



Julie Hodgson, Friends chairman James Hodgson, Marion Tanner and Richard Tanner, High Sheriff of Shropshire



Barbara Maund, Rachel Gibbs, Norman Porter, Mabel Davies and Angela Unsworth.

Nov 06

FRIENDS of Royal Shrewsbury Hospital gave themselves two well-earned pats on the back as they gathered for a double celebration.

The Friends received the Queen's Award for voluntary service earlier this year, and are also celebrating the group's 40th birthday.

Members were invited to the hospital in Copthorne last Friday evening for a party in honour of their achievements and hard work.

Profits from their hospital shops, as well as other fundraising, have enabled the donation of more than £4m worth of equipment over the last four decades.

By the end of the year, this figure is expected to reach £5m with £400,000 worth of equipment currently pledged by the Friends, all for the benefit of hospital patients.

The Friends' organising secretary Norman Porter said: "Money is raised through our four shops and profits from them goes towards hospital equipment.

"We have a very good fundraising team who organise a lot

of events and every penny that they raise also goes towards equipment, and so do donations."

He said the history of the friends started with the wives of two hospital consultants, Mrs Cynthia Grant and Mrs Lincoln Lewis, who started fundraising in 1966.

The first Friends shop was opened in 1971 and membership now stands at around 1,200.

Mr Porter, a member for 29 years, said: "We are trying to raise money now for various pieces of equipment to give to the hospital and this will in total be somewhere in the region of £400,000."

King's
Fund
Box

Friends hold a sportsmen's dinner

Shrewsbury Hospitals League of Friends held their sportsmen's dinner last week at the Lord Hill Hotel. Radio and TV personality Brian Johnson was the guest speaker.

1—Mr Harry Roycroft, Mr Cyril Baugh, Mr Harry Parton, Mr Geoff Walters, Mr John Miller.

2—Mr Peter Alltree, Mr Hubert Morley, Mr John Hole, Mr Norman Evans, Mr Paul Drury.

3—Mr Jeoff Kelly, Mr Harold Walters, Mr Ray Forrest.

4—Mr Robert T. Musker, Mr John Holding, Mr

Robert P. Musker, Mr Mike Carr.

5—Mr Charles Holmes, Mrs Marie Musker, Mr Norman Parker.

6—Mr Lawrie Prescott, Mr Brian Johnson, Mr James Hodgson.

7—Mr Bill White, Mr Stan Parker.

8—Mr Bill Evans, Mr James Hodgson, Mr Reggie Lloyd.

1981





League of Friends officials Chris Clayton, Jill Mace, Tony Barker, June Whitaker, James Hodgson and Susan Hurdiss.

Friends indeed

Nov 2008

Neil Thomas is impressed by the commitment of a group of volunteers improving the lot of patients in the RSH

They are believed to be the most successful group of their kind in the UK and they are based right here in Shropshire.

The Royal Shrewsbury Hospital League of Friends has been around a while. It was formed in the year that England won the World Cup. Yes, that old!

Since its launch in 1966 it has donated gifts worth more than £7m to the hospital, and the difference it has made down four decades is tangible.

Recently, the league gave £150,000 to buy endoscopic ultrasound equipment to improve the care of patients with suspected cancer. In September this year £180,000 was donated to the renal unit to provide dialysis machines. Other recent donations include £85,000 worth of ultrasound and testing equipment; £82,000 towards a new operating theatre; £34,800 for baby tags for the maternity wing to ensure the safety of new born babies; and £5,000 for a new trolley to take

patients to and from operating theatres.

One of its busiest years was 2004, which saw the league donate £600,000 towards a new treatment centre, plus a further £150,000 for new equipment.

The tireless work of the league is also there for all to see in the shape of its four café-shops in the hospital, as well as regular trolley services around the wards, providing a comforting service to patients, family and friends who all find themselves in a place they'd rather not be.

The profit from the shops helps to boost funds to buy much-needed equipment.

The league has its own office at the hospi-

The league opened its first shop in south hospital in 1971, with first-day takings of £28. A far cry from today's 'chain' of four shops dotted around the massive site.

tal, where organising secretary Susan Hurdiss is based. She took over the role earlier this year from stalwarts Norman and Janet Porter, and has been bowled over by the dedication, hard work and enthusiasm of an army of more than 250 volunteers.

"It is wonderful to see so many people working so hard and really making a difference to so many people," says Susan. "To be involved in an organisation that can help to save lives is very rewarding."

"All of what the league has achieved has been possible because of the generosity of the people of Shropshire and Mid Wales, and the wonderful help we receive from the volunteers."

"Jayne Mott, our fundraising chairman, and the committee members work tirelessly throughout the year organising fundraising events in order to raise much-needed money for the hospital."

"Volunteers of the fundraising committee also provide flower displays around the wards to cheer up the patients."

Current executive chairman is James Hodgson, who heads an organisation for which some volunteers have clocked up decades of service. Norman Porter, for instance, had been involved for 31 years, while Tony Barker has been treasurer for more than 20 years.

"The members of the executive committee and the committee members are all volunteers and all the money that is raised at

fundraising events goes into the funds of the League of Friends," adds Susan.

One of the longest-serving volunteers is June Whitaker, who joined the league in 1969 and was chairman for 11 years.

"The wonderful thing about the league is that every penny goes directly into the hospital," says June. "We are able to help so many people in Shropshire and Mid Wales, different people with different illnesses who benefit from our existence, which is marvellous. To think that you are helping to save lives is wonderful."

"We work closely with the doctors to ensure that the money is targeted where it's needed most. Some of the equipment we buy can mean the difference between patients travelling to Shrewsbury for treatment or Birmingham. It makes life easier for so many people if they can get their treatment in Shropshire."

Debbie Brown manages one of the caf  shops and, on the day I visited, pensioner Norman Bland was the volunteer helping her.

Norman is a widower but was touched by the care his late wife received when at the RSH.

"They were so good looking after my wife. They were excellent. Now I can pay a little back," he explains.

The league opened its first shop in south hospital in 1971, with first-day takings of £28. A far cry from today's 'chain' of four shops dotted around the massive site.

"They are the Friends' front-line," says Susan Hurdiss. "They open daily from 9am until 7.30pm, only ever closing on two days a year: Christmas Day and Boxing Day."

The shops are manned by more than 200 volunteers along with some paid helpers.

From North Shop a trolley service goes out to all the wards, taking daily papers, magazines, confectionary, drinks and toiletries.

"The service is appreciated not just by the patients but also by the hospital staff. Due to the size of the hospital now this service can take up to four hours," says Susan.

"The patients really look forward to the trolley ladies visiting them; it brightens up their day. Some patients may not receive any visitors so the trolley visits are particularly important to them."

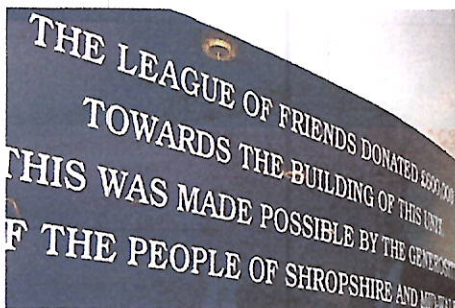
The service at one time extended to the Eye, Ear and Throat Hospital and Monkmoor Hospital, both of which are now closed.

"Speaking to some of the volunteers I was amazed to discover that many have full-time jobs but still give some of their free time to help at the hospital," adds Susan. "The generosity and kindness of people is incredible."

The league's efforts and achievements were recognised in a major way in 2006, the year of its 40th birthday, when it received a Queen's Award for Voluntary Service. This was presented for outstanding achievement and commitment to helping others.

Adds Susan: "Only 100 of these awards are given out each year, so the League of Friends felt very honoured."

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Clockwise from top:

❖ *Fred Hughes volunteers at the tea bar shop.*

❖ *Debbie Brown and Daphne Wall at the Oasis shop in the treatment centre.*

❖ *Lady Mary Lees, Jayne Mott, Nichola Dapling, Jenny Gough and Diana Baart running a Friends' bacon buttie stall.*

❖ *A wall plaque at the hospital recognises the public's contribution.*

❖ *The hospital site is now so large that trolley rounds can take four hours.*



That's what friends are for...

By chance¹¹⁰⁸ — charity begins at home

ONE of the first babies to be 'tagged' at the Royal Shrewsbury Hospital is the granddaughter of a man whose charity funded the scheme.

Poppy Clarke was born on December 17, just as the maternity unit launched its new security system with almost £50,000 from the Friends of RSH.

Poppy's grandfather is James Hodgson, Friends chairman, who was doubly delighted to see the charity's work benefit the hospital and his own family.

The tagging ensures that babies are monitored by a 24-hour computerised system linked to a miniature electronic transmitter put on the baby's ankle at birth.

Alarm

If a tagged baby is moved from any of the safe areas in the unit, an alarm sounds and the baby's name and location are instantly flagged up on the computer screen.

There is also a safeguard preventing tags being removed without authorisation.

Maternity staff describe the Friends' gift as 'a fantastic addition' to the already stringent security system in the unit.

Friends' press officer Gordon Riley said: "We are always looking for gifts we can make to help maintain and improve patient care and were more than happy to donate this kit in the knowledge that it brings so much peace of mind to parents and staff."



Proud grandfather James Hodgson, back, with Claire and Poppy Clarke, and Jayne Mott, chairman of the fundraising committee.

CHMB

The League of Friends roll out another gift for the hospital

1108

A VOLUNTARY group has continued to provide much needed support to the Royal Shrewsbury Hospital after raising money to buy a new trolley for its patients.

The League of Friends has helped raise £5,000 to pay for the trolley which will help take patients to and from operating theatres.

The group raises money to buy much-needed equipment and comforts which are used for the benefits of the patients and staff.

The group also provides all the flower arrangements throughout the hospital and runs shops on site, as well as organising events.

Much of the money is raised through the work of its 250 volunteers.

Generosity

Organising secretary, Norman Porter, said: "The group is constantly being asked to provide equipment which cannot otherwise be funded due to a lack of money and which is unavailable from the NHS."

Since its formation in 1966, more than £400 million in gifts have been donated to the hospital.

"This has only been made possible by the generosity of the people of Shropshire and Mid Wales," added Mr Porter.

"Donations, legacies, fundraising activities and profit from all our shops all contribute to the cost of items that are donated," he added.

Mr Porter said help was always required in the group's shops. If you are interested contact him on 01743 261007.

Alternatively you can call into the office which is situated next to the outpatients' waiting room.



That's what Friends are for - pictured with the trolley are James Hodgson, Steve Bailey, David King, Marylinne Talbot, David Dibble, Jayne Mott, Tony Parker, Bridget Goodall, June Whitaker and Norman Porter.

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