

**North and East Herts Branch  
November Newsletter  
A very Merry Christmas to you all**



The MND association website is: [www.mndassociation.org](http://www.mndassociation.org)

The National Office helpline is: 08457 626262

Motor Neurone Disease Association – Registered charity No. 294354

Branch Patron: Dr Viv Lucas

## Message from the Chair

This will be the last newsletter for 2014 which we hope will reach you before the Christmas postal rush begins!

Attendance at the September and October meetings was poor and it was a pity that there were not more members present to see the beautiful quilt which Michele brought along and hear about how it was made. Raffle tickets are still available from Chris. Annette showed the photos of our 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary 'do' at the October meeting and Neil Penson the Volunteer Development Co-ordinator at National Office talked a bit about his role in the association.

The Christmas lunch is booked at Papillon in Stapleford on Thursday December the 4<sup>th</sup>. This is instead of our November meeting. This has been well-supported and we now have twenty-six folk coming to it. We are organising an afternoon cream tea, along with a Bring and Buy Sale, for our January meeting. This will be held at the Bedwell Community Centre on January 28<sup>th</sup> from 2.30 to 4.30pm and will be an opportunity for you to dispose of any unwanted Christmas gifts and books and also raise some money for the branch. We shall need to know numbers for catering and will check with those at the meal in December or contact those we think might be interested nearer the time. And we shall organise another pub lunch at the 'Three Horseshoes' in Hooks Cross for February.

I should like to record our thanks to the members and supporters who continue to contribute to our funds by organising activities such as the 'Bake It' by Maggie and Kathy Duncan, 'The Birdsong' concert by Catherine Henderson, the Cycle Ride by James Beaven, the Swim by Emma Roberts and the local street collections manned by volunteers. Events like this and collections from individual's boxes, 'in memoriam' and donations from organisations such as 'Friends of Heydon Grange Golf Course' ensure a steady flow of funds to the branch. This enables us to respond to requests for support for local folk with MND.

The committee and I send our best wishes for Christmas and the New Year and look forward to your continuing support in 2015.

Gloria

# Fundraising

## A cool £7million

The Association are delighted to announce the income received so far from the Ice Bucket Challenge is a staggering £7 million. So to all of you who have taken part, or been involved in any way, we send you a heartfelt thank you.

As a relatively small charity, these have been an historic few weeks. Last year we received an average of 13,000 donations per month. Thanks to you and the public, we received more than 910,000 donations in just three weeks. The vast majority of these donations came via text to the ICED55 Just Giving page, set up by our volunteers and promoted on social media. But it was not just about raising money, it was also about spreading the word of this devastating disease.

### Facts and figures

- 15,000 new Facebook likes
- 8,000 new Twitter followers
- 5 million views of [Benedict Cumberbatch Ice Bucket Challenge](#)
- 1 million views of [Stephen Hawking video](#)
- Social media reach of 60 million people
- 533 new direct debits set up worth over £50,000 per year
- An increase in sign up for fundraising events
- Increased celebrity participation and engagement
- 695 new charter signatures
- An increase in volunteering enquiries.

### Media coverage

Between 11 August and 8 September, MND and the MND Association were mentioned in an incredible 3,120 news articles and features. This included: Sky News; BBC World Service; BCC News; BBC Breakfast; ITN World and coverage in almost all of the daily and weekly nationals from the Sun to the Observer. Regional media, including regional television, across the UK covered the story and there was significant interest from online channels too, ranging from the Mail Online to specialist health websites.

A big thank you to all those who shared their stories.

In the short term this extra money has allowed us to make an immediate start on some projects we planned to begin over the next three years including:

**New Research Grants** - We are awarding seven new research grants, totalling over £1 million.

**Studentships** - We also have six new PhD studentship projects starting shortly, totalling over £500,000.

**Genetic Research** - We can accelerate our genetic research programmes now.

**Multidisciplinary Care** - We already plan to develop our specialist Care Centre programme while also campaigning for more statutory support for people living with MND.

**New Grants for Children** - We will support young people through a new 'Young Person's Grant'.

We are now making plans to spend the rest of the money – and we want to hear your priorities. This will ensure we get the maximum impact for people with MND.

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## **Great North Run**

Jim Bourke's son Jim and his granddaughter Lauren, recently ran the Great North Run raising money for MND through Central Office fundraising, who have received all of the funds through Just Giving. A friend has also very kindly donated a cheque in the sum of £100 which Jim and Lauren have given to the branch.

Many thanks Jim and Lauren – very well done.

## **New film about the life of our Patron, Professor Stephen Hawking**

You may have recently heard about a new film called 'The Theory of Everything', which is due out early next year. The film is based on the diaries of Professor Hawking's first wife Jane, and covers their life from meeting at university until the break up of their marriage. The couple are played by leading young British actors Eddie Redmayne and Felicity Jones. The film has already been touted as a possible contender for the 2015 Oscars.

As part of their research, Eddie and Felicity met people living with MND and their carers, supported by the North London and North West London Branches. We advised the set designers and production teams. The film will raise awareness of MND, and our work. Since July 2013 we have been liaising with the film company, the Hawking family and – through the North London Branch – with Eddie and Felicity to see how we can link in with the film. The UK premiere is expected to take place in London on Tuesday 9th December and we can now confirm that we will benefit from this event. We are likely to be given tickets to sell but we are also waiting to hear what other ways we might be able to maximise this fantastic opportunity.

We are able to confirm – thanks to the Isle of Wight Branch Chair, Tony Bray – that Britain's second biggest cinema chain, Cineworld, have given permission for branches and groups to hold bucket collections in any of their cinemas on Friday 2 January, the opening night of the film's general release.

If anyone would be interested in taking part in the bucket collection at the Stevenage cinema, please contact a committee member.

## Past Events

Our September meeting was poorly attended but it was light hearted and interesting. Michele Clarke came to talk to us, bringing her magnificent Art Nouveau Applique Quilt.

Michele starting quilting over 40 years ago, having seen an advertisement to join a Patchwork group, while playing badminton for her local club in Codicote. She now teaches patchwork in her village hall in Weston. Michele and her group have made over 100 quilts, 8 runners and numerous cushions.

Michele decided to make the quilt and raffle it for MNDA when her great friend was diagnosed with the disease. Her 'girls' made the inside blocks, while she finished it off with the borders, putting it together and then quilting it. The quilt has taken over 18 months to complete. The Art Nouveau design is one of her favourite eras for design. We hope you will like it too.



Raffle tickets are available from Chris Carter for £1. The money raised will go to the branch and to the very much needed research into this dreadful disease, so please make sure that you buy some tickets.

The draw will take place on Sunday 7th December in the village hall, following a small exhibition of their work from 2-5pm. The draw will be at 4pm and we do hope it goes to a good home! Everyone is welcome.  
Many thanks to Michele and her 'girls'.

### **Meeting Wednesday 29th October**

Our meeting this month was an enjoyable and informal evening beginning with Annette showing us photos which Roger Widdicombe had taken at the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration in May. There were some lovely photos taken of the various dignitaries and local community representatives who had been invited, the display of past branch events, the committee, Dr Viv Lucas (our patron) and the wonderful cake which was made by a friend of Marilyns. Grateful thanks to Annette for bringing a laptop in order for us to see the photos.

It was a good introduction to the meeting for Neil Penson our new Volunteering Development Coordinator who came to introduce himself and talk about his role. Neil has taken over from Susanne Curtis as a result of the Associations regional restructure.

Neil explained that he wanted to find out about the work we do and how we can work together in the future. Next year he will carry out a review of the Branch by attending one of our Committee meetings. It will give us an opportunity to discuss with him about what is being planned for the future, what has gone well, ideas that we would like support from. He was impressed with our Newsletter and the friendly atmosphere at our meetings.

He talked about the fantastic results from the Ice Bucket Challenge. He explained that the Association are open to ideas as to how the money raised could be used. He also told us that with the power of social media it has increased MND awareness to younger people and we should be building on this success. Apparently Tesco's ice sales were up by 20% and they donated their profits to MND!

### **Changes at the QE11 Hospital**

In October the Accident and Emergency department at the QE11 hospital in Welwyn Garden City closed and was replaced by an Urgent Care Centre.

The centre is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week. No appointment is needed.

The centre can treat:-

Muscle and joint injuries

Tendonitis and soft tissue injuries

Suspected fractures and broken bones

Bites, stings, cuts bruises and grazes

Burns and scalds

Foreign bodies that are stuck in ears or noses

Minor eye injuries

Minor head injuries

Minor illnesses which would normally be treated by a GP, but which can't wait until your GP practice is next open.

The centre will move into the brand new hospital, which is being built on the existing site, in Spring 2015

## **FUTURE MEETINGS AND EVENTS FOR YOUR DIARY**

December Thursday 4th	Christmas Lunch 12.45 for 1.00pm Papillion Restaurant at the Woodhall Arms 17 High Road Stapleford Hertford Hertfordshire SG14 3NW
January Wednesday 28 <sup>th</sup>	Bring and Buy Sale – Cream Tea Bedwell Community Centre 2.30pm
February Wednesday 25th	Lunch at The Three Horseshoes – Hooks Cross
March Wednesday 25 <sup>th</sup>	Meeting at Bedwell
April Wednesday 29 <sup>th</sup>	Meeting at Bedwell - A G M

Bedwell Community Centre  
Bedwell Crescent  
Stevenage  
SG1 1NA

Bedwell meetings are the last Wednesday of the month at 7.30pm



## **BRANCH MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE – 2012/13**

### **OFFICERS**

<b>CHAIRMAN</b>	<b>TREASURER</b>	<b>SECRETARY</b>
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### **COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

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### **ASSOCIATION VISITORS**

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### **REGIONAL CARE DEVELOPMENT ADVISER**

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### **THE MND NORTH HERTS WEBSITE**

[www.mnd.n-herts.freeuk.com](http://www.mnd.n-herts.freeuk.com)

### **THE MND HELPLINE**

**Tel: 08457 626262**

All calls are charged at local rates. The hours of opening are:-  
Monday - Friday 9.00 a.m. - 5.30 p.m. and 7.00 p.m. - 10.30 p.m.  
Saturday, Sunday & Bank Holidays: 10.00 a.m. - 6.00 p.m.