

October 2011



REACH OUT Goes Live!



Special points of interest:

- * New charity number
- * Fundraising stories
- * REACH OUT on the road
- * New staff recruited
- * Chief Executive's Report

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On the 6th June Project REACH OUT was officially launched at the Sixways Stadium, home of Worcester Warriors rugby team. Invited guests included education department managers and head teachers from the surrounding counties who met with MBH staff, parents and children. MBH Chief Executive Lee Gough gave an overview of the project and Conductive Education specialist Annamaria Berger gave a detailed account of the benefits of the service and answered questions from the guests. The launch was covered with a live broadcast by BBC Hereford & Worcester (after some delay in aligning the satellite dish!) and the Worcester Evening News. In addition to the presentations, those attending were able to see children at work with Lead Conductor Judit Ziman, conductors Chloe Hicks and Timea Szell and classroom assistant Jacqui Martin. The launch generated a great deal of interest and the Vale of Evesham School asked to be one of the first schools to benefit from this free service. REACH OUT is a three-year project which aims to take MBH services into the counties of Worcestershire, Herefordshire, Warwickshire, Gloucestershire and Shropshire. The project will cost £465,000 and all funds have been secured (£362,000 FROM Big Lottery) until the end of 2013. (See page 11 For the latest progress report).



Local Fundraising Successes

The Cross Inn - Jan and Richard Lane - proprietors of The Cross Inn in Eardisland - organise charity events throughout the year including excellent pub quizzes and themed nights, raising money to go towards a charity at the end of each year. This year they have very generously donated £975 to Megan Baker House. Lucy Barrell from MBH was presented with a cheque by Jasmine Richards who attended MBH for several years. Jasmine's mother Alison had suggested to Jan and Richard Lane that MBH would be an ideal charity to receive the money.



MBH's Lucy Barrell accepts a cheque from Jasmine and Richard

If you can help raise funds for MBH please contact the centre on 01568 616179

Linus Project Quilts - In September Norma Dark and Lorna Pickford visited the centre again and donated two more beautiful quilts to the children. They make regular visits and have made two previous donations of their beautifully crafted quilts made by members of the Linus Project Quilts group.



Megan and Isabel receive their beautiful quilts

For other items you can donate please see the current 'wish-list' on page 14



After the event a collection for MBH was held and a magnificent £1,700 raised.

'Bobby Ewing' Talks For MBH



JR (Larry Hagman), 'Swelin' (Linda Gray), Bobby (Patrick Duffy), Pamela (Victoria Principal) - who could forget Dallas, one of the most popular soaps ever to be shown on British TV. Dallas was born in 1978 and was a heady mix of increasingly outrageous melodrama and

immorality, based in Texas where ten-gallon hats, beautiful woman and oilfields were two-a-penny - just like Herefordshire but without the hats and oilfields! The show was watched by an estimated audience of 300 million viewers in 57 countries around the world. Patrick Duffy, who played Bobby Ewing, has recently given a series of talks around the UK and in October he presented the Annual English Mutual Lecture in the prestigious venue that is

Worcester Cathedral. MBH's Lee Gough was invited to the lecture and during the introduction the work of MBH was explained to the audience. "It was a fascinating evening" said Lee "and I am extremely grateful to English Mutual who, through their 'Wealth of Happiness Foundation', continue to be valued and enthusiastic supporters of MBH". After the event a collection for MBH was held and a magnificent £1,700 raised.

MBH's share from the evening is an amazing £7,800 - thank you Jo.

Jo Brand Does It Again

In September MBH patron Jo Brand entertained large audiences at The Courtyard Theatre in a special one-off show in aid of MBH and The Courtyard. This is the second time that Jo has given her time to MBH. Giving two performances the audience were treated to Jo at her best delivering her unique 'tell it like it is' humour. MBH's share from the evening is an amazing £7,800 - thank you Jo.



Owen's Trampoline Challenge

Owen has raised an impressive £216

Owen Phillips, who attends MBH, has been bouncing his way to major fundraising success with his sponsored trampoline challenge. Owen has raised an impressive £216 towards his £500 target. If you want to sponsor him visit <http://www.justgiving.com/owenkyle>. Well done Owen - keep bouncing!



Medieval Merriment

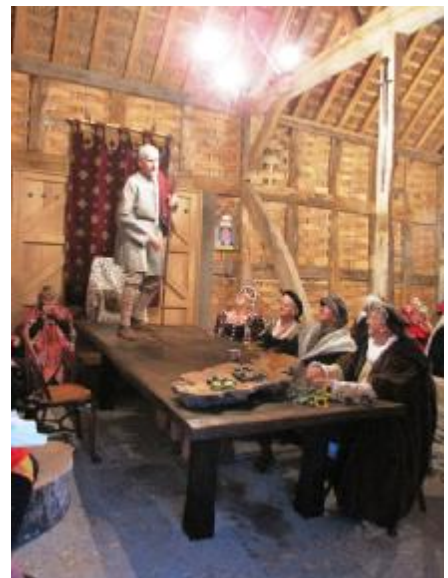


See all of the photos on the MBH website

www.meganbakerhouse.org.uk

In early October a truly magnificent back-drop unique event was held to raise funds for MBH. The venue was Parsons Farm, the stunning home of Nicki and John Beavan, parents of MBH attendee Woody. The property dates back to 1304 and has been lovingly restored using traditional materials and techniques with the finale being the restoration of a huge tithe barn. Nicki and John decided to hold a fundraising event and their ideas were soon guided by the amazing history of their home - it had to be an evening of Medieval Merriment. Guests parking in the orchard and walking down to the property were forgiven for thinking that they had just wandered into the film-set of Robin Hood! The farmhouse and tithe barn provided a unique event for the characters that were milling about in the foreground - noblemen and ladies, crusaders, rotund friars, court jesters and buxom wenches serving ale and roast pig. The main entertainment came from a travelling story teller who regaled the ensemble with the tale of Beowulf. Held in the largest oak trestle tables you have seen and beautiful wooden drinking goblets, both made by master craftsman John Beavan, the dramatic evening unfolded. Peter Carrington-Porter leaped onto a table and recited the legend of Beowulf with enthusiasm and skill. Later in the evening it was time for the 'fools' to jest (Peter Goodson and Ian Mason) while the fiddling vicar made sweet music with his violin. The evening ended with a raffle of wonderful prizes - donors listed in the 'Thank You' column - along with those who helped make it such a successful event. The funds raised for MBH were staggering - £2,535 to date and still rising!

Thank you Peter & Sue Carrington-Porter; Peter Goodson & Ian Mason; The Conquest Theatre; Goodwood Estate; Legges; Farmhouse Fayre Restaurant; Bromyard Natural Therapy Centre; Jeni Vidlar; Elgar Foods; Pye Powder; Laming Bakery; Philip Gibb; Hannah Murphy, Jodie Baldwin; Christopher Murphy; Francis Machine Supplies; Alternative Glass



Peter Carrington-Porter tells the legend of Beowulf



Medieval Photos!



King John (Beavan) with the royal friar



Revellers around the fire



"Jester song at twilight.." MBH trustee Len Vidlar (right) & Peter Goodson camp it up









Pupil Power

MBH is benefiting from its friendship with Monmouth Comprehensive School. The second year sixth-form students made a kind donation of £200 to the charity from funds left-over from their dinner dance. More students presented the cheque when they visited MBH in June as part of a new initiative between MBH and the school which will allow the students to experience conductive education in action and help with volunteer work at the centre. MBH Chief Executive Lee Gough is delighted that the school chose MBH for this project “Darryl Williams, the year ten Progress Leader, has worked hard to encourage



the students with their charitable work. I think it’s an important part of any young person’s education to see how difficult life can be for others. Empathy seems to be in short-supply generally in society so exposing the ‘next-generation’ to a wide range of difficult experiences can

only help to develop a better, more caring society. I hope that our relationship with the school will continue to develop new opportunities for them and us”.



This year's students at MBH



Students give Georgina a helping-hand



I'm Not A Pheasant Plucker

Did you hear the one about the 'interesting' materials. The feathers pheasant, MBH Chief Executive Lee languished in the cellar for two years until John's daughter announced the date of her wedding and he had an idea. Unbeknown to Lee, the feathers were sent to Louise Turnbull of Tiara Heaven, a Dorset-based company that makes bespoke wedding jewellery. Louise quickly brushed-up on her millinery skills and created a stunning Christmas decorations from

the wedding. The result was stunning, Lee was thrilled and Louise insisted that her fee should be donated to MBH. Louise takes-up the

story "I had never heard of Megan Baker House or conductive education before I received a copy of the newsletter from John. It is obviously a much-needed source of help and I'm delighted to have been able to support it. By the way this project has totally kick-started a new love of all things feathery and I am now dying to add millinery to my collections". If you want to contact Louise or see her jewellery collection look at the website www.tiarahaven.co.uk



Cook it, eat it, wear it!



More Fundraising for MBH



NatWest Golf Day - Held at the Burghill Golf Club and MBH was very grateful to receive a cheque for £800.

Quiz Night - Weobley village hall held a quiz, supper and auction in aid of MBH and £700 was raised.

Something Fishy - Local auctioneer and salty sea-dog John Amos was the star-turn at an evening of sea shanties and fish supper held at the *plaice* known as the Grove Golf and Bowl in Herefordshire - *cod's* own country. John is a *dab*-hand with sea shanties and never known to *flounder* giving each rendition his heart and *sole*. MBH has benefited to the *tuna* of £130 which is so *brill* that MBH staff started doing the *conger*.



'Good Food Costs Less At...' But shoppers at Sainsbury's were generous when asked to donate to the cause by parents and volunteers. The collection totaled £287 and MBH is very grateful to everyone who made this a success.

Funding For Numeracy - MBH will be targeting learning difficulties, especially numeracy, in a new project partly-funded by a generous grant of £20,000 from the Britannia Foundation. It is hoped that this will grow into a larger project called SENCE (Special Educational Needs & Conductive Education).





Pimm's And Ponies - A Night To Remember

..... A major fundraising event which raised £7,000 for MBH.



Patron David Hepworth's beautiful home in Eardisland was the setting for a major fundraising event which raised £7,000 for MBH. Held at the end of May, a clear blue sky, manicured lawns and superb jazz band greeted guests for a Pimm's reception as the Weatherall Skilfully managed the evening of racing, followed by an auction of unique lots. People travelled from far and wide to support the event which had benefitted from painstaking preparation and generous sponsors. The main event was held in a marquee of substantial proportions and the catering for the evening was superb with a menu consisting of organic pork, a selection of authentic curries and fresh strawberries and cream. Compare John Weatherall Skilfully managed the evening and managed to keep the programme on-time. The racing brought-out the competitive spirit in some, with excitement and noise levels increasing as the night wore-on. The auction was taken by Charles Robinson who worked the audience with great humour. Auction lots included a magnum of Chateau Miraval vintage 2002 in a wooden box donated by Angelina Jolie and Brad Pitt from their private French estate - autographed by them both; a silver 'Specialised Allez' 16 speed light weight racing cycle used on the UK Youth Round Britain Cycle Challenge signed by Nigel Mansell and his sons along with famous Tour de France competitor Magnus Backstedt (Maggy) and one of his cycle shirts also signed by Nigel; a weeks holiday in the 'Villa House' on the luxury 5,000 acre Killean Estate on the Mull of Kintyre for up to nine people and four fully-inclusive tickets to the amazing and ultra-exclusive Concours d'Elegance at the Hurlingham Club in London (see P10 for a full report). See all the photos at meganbakerhouse.org.uk



Sponsors & supporters...

Unlike Jazz, ABC Print, GB Liners, Powells Butchers, S & A Produce, Event Works, Jalsaga Restaurant, Brightwells, Dytecna, Market Link, Hayes, Cadbury, Video Interactive, Q Cold, Cotswold BMW



Stalwart supporters Paul and Liz Beaumont



Many guests came from Worcester



Studying form - Sue and Peter Fitzjohn

Go girl - Maria Dineen is a WINNER!





Auction Extravaganza

Gareth Joyce out-bid everyone for a reception until 9.00pm followed by £100m of classic cars. Gareth and wonderful lot at MBH's Pimm's and gourmet food stalls in the friend Steve chatted to the owners of Ponies Night - an invitation for four Hurlingham Grounds and dancing a racing powerboat who offered to guests to the Concours D'Elegance at with DJ Seb Fontaine until 1 am - take them for a spin up the Thames. The Hurlingham Club. The day phew! Gareth and friends enjoyed the The boys were slightly shaken but not included champagne on arrival, a exhibitions of luxury items on display stirred after the crew decided to gourmet lobster barbeque lunch & - fast cars, helicopters, power boats, complete a few 'doughnuts' at high traditional afternoon tea, cocktail jewellery and much more including speed.



Andrea Wright and Gareth Joyce ready to party



Gareth and Steve Holder can't decide which to buy - a helicopter



"Hey Steve - imagine this on the River Wye!"



"Decision made - I'll have this!"

'REACH OUT' For MBH

In September the very first conductive education sessions, provided by MBH as part of the REACH OUT project, were delivered to pupils at Barrs Court School Hereford and the Vale of Evesham School in Worcestershire. MBH had previously worked with Barrs Court at various times over the last few years but the Vale of Evesham School was a new venture for the charity. Headteacher Ann Starr is enthusiastic about the project - "It was very exciting to attend the launch of REACH OUT and hear that we at The Vale of Evesham School could apply to be part of the planned outreach work. The rest of the summer term was spent planning which pupils at school would benefit from this approach, informing parents and watching assessments carried out by the staff from MBH. The service started in school during September and pupils have loved joining the sessions even though they are asked to work very hard. The MBH staff are very

professional and quickly developed good relationships with the young people. Pupils can transfer skills learnt in many situations through the school week. I know all the young people on this programme will improve their motor and social skills through this intensive support and the unique skills of the conductors and The Vale of Evesham School is looking forward to a long-term relationship with MBH". In addition to the conductive education services provided for children, MBH has now encompassed adults who suffer with Parkinson's disease. The weekly adult sessions take place at the Perdiswell Leisure Centre in Worcester. Two further Worcestershire schools have requested placements on the project and assessments are taking place to determine the best way forward. Funding for the project includes two vehicles - one this year and one next year - to transport REACH OUT staff to their venues and it was an

exciting day when MBH Chief Executive Lee Gough took delivery of the first in early October. Supplied by Bengry Motors in Leominster, the car looked stunning in its REACH OUT livery. The charity is fortunate to have such strong supporters such as Sign Rite, who donated their services, to make the car so eye-catching. The car features the new REACH OUT logo designed and printed by two of the charity's strongest supporters - Market Link and ABC Print. Lee is obviously thrilled "This is a 'first' for the charity - to have our own vehicle and I am extremely grateful to Bengry's for their support and the Big Lottery Fund for believing in us. REACH OUT is progressing well and it is an exciting project to be running and is destined to grow into other counties in the next two years".



Bengry Motors's Dealer Principal Viv Melia (centre) hands over the car to MBH staff





Working Hard For Independence



Achieving A Brighter future





Staff and Centre News

The charity was sad to say 'goodbye' to Jacqui Martin in July and she will be remembered for her hard work, skill and dedication. On a happier note we were thrilled to appoint two new classroom assistants - Lauren Healey, recruited to the REACH OUT project, and Zoe White, working at the centre.

Lauren graduated this year in Sports Coaching Science and while at university she was coaching football with blind players and those with learning difficulties.

Winslow Court supporting young adults with challenging behavioural problems before seeing the opportunity at MBH. "I enjoy running and currently training for the London Marathon 2012 says Zoe "and I am looking forward to my new role here at MBH".

Marketing Intern Freya Wileman has given time to

agreed that he does have a special place in his heart for the children in Herefordshire but strongly denied that this was linked in any way to the county's cider industry. When asked why his sleigh was weighed-down with 'clinking' bottles as he leaves Herefordshire on Christmas Eve, Santa's press officer, elf Ali Stir-Campbell said "That must be bottled water for the reindeer on the return trip to Lapland" - a likely story!

"I am looking forward to learning so much more here at MBH".



"After finishing university I wanted a career that I would enjoy but also would provide me with challenges" says Lauren, "I am looking forward to learning so much more here at MBH".

Zoe left Herefordshire College of technology in 2008 as a qualified beautician but soon decided that she wanted new challenges. In 2009 Zoe started working at



MBH during her summer holiday and worked hard on press and PR tasks especially with REACH OUT and the Jo Brand evening. Freya is back at university but hoping to help us again in the future.

Dates For Your Diary

The children's Christmas Party will be held at the centre Saturday 3rd December and everyone is welcome. Father Christmas has attended every year so we are all keeping our fingers crossed that he can do so again. HQ in Lapland



Autumn term ends 16th December; Spring term starts 9th January 2012; Half-term is 13th-17th February 2012

WANTS - Sat-Nav for REACH OUT car; tumble drier; wheelie stool; potties; changing mats; non-slip mats; special cups; towels (hand & bath); plinth mats; floor mats; toys & games. Please talk to Chloe Hicks for details - chloe@meganbakerhouse.org.uk

And Finally

As another year draws to a close I can reflect on the past twelve months and realise what a fantastic year it has been. During the year some of our children have made remarkable progress and even though my time is largely taken with making sure that we have the money to continue our vital work, I never forget why we are here. In this edition of MB Housecall you will have seen some photographs of our participants at work, both children and our Parkinson's group for adults - this is why we are here. Conductive education is not a 'therapy' or something undertaken passively by recipients. It is hard work especially for the children but our teaching methods are of course designed to make it 'fun'. Testimonials from parents remind us of the value of our services and encourage all of the MBH team to continue striving for excellence, whatever their individual roles. Ensuring that we have enough funding is a daily concern and we need income from as many sources as possible - small donations, services provided free-of-charge and the support of our large donors are all equally vital. I am grateful to the parents, adults and children who have worked tirelessly raising funds for us and our friends who are usually running their own businesses but find time to help us with major fundraising initiatives. 2011 has been particularly successful - Pimm's Ponies, Medieval Merriment and Jo Brand. We have raised £18,000 and I am extremely grateful to everyone who worked so hard to make them happen and to those who came along to spend their money! One of my highlights of the year was the visit by the HRH Duchess of Gloucester on a glorious day in March when temperatures rocketed and we all basked in the spring sunshine - this was the start of a long dry summer. Achieving the lottery success for REACH OUT was a fantastic achievement and the culmination of years of work. The project has really taken off and is definitely the right direction for MBH, after all we are a small centre with far reaching consequences. REACH OUT has been designed to build gradually until we will be working across the counties of Worcestershire, Gloucestershire, Warwickshire, Shropshire and Herefordshire. I do need to keep reminding everyone that the funds awarded by Big Lottery are only for this project - we still need to be continually finding about £8,000 EACH WEEK to keep services at the centre running. We have not been unaffected by the economic downturn and with several sources of our income drying-up we have

had to work hard to replace it - this is why support from the community, MBH participants and parents is so important to us. I am always looking for opportunities to form partnerships with other charities where such relationships would benefit MBH and this year have worked closely with The Courtyard Theatre in Hereford. Joint fundraising started with the 'Hereford's Got Talent' event followed by a joint fundraiser when Jo Brand performed at the theatre in support of both of us. Jo's performances raised just under £8,000 for each charity. This year also saw MBH become incorporated which meant that we were assigned a new charity number by The Charity Commission. This caused some confusion when applying for grants as some trusts thought that we had only just been formed! In fact we have been going for nine years as a registered charity and next year we will celebrate our tenth anniversary with a major fundraising ball at Eastnor Castle. Please continue to do all you can to help us. Thank you and have a wonderful Christmas and a peaceful new year.

Lee

Chief Executive
Megan Baker House



"... we still need to be continually finding about £8,000 EACH WEEK to keep services at the centre running".

Thank you to our friends: ABC Print, Market Link, Cadbury, Richard Weaver, Geoff Robinson, Event Works and many, many more.



A pathway to independence.

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HR6 0DP
Phone: +44 (0)1568 616179
E-mail: lee@meganbakerhouse.org.uk

MBH provides life-changing outcomes for children and adults with motor disorders such as cerebral palsy and early-onset Parkinson's disease. Using the well-established technique of conductive education, recipients learn how to control and improve movement and coordination. Conductive education provides a pathway to independence, enhancing both confidence and self-esteem. The organization was founded in 2001 by Jo Baker-Watson to provide conductive education for daughter Megan. Since that time MBH has grown steadily and now children and more recently adults, come from across the UK, although the majority are from the surrounding counties of Herefordshire, Worcestershire, Gloucestershire, the West Midlands and Wales. MBH is unusual as it does not charge for its services and this remains a core value of the organisation. The centre is seen as a 'centre-of-excellence' and all front-line staff are post-graduates in

We're on the Web!

www.meganbakerhouse.org.uk



Timea Szell
Conductor



Judit Ziman
Lead Conductor



Chloe Hicks
Conductor



Annamaria Berger
Conductor



Zoe White
Classroom Assistant



Lauren Healey
Classroom Assistant

MBH would like to acknowledge the continued support from companies, both local and national and individuals, all too numerous to list, for which we remain truly grateful. Please continue to support us in our goal of improving the lives of the families who need our specialist interventions.



Julia Higgs Volunteer
Coordinator

The Staff of MBH



Lee Gough
Chief Executive



Lucy Barrel
Office Assistant