



Oxford & District

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Dear Friends

As many of you will know, members have had to bring their own lunch to our Open Days since Covid.

The MS Society has ruled that we can no longer have meals prepared by our own team of volunteers – they have to be provided by professional staff with their own insurance in case anything goes wrong.

After several attempts to find a supplier, we have now decided to start a two-month trial with Michael Lammis, who runs La Baguette in Abingdon. He will be supplying the food options opposite.

You don't need to order – all on this list will be available on the tables and you will simply make your choice when lunch starts. Tea and coffee will be served as normal.

Group Newsletter Spring-Summer 2023

Sandwiches

- Cheese
- Chicken w/mayo
- Egg w/mayo
- Ham
- Cheese & Ham
- Tuna w/mayo

Desserts

- Chocolate brownies
- Dark millionaire shortbread
- White millionaire shortbread
- Almond slice
- Ginger tiffin

So that we don't order too much, please let our administration volunteer, Jo Hawtin, know at least three days before the Open Day that you will be present – email her at jo.hawtin@ntlworld.com

We are keen to hear from members whether they think the arrangement is working before we agree to extend it beyond our May and June Open Days.

We are grateful to Sara Nugent for setting up the deal with La Baguette. Other firms appeared reluctant to help when they heard it was a 'once-a-month' order.

Incidentally, Sara has answered our urgent call in the last newsletter for younger members to help run our group – she will be joining our committee to assist in planning future activities. Thank you and welcome, Sara!



Our April Open Day, with the Lord Mayor James Fry and Susanna Pressel, who chairs Oxfordshire County Council

OPEN DAYS

We wondered if our April Open Day clashing with Good Friday would work against us, with hardly anyone turning up.

We needn't have worried. Just look at the picture above - 24 members, including four newcomers, came through the doors at the Northcourt Centre in Abingdon to hear two very important speakers.

We were delighted to welcome the Lord Mayor of Oxford, James Fry, and Susanna Pressel, his wife, who is not only Lady Mayoress and a city councillor but also chairs Oxfordshire County Council.

We could hardly have chosen a busier and more powerful couple in the city and county!

The Lord Mayor spoke about his role in the city, while his wife told us about her work across the whole county.

There were plenty of questions for both after they spoke – one big topic, not surprisingly, was potholes in our roads! In fact, the question-and-answer session lasted longer than the original speakers! Members really got stuck in and aired their grievances with council representatives so close at hand!

Our coordinator, John Chipperfield, had prepared a series of questions in case no-one in the audience spoke out.

He needn't have worried – we can't remember our members engaging speakers for so long! It was a good opportunity to let off steam!

We have been pleased to welcome new members to our recent Open Days, among them Karen and Stuart Burnham, Trevor Bailey and Andrew Garner.

LET US KNOW!

Don't forget, this is YOUR newsletter and we always like to hear what you are doing in your lives.

If you have any stories to tell, written poetry, created paintings and drawings or taken family photographs in recent times, please send them to John Chipperfield at mjpchipperfield@yahoo.co.uk for inclusion in the next newsletter. We all love to hear what other members are doing.

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

DOREEN PHILLIPS

We were sorry to hear of the death of Doreen Phillips, who attended our Open Days for many years, making many friends and enjoying our activities.

Born at Caversham, near Reading, in 1931, she moved with her family to Oxford aged three and later attended Donnington School and Cowley St John Girls' School.

She and her future husband John liked to dance, a tricky feat as John was 6ft 4in tall and Doreen was 5ft 4in.

They married during the bitter winter of 1962 - the doors to St Albans Church had to be defrosted before they could get in and it was too cold to go on honeymoon.

Doreen worked as a donor attendant for the Blood Transfusion Service before moving to the public health department as a shorthand typist. She was also part of the polio vaccination team.

She left in 1967 to have her only son John. According to her



Doreen with Zeus the dog owned by her main carer, Lena

family, she was “a traditional homemaker and Mum, who enjoyed sewing, crafting and fixing things, typical of the ‘make do and mend’ generation”.

She later worked at a nearby school for 14 years, “doing a bit of everything”, before being diagnosed with MS in 1994.

She was a big animal lover and
(Continued on next page)

CHOCOLATE TREAT

(From previous page)

kept cats for many years. Budgies were also a favourite – she enjoyed teaching them to talk.

Doreen moved from Oxford to Didcot in 2008 to be nearer her son, but by the first Covid lockdown in 2020, she started to deteriorate.

After a move to a nursing home, her health improved, she moved about on her motorised wheelchair, enjoyed reading, TV and puzzle books – and tucked into her daily dose of dark chocolate. She died at the home in March after a spell in hospital.

Members of our group attended the funeral at South Oxfordshire Crematorium to pay tribute to Doreen. We, like her family, will miss her.

VITAL ROLE

The MS Society has released figures which show how much it relies on volunteers to main its services.

It reports: “We have 2,907 volunteers supporting the MS community across the UK, 389 new volunteers joined in 2022 and the average age of volunteers is 42.”

There are 237 active local MS groups, 83 per cent of which have a group co-ordinator, 96 per cent have a finance volunteer and 170 groups are delivering an MS support service.

The society’s chief executive, Nick Moberly, praised the role volunteers had played during the Covid pandemic and other crises.

He said: “The uncertainty caused by the ongoing conflict across the world, and now the cost-of-living crisis, is having a particularly significant impact on those living with MS in our community.

“Despite this, we’ve continued to see the dedication and support of our volunteers in action throughout all parts of our organisation.”

The society has now introduced impact awards to recognise and celebrate the contribution of volunteers. The first 101 awards were presented to recipients last October.

RESIGNATION

Chris Sivewright has resigned after a short spell as our support volunteer. If you, or you know of anyone, who would like to take on this important role, please contact our administration volunteer, Jo Hawtin, at jo.hawtin@ntlworld.com

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT for the year ended 2022.**Fund Balance at 1st January**

| | Open Day | General | Total | Previous Year |
|------------------------------------|-------------|-------------|---------------|------------------|
| Income | 8907 | 23189 | 35117 | 32096 |
| DOnations | | 225 | 225 | |
| other | 42 | | 42 | |
| Raffles | 442 | | 442 | |
| Travel Contrib | 65 | | 65 | |
| Coffee Mornings | | 0 | 0 | |
| Subscriptions | | 2345 | 2345 | |
| Bank Interest | | 242 | 242 | |
| Grants | | | 0 | |
| Total Income | 549 | 2812 | 3361 | 3233 |
| EXPENDITURE | | | | |
| Grants | | 294 | 294 | |
| Outings & Socials | 2616 | | 2616 | |
| Therapy | 80 | | 80 | |
| Fund Raising | | | 0 | |
| Printing & Statonery | | 127 | 127 | |
| Postage | | 80 | 80 | |
| insurance DBS Fees | 114 | | 114 | |
| other | | 411 | 411 | |
| Total Expenditure | 2810 | 618 | 3722 | 212 |
| Fund Balance A 31st Dec | | | 34,756 | 35117 |
| Represented by:- | | | | |
| Cash in Hand | | | nil | nil |
| Stock | | | | |
| Bank Balance | | | 34756 | 35117 |
| | | | <u>34756</u> | <u>35117</u> |
| Less | | | | |
| Cheques NOT presented at 31/12/22 | | | 614 | |
| | | | <u>34142</u> | <u>35117</u> |

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

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

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| Fri. 5th May | OPEN DAY – Andy Simpson. Country music entertainment. |
| Sat. 13th May | MS Collection Day. Millets Farm, Kingston Road, Frilford, OX13 5HB. |
| Fri. 2nd June | OPEN DAY – Chrissie Harper. In the company of her owls. |
| Fri. 7th July | OPEN DAY – Dr Mark Merrony, Editor-in-Chief, Antiquvs. The Splendour of Mosaics in the Roman Empire. |
| Fri. 4th August | OPEN DAY – Don Rouse. SPAJers (the Society for the Preservation of Ancient Junketing). |
| Fri. 1st September | OPEN DAY – Cody. Entertainment from the popular singer and guitarist. |
| Fri. 6th October | OPEN DAY – Jacqui Marie Miles. Classical music and songs from the shows. |
| Fri. 3rd November | OPEN DAY – John Lowe. 'Where are the boys of the village tonight?' - The impact of the First World War on an Oxfordshire village. |
| Fri. 1st December | OPEN DAY – Rebukes Ukelele Band. Entertainment to get us in the festive party mood. |

THE PAST - AND THE FUTURE

Anthony King got us off to a good start to 2023 at our February Open Day with an entertaining talk about his life as a court judge. He was followed in March by Ian Saxton from the Co-op, with a talk entitled 'Tax, Care and Toyboys'.

As you see above, we look forward to welcoming Andy Simpson with his country music on Friday, 5th May while a month later, on Friday, 2nd June, it will be turn of Chrissie Harper and her owls to entertain us.

If you have any ideas for guest speakers, singers, musicians or any other acts for our Open Days, please let our co-ordinator, John Chipperfield, or any of the committee know. We like to make the programme as lively and as interesting as possible.

HELP AT A GLANCE

MS Society helpline – 0808 800 8000 (Freephone)

MS nurse advice line – 01865 234461

ouh.ms@nhs.uk

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

MS specialist nurse – Sue Barnden

01865 737465

ouh.cnsns@nhs.net

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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**A picture from the
past – a picnic at
Millets Farm**