



## Oxford & District

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Dear Friends

We have now held four Open Days since our return following the Covid break.

Our latest, in October, featured five members of the Rebukes ukelele band, who proved as popular as ever, with some rousing songs, with all of us joining in, and plenty of fun and laughter in between.

In September, we had a visit from Jim Humphreys, describing amusing incidents as town crier of Abingdon, while in August, we saw the return of another popular musician, guitarist Cody.

As we reported in the last newsletter, retired fire officer John Lowe had restarted our Open Day programme when we reopened in July with a talk about the history of firefighting locally.

We are building up what we hope will be an interesting and entertaining programme of guest

## Group Newsletter Autumn/Winter 2022

speakers, singers and musicians for future Open Days. If you have any ideas whom we might invite, please let our chairman, John Chipperfield, or any of our committee know.

As many of you will know, following Covid, we have been forced to make changes to the way we organise our Open Days to meet new rules and regulations imposed on us by the MS Society, to keep everyone safe.

We are still trying to find an outside caterer to provide lunch (several interesting ideas were put forward at our October Open Day) and those efforts will continue. Meanwhile, please continue to bring your own lunch.

As many of you will know, the rest of our Open Days remains the same, with tea, coffee and other drinks served when everyone arrives and, later, during and after lunch.

We are also pleased that our three therapists – Alison Wiltshire, Helen Thorpe and Neil Lambert – are continuing their valuable work as usual.



We provided all the publicity we could at the MS stall at the City of Oxford United Nations Old People's Day 2022 at Oxford Town Hall. Jo and Brian Hawtin, Alan Cusden and John Chipperfield manned our colourful stall for five hours to spread the word.

We put on display an array of pictures taken at our Open Days and other events, and there was plenty of information about MS available for the many visitors.

### **'SHAKING THE TIN' COLLECTION DAYS MAY BE OVER**

Many of you will recall that our regular collections outside supermarkets and garden centres were an important source of income for us.

Now, however, fewer people are carrying notes and coins in their pockets and handbags, making the traditional way of 'shaking the tin' for donations less attractive.

We continue to investigate how best to adopt the modern way of paying – the press-button automatic hand-held payment machines – and will update you when we have more information.



## **JOE RUNS FOR MS**

Many of us will remember Douglas Bradley, who was a regular at our monthly Open Days with his wife Hilary.

His grandson, Joe Solaja, pictured here, ran in the recent London Marathon in memory of his grandad. So far, he has raised £515.

His mother, Tracy Bradley, writes: "Joe got a place for the marathon two years ago but, of course, it was cancelled because of Covid. Last year, he had just had his son, Freddie, so he deferred his run until this year.

"He finally got to run the race and completed it in the amazing time of three hours 54 minutes.

"We are so proud of him and I know my dad would be too."

## **RAFFLE PRIZES**

One of the most popular features of our Open Days is the raffle, but we've been short of prizes lately. If anyone wishes to contribute, please bring along whatever you wish to offer.

## **SAFETY RULE**

To meet regulations imposed on us by the MS Society, please let us know you are coming to our Open Days by sending an email to our secretary at [jo.hawtin@ntlworld.com](mailto:jo.hawtin@ntlworld.com)

## **MS RESEARCH STUDY**

People with MS and their carers are being invited to take part in a research study being conducted at Southampton University.

Senior research fellow Dr John Spreadbury and his colleagues in the Faculty of Medicine are investigating attitudes to digital health technology among those with neurological conditions and those who provide care for them.

The study will involve taking part in either a telephone or online interview or an online focus group. Participants can choose whether they prefer to participate in an interview or focus group.

If any of our members and/or their carers wish to take part, contact Dr Spreadbury at [jhs101@soton.ac.uk](mailto:jhs101@soton.ac.uk) or by telephone on 07876 818 404.

## **VOLUNTEER AWARDS**

As many of you will know, the MS Society holds an annual ceremony to celebrate our inspiring volunteers and the amazing work they do.

This year's event took place in early October and was hosted by BBC Radio 1 disc jockey Scott Mills, who is one of the MS Society's ambassadors.

It is clearly too late to nominate anyone for the 2022 awards, but that does not stop any of us making an early start to 2023.

You can find the application form by keying into your computer '[MS Volunteer Impact Awards](#)'.

## **WOOF, WOOF!**

The MS Society has launched a new fundraising initiative entitled 'My MS Woof'.

The word 'woof' probably gives a clue as to what it is all about – yes, your dog or dogs are included!

The idea is to encourage people to walk, run or stroll with their dogs to raise money to stop MS. You can find everything you need to know at '[My MS Woof](#)'.

## **FREE DAY ON THE SEA**

Fancy a day on the sea? Seventy people with MS are being offered a free day's sailing from Port Solent Marina, Portsmouth.

Four sailings are planned in November, so there are plenty to choose from.

If you are interested, fill in the application form at <https://oceansofhope.co.uk/day-challenges/>

## **SUPPORT OFFICER**

We are delighted to welcome our new Support Volunteer, Chris Sivewright, who is offering to help members in any way he can.

He writes: "I have a background in teaching. I've taught in schools, colleges and university in Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire since 1981. I still teach but only online.

Currently, I have 57 courses and 161,000 students – BUT about 95% of them tend not to ask questions so I have time to do other things.

"Wanting to escape sitting in front of a computer, I scoured the voluntary services advertisements and decided to volunteer for a variety of charities – including the MS Society.

"I have a particular link to the Society as I have raised funds for it for years and my sister, mother and brother all have/had MS. I hope to offer:

- Information about services and healthcare in the area.
- Assist and offer support in social activities/reducing isolation.
- Assist in any and all activities as required."



Chris lives in Water Eaton, near Kidlington. His email address is [chris.oslmarketing@gmail.com](mailto:chris.oslmarketing@gmail.com) and everyone is welcome to Whatsapp him on 07429144607.

## **WE NEED YOU**

If you have any stories to tell, written poetry, created paintings and drawings or taken family photographs in recent times, don't forget send them to John Chipperfield at [mjpchipperfield@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:mjpchipperfield@yahoo.co.uk) for inclusion in the next newsletter.

We all love to hear what other members are doing in their lives.

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**All views expressed in this newsletter are individual and not necessarily the view or policy of the charity or its supporters.**



**Together, we can be there for everyone affected by MS**

### **DATES FOR YOUR DIARY**

All Open Days take place, 10am-4pm, at Northcourt Centre, Abingdon, OX14 1NS.

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|-------------------------------------|---|
| <b>Fri. 4<sup>th</sup> November</b> | <b>OPEN DAY - Jeff Rozelaar.</b><br>Bagels and Bacon.                     |
| <b>Fri. 2<sup>nd</sup> December</b> | <b>OPEN DAY - Diana Woods entertains.</b><br>Popular organist and singer. |

**2023**  
**NO OPEN DAY IN JANUARY.**

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|-------------------------------------|--|
| <b>Fri. 3<sup>rd</sup> February</b> | <b>OPEN DAY - Anthony King.</b><br>Life as a Court Judge.    |
| <b>Fri. 3<sup>rd</sup> March</b>    | <b>OPEN DAY – Danny Grocock.</b><br>Tax, Care, and Toy Boys. |
| <b>Fri. 7<sup>th</sup> April</b>    | <b>OPEN DAY – Don Rouse.</b><br>The barn dancing farmer.     |



**Members pictured with town crier, Jim Humphreys, who described his work at our September Open Day.**

## **HELP AT A GLANCE**

**MS Society helpline – 0808 800 8000 (Freephone)**

**MS nurse advice line – 01865 234461**

[ms.advice@ouh.nhs.uk](mailto:ms.advice@ouh.nhs.uk)

(The advice line is an answer machine service monitored 9am-5pm, Mon- Fri)

**MS specialist nurse – Sue Barnden**

**01865 737465**

**Continence (bladder and bowel) nurse – 01865 904303**

**MS Therapy Centre**

37e Milton Trading Park, Abingdon

**01235 832023**

**Carers Oxfordshire – 0845 050 7666**

**MS resource centre – 0800 783 0518 (Freephone)**

**MS Trust Library & Information Service – 0800 032 3839**

**NHS Direct - 111**

**Medical Emergency - 999**

## **OXFORD AND DISTRICT BRANCH OFFICERS**

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**The Rebukes ukulele band – left to right, Becky, Claire, Caroline, Sarah and Julian – who entertained us at our October Open Day**

## **OUR OPEN DAYS – OUR FUTURE PROGRAMME**

We look forward to continuing our successful restart to our Open Day programme in the coming months.

On **Friday, 4<sup>th</sup> November**, Jeff Rozelaar will entertain us with his talk entitled 'Bagels and Bacon' about the post-war East End, while on **Friday, 2<sup>nd</sup> December**, we welcome back organist and singer Diana Woods with an early taste of Christmas.

Don't forget, there is no Open Day in January, but we will be back on **Friday, 3<sup>rd</sup> February** with Anthony King talking about his life as a court judge.

He will be followed on **Friday, 3<sup>rd</sup> March** by Danny Grocock from the Co-op with a talk entitled 'Tax, Care and Toy Boys'.

We are building up a programme for the rest of 2023, so don't forget, if **you have any ideas for speakers or entertainers, please let us know.**