

## North and East Herts Branch Newsletter

**NOVEMBER 2019**



**Wishing you all a very Happy Christmas and a healthy New Year**

The National Office Helpline is 0808 8026262  
Motor Neurone Disease Association – Registered Charity No. 294354  
Branch Patron: Dr Viv Lucas

## Message from the Chair

The 'festive season' is almost here and I will start this newsletter with details about our Christmas Lunch which is booked for **Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> December at 1 o'clock at the Three Horseshoes as usual.** and replaces the November Branch meeting. We have had a good response with 24 members signing up for the meal and most have already given me their choice of menu. Please contact Chris if you wish to include your name or want more information about this **01462 338450** The cost this year is £22 for two courses and £27 for three to include coffee and a tip.

We are most grateful to Colin for arranging another quiz evening which was a great success last year. More details about this can be found in the newsletter and the committee are always happy to support members who wish to organise their own fundraising event. Members have held coffee mornings, cake sales, afternoon teas, and raffles with families, friends and neighbours which have not only raised funds for the Branch but have also raised awareness of MND. And I must also mention our Patron Dr Viv Lucas who has given several 'gigs' and recently released a CD. Publicity materials are also available from National Office for any event.

Anita Solan a retired fundraiser at National Office and a member of the Milton Keynes branch was the speaker at our October meeting and gave a very interesting and informative talk about how we can all make a difference and fundraise on a personal level. This is very much what I have written in the previous paragraph, and I hope her enthusiasm will inspire others to 'have a go.'

The Charity Gala at the Gordon Craig Theatre, was well supported and a great success and has so far raised £4250,00 for the MND association. We are indebted to Carl and Neil Rutherford for all the planning and work they have done to make this second Gala Event in memory of their father Iain possible. A great fund-raiser and entertainment involving local folk alongside West End stars. Thank you Carl and Neil

We look forward to your continued support in 2020 and send our good wishes for Christmas and the New Year.

Gloria

## Finance Report September - October 2019

Our funds have seen a steady increase over the last couple of months. We were pleased to raise £436 from our Hitchin Street collection in September, our thanks to the Bourke family who have again been a mainstay of the collection team. We also received a £2,000 In Memoriam donation from the Hitchin Rotary Club, £700.00 from the CUI in Stevenage, £236 from a cake sale, £185 from the sale of donated items and £150 in regular donations.

These funds have made it possible for us to finance nearly £2,000 in Quality of Life Grants and a further £250 Carer's Grant over the last 2 months. As at the end of October our bank balance stood at £9,310.27 and with the promise of 50% of the proceeds from the recent Gala (about £4,250) our financial position is looking very sound.

Heather

## **Past Events**

### **Hitchin Collection Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> September**

On Saturday 21st September we had our Hitchin street collection which luckily coincided with Hitchin Bancroft Day. With one of our 2 allocated collection points at the corner of Bancroft and the High Street leading to the market Square and the 2<sup>nd</sup> collection point in the market square we had plenty of footfall during the 4 hours we were collecting.

As with the previous collection at Letchworth we are now only allowed 2 people at each location. Catherine Everett and her 2 daughters Anna and Evie (we decided 2 children make 1 adult) took the first hour on the corner of Bancroft and by the weight of their boxes and the amount of stickers given out their smiles must have attracted the most donations on the day.

The total collected was £436.30 which was a tremendous amount over only 4 hours and many thanks to the other collectors on the day Annette & Jon Ward, Jo Keshishian, Heather Hurley, Jim Bourke ( Senior) , Mark Bourke & Dan Bourke

Many many thanks to Daniel, the Bourke family and all our wonderful supporters for making this such a successful day.

### **Branch Meeting Wednesday 25th September**

Our lunch meeting was very enjoyable supported by 19 of our members and friends. We were very pleased to welcome some new faces. Gloria welcomed us all and asked if we had any ideas for future meetings. Afternoon tea was suggested possible at the par 3 golf club in Letchworth where we have enjoyed homemade cakes and scones. Colin, who is the president of the Baldock bowls club, informed us that he is arranging another Quiz evening either at end of November or beginning of December.

### **Branch Meeting Wednesday 30<sup>th</sup> October.**

Gloria welcomed Anita Solan, retired Fundraiser at National Office and a member of the Milton Keynes branch to the meeting. Anita has joined us on several of the Letchworth Walks to D'Feet MND. Anita became aware of MND when her sister was diagnosed in 1996, little was known about the disease and Anita found only 2 books that could help them. Anita found support with the Milton Keynes branch, helping them to raise funds, coffee mornings, quizzes, etc and never refused a funding request. She then volunteered 2 days a week at national office as a fundraiser, after a few months it became a full time position with the title of Community Fund Raiser which lasted for 10 years. Anita retired in January, and has been a volunteer for 15 years. Since January, has she been taking things easy? No! Animal conservation, in Thailand with elephants, volunteering in Cambodia, India, Europe, bear sanctuary in Albania, Spain with the Pigs, Goats and Guinea Pigs, giving a pig a mud bath sounded very messy.

It was interesting sharing all Anita's experiences at work and play. Many thanks to her for joining us at our meeting, and we hope to see her again soon.

Colin Chambers delighted us with his Artwork that he produced to celebrate the 25th Anniversary of the branch and the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Association. Many thanks to Colin for a beautiful very detailed piece of art.

Peter arrived with lots of goodies for the raffle for the gala and the quiz evening, his family and friends had all kindly donated some wonderful prizes to support him and the branch. Many thanks to them all for their generosity.

Carol once again had been busy knitting raising funds for the branch and came with lovely little red knitted stockings filled with chocolate. Many thanks Carol.



### **Charity Gala Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> November**

Many thanks to all those who came along to support the branch and the Association, and to all those who gave donations and raffle prizes, for this our second Motor Neurone Disease West End Gala. It was held in the larger Concert Hall at the Gordon Craig Theatre in memory of all those who have lost their battle with the disease, including Iain, Neil and Carl's father. More than 650 people came along to watch a wonderful successful evening. Nearly £4500.00 was raised which will be shared with the branch and Association for research.

The evening was hosted by Neil, Carl and Sarah Moyle, who is best known for her role as Valerie Pitman in the BBC series Doctors and the sitcom Extras.

The choir from the Mountview Academy were outstanding, Nathania Ong, in her second year of training at Mountview sang, We kiss in a shadow/I have dreamed, with Dean John Wilson who graduated from Mountview, It was beautiful,

A family friend and local artist, Val Evans, gave a very moving rendition of Send in the Clowns.





Many many thanks also to all the artists, Simon Beck the conductor and the orchestra who all kindly gave their time free, performing some wonderful songs from the Greatest Showman, The Lion King, Oliver, Ghost, Carousel, the King and I, and our very own patron Viv sang his Song for Lindy, a lovely tribute to his sister who he sadly lost to MND.



As the evening was dedicated to all those who had lost their battle with MND, there was a special tribute with pictures of some of the loved ones lost, but always in our hearts. Liz Pybus our Regional Care Development Advisor, talked with Carl about the disease and how the branch and the association supported and raised funds for all MND sufferers and their families

Neil had asked my daughter Nicola to write a poem again which was deeply moving and was read by Sarah Moyle.

***What do you see?***

***What do you see, when you look at me?***

***Do I still have, my identity?***

***What do you feel, about what I have become?***

***Are you afraid, or are you just numb?***

*The person I was, is no longer near  
But if you look close, you will see I'm still here  
The unwelcome visitor, has indeed ravaged  
But destroy my essence, he has not managed.*

*My spirit remains strong, when my body is weak  
Which I try to convey, though unable to speak  
I can no longer hold you, which makes me so sad  
But our love hasn't wained, of that I am glad.*

*My appetite for food, has all but departed  
My appetite for life, seems only just started  
On my journey, that is to be cut to the quick  
As my visitor prods me, with his disease ridden stick.*

*As my time draws near, I want you to feel proud  
Of how we shared life, as we once vowed  
For better for worse, we saw it through to its end  
And I could never have asked, for such a wonderful friend.*

*Thank you my love, for all you have done  
Don't be sad, try to think back on all of the fun  
That we've had as we've shared, the life that we've led  
So precious, there's not another I would have chosen instead.*

*It will be hard, but you'll need to let me go  
For it is peace I now seek, so please don't feel low  
Life is for living, which is what you must do  
I'll always be with you, so please live it for two.*

## **Future Events**

### **Quiz Night Friday 29<sup>th</sup> November**

Colin Smith, President of the Baldock Town Bowls Club has again arranged a Quiz evening on Friday 29<sup>th</sup> November, raising funds for the branch.

7pm for 7.30pm

Tables of up to 6 people

Prizes for Winners and Runner Ups

**Quiz Master Mr Eddie Plume**

Half Time Fish and Chips, Raffle - £12 per person

Baldock Town Bowls Club West Avenue Baldock SG7 5AY

Donations for raffle would be welcome

Entries to – Colin Smith 01462 682621 Email – [colinwsmith01@btinternet.com](mailto:colinwsmith01@btinternet.com)

### **Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> December**

Carol Hardy will have a craft stall at the Oval Community Centre Vardon Road Stevenage on Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> December 11am to 2pm. Selling her lovely knitted items, including Hats, Scarves and Christmas decorations.

## **FUTURE MEETINGS FOR YOUR DIARY**

**Friday 29<sup>th</sup> November**

**Quiz Evening – Baldock Town Bowls Club**

**November Meeting  
Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> December**

**Three Horseshoes  
Christmas Lunch**

**Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> December**

**Craft Stall – The Oval Community Centre**

**January Meeting  
Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> January**

**Three Horseshoes**

**February Meeting  
Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> February**

**Three Horseshoes  
Lunch 12pm**

**March Meeting  
Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> March**

**The Three Horseshoes  
A G M**

Monthly meetings are held on the last Wednesday of each month at 11am

The Three Horseshoes  
Hooks Cross  
Watton-at-Stone  
Hertfordshire  
SG14 3RY  
01920 830391