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The Chairman's Newsletter: Winter 2022

Dear Friends,

Happy New Year!

It seems extraordinary that we are now almost two years into the Covid pandemic. 2021 was another difficult year for the Friends, and we once again had to close the office and part-furlough our staff for several months. Despite this we managed to resume some of our pre-pandemic activities, including our Shop and Library Trolley services, in the second half of the year, and made several grants to hospital departments. We also managed to hold a couple of fundraising events, including a very successful Carol Service at St Mary The Boltons. We hope to get closer to the 'old normal' in 2022, although of course nothing is certain with Covid.

We are planning an exciting major fundraising event for 11th May 2022, brief details of which can be found at the end of this newsletter. Do put this date in your diaries for now, and watch this space for more updates!

With best wishes

Hilary O'Neill

Hilary O'Neill
Chairman, Friends of Chelsea & Westminster Hospital

Summer Fair

Due to Covid restrictions we were still unable to hold fundraising events in the hospital in the second half 2021, but we decided to go ahead with an outdoor Summer Fair at Nevern Square on 31 July. Visitors enjoyed browsing stalls including books, collectibles, cakes, and jewellery. The rain held off until the last minute, and we raised over £500 for the charity. Thank you so much to all our volunteers and attendees!



Carol Service



We were lucky to be able to hold our Carol Service at St Mary the Boltons church on 1 December before the Omicron covid variant took hold. This was the first year we had held our own service rather than a joint event with the Friends of the Marsden and Brompton Hospitals. We had fantastic musical contributions from the **St Mary The Boltons Choral Scholars** and the **ChelWest Singers**, who performed the world premiere of Shine Your Light, a song written by one of their own members. We were also delighted to be joined by **Greg Hands MP**, plus our special guest the writer and broadcaster **John Suchet**, who treated us to a reading from A Christmas Carol.



The service raised almost £3,400 for the Friends after costs. Many thanks to our Trustees, staff and volunteers and everyone else who helped make the event possible.



Library Update

Sadly we have still not been able to resume our book or bric à brac sales in 2021, but the Library team have been working to support staff and patients in other ways. The Friends Parcel scheme is still going strong, and the Library Trolley has also resumed with the help of our brilliant volunteers, including new recruit **Nicolas Dreyfus**. We are so grateful as always to Richard, our Librarian, for his hard work and creativity. A big thank you also to Richard's son, Billy, who designed us a brilliant new banner (pictured) as part of his college course. Well done, Billy!



AGM

We were unable to hold an AGM in 2020 due to Covid restrictions, so it was all the more important that we met in 2021. The AGM took place on 22nd September at St Luke's Church Hall, St Luke's Street, and we were delighted to have a higher than usual turnout. The meeting was chaired by our Vice President **Lady Borwick**, and our Librarian **Richard Rooney** gave a fascinating talk about how the Friends Library has continued to help patients during the Covid pandemic. Following the AGM, we held an Extraordinary General Meeting to ratify our new Constitution, which had been updated and modernised since it was originally drawn up in 1993. The new text was unanimously approved. A huge thank you to all who attended, and in particular to Lady Borwick for her very efficient chairing!

Volunteers Wanted

We are in need of new volunteers to take the Shop and Library Trolleys round the wards. The trolleys are really popular with staff and patients so this is a chance to contribute something positive to the life of the hospital. Volunteers must be cheerful, polite and enjoy meeting new people. If you are interested please contact the office at chelwest.friends.office@nhs.net or **0203 315 8825**. We'd love to hear from you!



Grants

Grants made in the second half of 2021 included:

- £4,051 (cost shared equally with CW+) to the **Training and Education Department** for a scoop hoist for use in training on moving and handling patients
- £3,130 (cost shared equally with CW+) to **Rainsford Mowlem** and **Nell Gwynne** Wards for two ice machines.
- £1,013 to the **Hand Therapy Team** for a Woodcast oven for making biodegradable splints

We were also able to make progress on the **Butterfly Room project**, which had been on hold since March 2020 due to Covid. In September 2021 we approved funding for four further Butterfly Rooms at West Middlesex Hospital, and work on the first of these has already begun. The Butterfly Room project is now fully funded, and we will be announcing our new major fundraising target shortly.

SAVE THE DATE – MAJOR FUNDRAISING EVENT

- **11th May 2022**: Keep this evening free for our exciting major fundraising event: a boat trip down the Thames to Greenwich followed by dinner, music and an auction at the historic Trafalgar pub! Further details to follow.

Please also keep the evening of **19th May 2022** free for our Annual General Meeting (time and venue to be confirmed).