



Support Network Newsletter

July 2017

Number 10

In this Issue

- The end of an era
- Visit from the High Sheriff
- One step nearer..
- Water Lilies
- Twitter Account
- Floozies Concert
- Hidden Gardens of Lavenham
- Community Fundraising in Action
- Lots of Purple Tea Party Fun
- Summer Raffle

Event Dates

Raffle draw: Friday
16th September

The end of an era



We are sad to announce that our CEO Annie Munson has decided to retire after 25 years' service. Over the past 16 years she has become the well-known and highly respected public face and voice of the Women's Refuge, working tirelessly to raise public awareness of domestic abuse and to publicise the work of our organisation. She is due to leave at the beginning of September, but has kindly agreed to continue working in a part-time capacity until Christmas in order to help her successor settle in to her new role. In Annie's own words: *"The Refuge has been my life's blood for so many years and it will be very hard to let go. When I walked through that door with just two sons and little else in 1992, who would have known that it would be the start of such a journey - a fabulous one."* A fabulous journey

indeed, and one that has been a very real inspiration to the hundreds of other women who have sought refuge with us over the years. She will be badly missed, but we are hopeful that she may eventually decide to serve on the Board of Trustees.

The Chair of the Board of Trustees, Christina Dye, will also be stepping down after 20 years' dedicated service. However, the good news is that she will continue to be involved in the future of our organisation by remaining with us as a Trustee.



Visit from the High Sheriff



On Thursday 22nd June Suffolk High Sheriff Geoffrey Probert, accompanied by his wife Nella, visited the Refuge as part of a fact-finding mission to learn more about the work of local charities. Annie described our work at the Refuge, and the urgent need for separate premises in a town-centre location to accommodate the services we provide for non-resident clients. Judith outlined the challenges of securing the necessary funding to run those additional services. Our visitors were concerned to hear that, in real terms, our core funding is 27% less than it was in 2012/2013; and that income from this source includes no provision whatsoever for work with child residents, nor for the range of programmes and activities we offer to resident and non-resident clients.

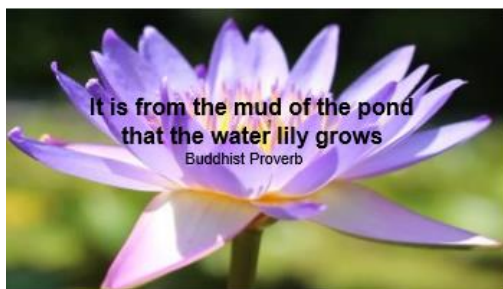
Other News

One step nearer to achieving our goal



On 27th June we were contacted out of the blue by the landlord of the commercial property that, sadly, we had failed to secure in March. To our astonishment, he offered us the lease. The property is conveniently situated in St Andrews Street North, and is the ideal venue for our proposed Resource Centre. We jumped at the opportunity to re-enter negotiations and are hopeful of a successful outcome in the near future.

Performance of 'Water Lilies' at the Theatre Royal



An evening of songs, poems and music on the theme of 'Refuge' took place before an invited audience at the Theatre Royal on 16th May. It was the outcome of eight song-writing workshops kindly sponsored by the Hodge & Shallow Fund and led by playwright Danusia Iwaszko and composer Rachel Hawick. Audience feedback said it all:

"What a magnificent, powerful evening." "Those women are so talented and brave." "Amazing, powerful, emotional, mind-blowing." "The stereotype of women who experience DV needs to be changed and hopefully evenings like this will go some way to doing this." "Beautiful, haunting, moving, powerful, affirming." "Wonderful to see the theatre so full and vibrant." "Brave, positive women stepping forward - well done!" Thankfully this brilliant collaborative project between the Theatre Royal and the Women's Refuge is set to continue.

The evening was dedicated to the memory of Katie Dent.

Twitter Account

In the three months since we launched our twitter account we have already gathered 223 followers. If you have your own account, please follow @BSEwomensaid and retweet our news to your followers. Even if you don't have a twitter account, try googling @BSEwomensaid, and then click on the link. That should take you to our twitter page, where you can still keep up to date with our latest news.

**Bury St Edmunds
Women's Aid Centre**
@BSEwomensaid
Our Women's Refuge and Outreach
Programmes offer hope and support
to women and children who become
victims of Domestic Abuse.

Events from our Annual Fundraising Calendar

Floozies Concert

This year our Annual Concert was included in the 2017 Bury Festival. Although it was headlined by the acclaimed local folk group The Floozies, their two support acts - both new to Bury St Edmunds - also made an big impact. Sally Army, featuring Colchester's brilliant singer/song-writer Sally Theobold, performed a witty repertoire of songs that provoked a great deal of laughter and fun; while Lizzie J Taylor's captivating voice and truthful lyrics created her own brand of magic. The Floozies then took over the stage to perform a mesmerising set of jazzy folk songs led by singer/song-writer Daisy Windsor, with harmonies by Paula Welham and percussion by Sue Szymanski. Thanks to the generosity of our audience and performers - and not forgetting the incredibly hard work of our volunteers - we managed to raise £1890 on the night. What a fantastic outcome to a wonderfully enjoyable event!



Hidden Gardens of Lavenham

Another of the annual events in our fundraising calendar takes place in the beautiful grounds of Lavenham Priory by kind invitation of owners Jonathan Hill and Ruby Sayed, one of our Trustees. With a constant stream of over 500 visitors, our refreshments team worked tirelessly throughout the day. Other volunteers ran our Tombola and Bric-a-Brac Stalls and sold Summer Raffle Tickets. Iced Pimm's and Mocktails were also available, and local singer Michael Gage kept us entertained throughout the afternoon. Our thanks to all who helped on the day: BSEWAC volunteers Tina, Elizabeth, Annie, Fiona & Judith; Support Network Volunteers Julia, Caroline & Margaret; Shelia, Janet & Barbara from Suffolk Revellers; and several of Ruby and Jonathan's friends. We are also grateful to everyone, including local businesses, who donated refreshments. However, our biggest debt of gratitude must go to Ruby and Jonathan for the enormous amount of hard work they put in to host such a successful event. £640.85 was raised from stalls and donations, and a further £120 in Raffle Ticket sales.



Community Fundraising in Action

During the 2016/2017 financial year, our Community Fundraisers raised a magnificent £12,238.95 from events organised on our behalf: an amazing increase of 225% over the previous year! We are enormously grateful for this vital life-line of local support. This year we are asking our supporters to continue raising funds to enable us to introduce new programmes, services and activities for our clients, as none of this crucial work is covered by our core funding.



Bay Tree Café: On 24th April Nicola Richmond and Rachel Foster from Bay Tree Café in St John's Street presented Annie with a cheque for £230 plus crafts, tools and household items for our residents. These generous donations had been collected over many months by Bay Tree Café staff and customers, who had kindly nominated us as their 'charity of the year'.



West Suffolk Rural Labour Party: Jean Staff, the Secretary, visited the Refuge on 4th May to present a cheque for £200 that had been raised at one of their social events. We are very grateful for their support of our work.



ASDA Foundation: We were lucky enough to win the Spring round of the Asda token scheme, which resulted in a very welcome cheque for £500! A massive thankyou to all those Asda shoppers who supported our cause!



Bury St Edmunds Chain of Hope held a Concert for Peace on Saturday 6th May, raising funds to be shared between their next Chain of Hope event to be held on 24th September and the work of Bury St Edmunds Women's Aid Centre. It was a well-attended and thoroughly enjoyable evening, and organiser Clare Mellor visited the Refuge the following week to hand over a cheque for £450, for which we are extremely grateful.



Bury Abbey Rotary once again demonstrated their loyal support of our cause with a cheque for £500 presented by outgoing President Peter Summers at their Charity Awards Event on 26th June.



Multicultural Women's Group: A retiring collection at MWG's wonderful evening of Poetry and Song from Around the World raised £217 on our behalf. We are extremely grateful for the continuing support of such a faithful group of friends; and full of admiration for the work they do to provide a support network for people of all nationalities and cultures living in and around Bury St Edmunds.

Support our Events!

SUMMER RAFFLE

Draw to take place at the Refuge on **Friday 16th September**
Tickets are priced at £1 and available in books of 5

2017

Bury St Edmunds Women's Aid Centre

Summer Raffle

1st Prize	Mid-Week 2-Night Stay for 2 Persons in the Priory Suite, Lavenham Priory	Ruby Sayed & Jonathan Hill
2nd Prize	Go Ape Family Ticket for 4 Persons	Go Ape Ltd
3rd Prize	Three-Course Dinner for Two at Award-Winning Maison Bleue	Karine & Pascal Canevet

Guerlain Fragrance	Guerlain at Palmers
Mini Photo Session Voucher	Rebecca Prigmore Photography
Three-Course Meal for Two	The Beehive, Horringer
'Oils Of Life' Skincare Collection	Body Shop
L'Occitane Gift Box	L'Occitane
60 minute Massage	Sam Hendricks Mobile Massage
£30 Voucher	Mulleys Motorways Ltd
Reflexology Treatment x <u>2 prizes</u>	Jan Parker, R-Zone Reflexology
Lunch for Two	Edmunds Restaurant at WSC
'Envy' Collection Shoulder Bag	Stephen John
£25 Gift Voucher	Marks & Spencer
Bardinet VSOP French Brandy	Friend of the Refuge
Beauty Make-Over (Winner & Friend) x <u>5 prizes</u>	Guerlain at Palmers
Express Manicure	Jill McDonald Beauty
Sumaridge Merlot 2013	Friend of the Refuge
25 kg Bag of Potatoes x <u>2 prizes</u>	Hall Farm, Fornham
12 kg Bag of Onions x <u>2 prizes</u>	Hall Farm, Fornham

Registered Charity No. 276883

HELP NEEDED

Ticket sellers are urgently needed. If each of our 180 Support Network members were to take just ONE book of tickets to sell to family, friends and colleagues, together they could raise £900. FIVE books each would raise £4500!

If you are able to help, please contact judithwac@btconnect.com
Judith will gladly deliver the tickets to your workplace or home address.