an increase of over 10% on last year. Our grateful thanks go to those who helped us raise this money despite the recession starting to bite.

However, payments for the year totalled £89, 773, which was an overall increase of approx 30% on last year's figures. The need for direct practical help has escalated with an increase of over 100% on provision of home help and laundry and a 250% increase in the provision of equipment which covers electrically operated chairs, wheelchairs and the rental of stair lifts for seriously ill patients.

As the charity is a self help organization run entirely by unpaid volunteers who have all been diagnosed with cancer our administration costs remain low totalling just £3,466 for the year.

During the year, with the help of the National Federation of Healers (non religious) and our own volunteers, the Charity started to offer healing to breast cancer patients on Monday evenings at Good Hope Hospital. This is a free service to patients and the service is offered free of charge by the healers. The Charity is very grateful to those involved as the service as been of significant benefit to patients who have had the healing.

Breast Friends Committee Members continue to promote breast awareness by giving talks to local women's groups and breast awareness is also promoted when fund-raising at local supermarkets and other outlets. The fact that men can also be diagnosed with breast cancer is also mentioned.

Through our help-line and the presence of our volunteers at the clinics in local hospitals the Charity continues to offer emotional help to patients recently diagnosed and those who have had a recurrence.

We take this opportunity to thank the health professionals, in the community and in the local hospitals, who work closely with us informing us of patients in need of our help.

The Charity is very grateful to the local community, which gives ongoing financial support to Breast Friends, without which we could not continue our work.

We are aware that our outgoings have exceeded our incomings this year by approx 13% and the need for our help is escalating so our aim for the forthcoming year is to increase our fund-raising and hope for the continued support of the community despite the difficult financial situation we are all living with.

**Jackie Benzecry, Chairman,  
Breast Friends, Sutton Coldfield**

#### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ACCOUNTS YEAR ENDING 30<sup>TH</sup> APRIL 2009 COMPARISONS

	YEAR 2007/8	YEAR 2008/9
DONATIONS & FUNDRAISING	£71476	£78841
PART FUNDED EVENTS COST TO CHARITY	£7351	£5596
LAUNDRY/ HOMEHELP	£11213	£25815
CHAIRS/ WHEELCHAIRS HIRE OF STAIRLIFT	£4035	£14262
AT END OF YEAR FUNDS AVAILABLE	£125292	£114360

# Great Midlands FUN RUN



Holly cools down!

On a very hot Sunday 31<sup>st</sup> May our wonderful Great Midlands Fun-Runners once again did us proud. As far as we are aware, around 80 people participated in support of Breast Friends and despite the heat, the atmosphere in Sutton Coldfield was absolutely fantastic.

The Great Midlands Fun Run is a moving and inspiring event with thousands of people taking part and lining the 8.5 mile route. So many deserving causes, charities and voluntary organisations, many small and local will benefit from the fantastic efforts of all who take part.



Team ran in memory of Mary Carus



Little Aston nurses took part in memory of Dawn Marsh

A massive thank you from Breast Friends to everyone - to those who took part and also the supporters who were out there cheering with their pink feather boas! The total amount of money raised is announced at the end of the year when all sponsor money has been paid in, so watch this space! The next Great Midlands Fun Run takes place on Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> June 2010, so please consider running for Breast Friends next year!



Pete and Ashleigh Mills

## Don Becomes Our Patron

Breast Friends are pleased to announce that comedian and broadcaster Don Maclean has agreed to become our 4<sup>th</sup> patron.

Don has given his time and support freely to our charity over a number of years, providing entertainment and laughter at our Celebrity Luncheon events. These times have been truly memorable occasions which with his help have raised thousands of pounds for our fund.



Breast Friends have thoroughly enjoyed our annual trips to the Pantomime at the Birmingham Hippodrome. Usually we find Don is playing the hilarious role of the 'Dame'. He always finds time to chat to our members in the hospitality room after the performance which is very much appreciated by all, giving the evening a special little sparkle.

Members have also enjoyed social evenings at the Garrick Theatre in Lichfield where Don has performed with his buddy Malcolm Stent in 'Go and Play up Your Own End' and 'Wait Till Your Father Gets Home'. He recently performed on the occasion of his birthday and was delighted to share a few drinks and a slice of birthday cake provided by our ladies after the show. We welcome and thank Don and look forward to plenty more laughter in the future.

## The Healing Corner

"As humans we do not just react with other humans, we also exchange energies with animals and endless forms of energy and life.

Take for example, an occasion when you may have been working extremely hard and realised that you must have a break. What do humans often choose to do? Maybe go away somewhere by the sea or other stretch of water, to lie in the sun, to take a walk in the woods or enjoy some beautiful scenery, whether it be mountainous or flat.

We often use the expression 'I need to re-charge my batteries'. All you mean is that your own energy field is depleted and you need to take in some more energy".

If you would like to attend the 'Healing Clinic' at Good Hope Hospital, please ring Jeannie for an appointment on: 0121 351 6017 for an appointment. All clinics are free to Breast Friends members.



## Breast Friends Website and Helpline

Please take a look at our website [www.breastfriends.org.uk](http://www.breastfriends.org.uk) You can find information about the group, its activities and many useful contact numbers. Our newsletters are now available on the website too.

Please remember our telephone helpline is also available. Breast Friends can offer emotional support and practical help to anyone concerned or affected by breast cancer. Your call is confidential and will be answered by a trained volunteer who has experienced breast cancer herself. **The helpline numbers are 0121 424 9054 or 0121 424 9490**

# Breast Friends Celebrity Lunch 2009



Our ladies who lunch!

Once again our 'Celebrity Lunch' in May was a sell-out. The event is always a real treat and was enjoyed immensely by all who attended the function at Moor Hall Hotel, raising the marvellous sum of **£3,554** for our fund.

As always the Charter Suite looked stunning with flower arrangements kindly donated by the **Whittington Ladies Flower Club** and balloons by **Brian Bate at Rainbow Greetings of Mere Green**.



Committee members pictured with patrons **Don Maclean, Kay Alexander & Andrew Mitchell MP**

Breast Friends patrons **Kay Alexander** (BBC Midlands News) and **Andrew Mitchell** (MP for Sutton Coldfield) both attended and paid tribute to the work of the group. We were also delighted to have the company of pianist **Annabel Anderson** who played for us beautifully throughout the meal.



Selling the raffle tickets

Entertainment was provided by our new patron comedian **Don Maclean** who was joined by his friend, entertainer **Malcolm Stent** and they performed a wonderful medley of comedy and songs from their recent stage show 'Wait Till your Father Gets Home'.

Thanks also to **Nigel Bailey** our MC and **all who helped organise the event**, to our generous **sponsors** for providing the many fabulous prizes for our raffle, and to the **staff and management of Moor Hall** for the lovely meal and efficient service.

To **everyone who attended**, thank you so much for your support and hope to see you next time.

## Warners Weekend

This year we will be having a change of venue for our annual 'Warners Weekend' and we are off to **Alvaston Hall in Cheshire from Friday 18<sup>th</sup> - Monday 21<sup>st</sup> September**. Alvaston is a half timbered country house five minutes from the old Cheshire riverside town of Nantwich. Close to the splendid cathedral city of Chester, just 10 minutes from the restful Water Gardens at Stapely.

Smaller than Thoresby Hall, but very well appointed offering the usual Warners standard of very comfortable accommodation, full English or continental breakfast and three course dinner in the Cabaret Diner, leisure & sports facilities including swimming pool and therapies, and live evening music & performances in the Cabaret Diner.

Alvaston Hall also has a beautiful original cosy half-timbered hall and original 19<sup>th</sup> century stained glass windows. There are four separate bars including the Clubhouse on the golf course and the Cheshire Barn for morning coffee, lunch and afternoon tea. It is ideally located to explore the many tourist attractions that Cheshire has to offer. We do plan a couple of optional excursions over our weekend.

**Price on a half board basis inclusive of transport will be £150 for Breast Friends members and £200 for non-members.** If you would like to join us for a feel-good three night mini-break. A chance to enjoy good company, good food and relax (or not!) Please contact Jackie as soon as possible on



**0121 378 3037** to reserve your place. *For those members who have already reserved a place, your payment is now required.*

## We Will Rock You!

A trip to the Birmingham Hippodrome has been arranged for the evening of **Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> August** to see 'We Will Rock You.' There are a few tickets left priced at £37 each to include return transport.

Actor and musician **Jonathan Wilkes** and former Coronation Street star **Kevin Kennedy**, star in this year's 'We Will Rock You' UK Tour. They appear in this smash-hit Queen and Ben Elton musical alongside **X Factor finalist Brenda Edwards**, star of ITV1's **Britannia High Georgina Hagen** and **I'd Do Anything's Nancy** contestant **Ashley Russell**.

Expect your favourite Queen songs including "We Are The Champions", "Another One Bites The Dust", "We Will Rock You", and, of course, "Bohemian Rhapsody". There have been fantastic reviews, so don't miss out!

**To reserve your seat, please telephone Gill Harris as soon as possible on 0121 350 0615.**

*Watch this space for more details about our annual trip to the pantomime next year. Gill has made a group booking for 28<sup>th</sup> January 2010. It's Sleeping Beauty, starring Joe Pasquale! Let Gill know if you are interested.*

## Cancer Support Centre Annual Ball

A good many of our members enjoy attending the Annual Ball in aid of the Cancer Support Centre, Sutton Coldfield. This year it will be held at Drayton Manor Tower Suite on Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> October.

*For more information and to reserve your tickets please telephone **Maureen Farmer** on **0121 308 8634***



## Donations Update

Since our last publication, donations to the Breast Friends Fund have been gratefully received from the following:

Mavis Rylance and her Line Dancers  
Jayne Parker (Macmillan Nurse)  
Elaine Turbill  
St Mary's Lodge (D. Gurham)  
D. Maneffa  
Peter and Kelly Lyons (Great Midlands Fun Run)  
Jo Millward (Breast Care Nurse)  
Julie Ellis (Pampered Chef)  
Fox Hill, Mitchell Centre  
Whittington Flower Club  
A. Howell  
M. Barwell  
D. Bessant  
Dahiben Chhimabhai Patel  
Helen McGrail  
Waitrose 'Community Matters' scheme  
Sarah Wood  
Flax Hill County Junior School  
Carol Hale  
'Down a Size'  
Yvonne Withers  
Sue Flint (Deanery School)  
Ed and Larissa Taylor  
Barry Walton  
D. Moule and Tamworth Borough Council Football Syndicate  
H. Buller  
J. Cook  
Dosthill WI  
Mary Jones (Spot the Baby Competition)  
Goodenough Charitable Trust  
Sylvia Geldard (Senior Spin Club)  
Kathy Beggs  
Joyce Jones  
Brenda Cordwell (in memory of Sheila Freckleton)  
Donations in memory of Muriel Fowles  
Donations in memory of Barbara Sheldon  
Donations in memory of Hazel Stone  
Donations in memory of Lisa Maunde-Barnes

## 'Relight Your Fire!'

There may be a few tickets left available for our 'Take That' Charity Tribute Evening at Pier 39 restaurant in Mere Green on Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> September.

Tickets are priced at £35 each to include a 3 course meal and coffee. It is sure to be a great evening. **Please enquire to Jackie Benzecry on 0121 378 3037.**



## Collection Box Boost

Committee member Lynn Wootton recently organised a collection day at Sainsbury's, Mere Green. Generous customers raised over £300 for our funds. Thank you to everyone who helped on the day.

Thank you also to Murraywells, House of Flowers and Fox Hill Knitting Shop at the Mitchell Centre and Rainbow Greetings of Mere Green whose customers have kindly made donations to our collection boxes.

*If you know of a business outlet that may be receptive to housing one of our pink 'Breast Friends' collection boxes, please contact Jackie on 0121 378 3037.*

## Dates for your Diary

**Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> August** – 'We Will Rock You' outing to Birmingham Hippodrome. **N.B no General Meeting in August - summer holiday time.**



**Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> September** - 'Take That' Tribute Night at Pier 39, Mere Green.

**Friday 18<sup>th</sup> – Monday 21<sup>st</sup> September** – 'Warners Weekend' at Alveston Hall.

**Monday 28<sup>th</sup> September** – General Meeting at the Partnership Learning Centre at Good Hope at 7:30pm. Speaker will be Breast Friends committee member and tennis umpire Janet Diamond giving us an insight into 'The World of Wimbledon.' All welcome.

**Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> October** – Sutton Coldfield Cancer Centre Annual Ball

**Monday 26<sup>th</sup> October** – General Meeting at the Partnership Learning Centre at Good Hope 7:30pm. Bargains Galore with Tom Speake and his popular 'Next One' Fashions. All welcome.

*Advance notice that our Christmas Party this year will be on 7<sup>th</sup> December and will be held at the Holy Trinity Catholic Church Centre on Lichfield Road, Sutton Coldfield. More details next time.*



## Contact

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West Midlands  
B75 6HS  
Tel: 0121 329 3600

e-mail: [sue-mills@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:sue-mills@blueyonder.co.uk)

## Breast Friends at Tamworth

A reminder to our members in Tamworth about our small and friendly sub-group who meet once a month at the Sacred Heart Church Centre, Glascombe Road, Tamworth. Meetings are held on the first Monday of every month (except on bank holidays) New members would receive a very warm welcome. Please feel free to bring a female friend or relative if you wish.

**For further information please contact Yvonne Hawkins on 01827 62181 or Mary Kirk on 01827 705941**

## Sharon has a Close Shave for Breast Friends!

Breast Friends member Sharon Fox from Tamworth recently raised the grand total of £1,115 for our fund.

*"After finding out in March 09 that I had breast cancer and was to undergo chemotherapy, I decided to lose my hair in style! I set about organising a Fundraising Disco in aid of Breast Friends as they have helped me immensely. We had lots of support and help from friends and family. The evening was a great success and everyone joined in the games that I organised to include, 'Pin the Nipple on the Boob' and our own version of the 'Full Monty'. A fabulous event that raised over a thousand pounds for Breast Friends and I hope to do more to repay the charity when I'm better!"*

Thank you Sharon, you are an absolute star!  
**Look out for Sharon's regular 'blog' in the Tamworth Herald.**



Sharon with hubby Stephen