



Friends
At the heart of RJA

LET'S BE FRIENDS

Christmas 2023 Newsletter



Friends RV Cafe Celebrates First Year Of Service!

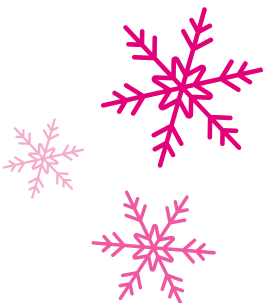
Friends RV Cafe at Veterans' Hub Celebrates 1st Anniversary

As December began, we were thrilled to mark a significant milestone – the first anniversary of the Friends RV Cafe located within the Veterans' Orthopaedic Centre. This celebration joins with the one year birthday of the Veterans' Orthopaedic Centre itself, creating a double celebration that shows a year of growth, community and dedication.

At the heart of the Friends celebration is Manon, our dedicated cafe assistant who has played a pivotal role in the success of the RV cafe. Manon's dedication and efforts have not only contributed to the cafe's triumph but have also earned her a commendable reputation within the hospital and among the visiting public. The RV Cafe has become more than just a coffee shop, it has become a space where people can come together, share stories, and find comfort in the company of one another.

As we reflect on the positive impact our Veterans' Centre has made, it is important we acknowledge one of the key driving forces behind it – our veterans' volunteer team. Our veterans team consists of 25 members, who all go above and beyond to ensure patients entering the centre feel welcome before attending appointments. With the support and hard work of this volunteer team, the Veterans' Hub has become a unique and supportive environment that goes beyond medical treatment for veterans and their family members seeking care.

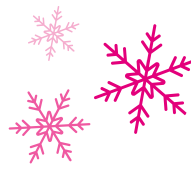
Looking ahead we are excited about the future possibilities that the coming years will bring. The success of the Friends RV Cafe and the Veterans' Orthopaedic Centre is a testament to the dedication of our amazing team who have played a huge part in this remarkable journey so far.



Featured:

- Friends Updates
- Festive Fun
- Knockout Fundraiser
- Christmas Bazaar
- Student Medical Interviews

Friends Updates



Ludlow Friends Spread Festive Cheer At Christmas Fair

Ludlow Friends celebrated the joy of the season with a resounding success at its annual Christmas fair on 14 November. Welcoming attendees from near and far, the festive fundraising event, held at Ludlow Racecourse, was organised by the dedicated members of the Friends at Ludlow branch.

The event showcased a dazzling array of stalls, from handmade crafts to stylish clothing, the fair had something for everyone, making it a popular go-to destination for those seeking unique and festive finds.

The tireless efforts of the Friends at Ludlow did not go unnoticed, as they successfully raised an impressive £19,000 for The Robert Jones and Agnes Hunt Hospital (RJA). This achievement speaks volumes about the generosity and support of the Ludlow community, as well as the dedication of those involved in organising and participating in the event.



Friends Host Medical Interviews For Aspiring Students

In a collaborative effort to guide and prepare the next generation of medical professionals, Friends recently helped to organise another round of medical interviews for aspiring students. The event aims to provide valuable insights and practical experience for students taking the crucial next step towards their medical careers.

Consultants from RJA came together to facilitate a unique and engaging format for the interviews. The evening, conducted in a 'speed date' style, witnessed the participation of almost 50 eager students.

The structured format consisted of three circuits, each comprising eight stations. At every station, students were presented with diverse challenges and objectives designed to simulate real world scenarios and challenges they may encounter during medical university interviews.

The success of the event lies not only in the number of participants but in the invaluable experience gained by each student. Friends, in collaboration with fellow RJA consultants and local schools, takes pride in helping contribute to the development and preparedness of the next generation of medical professionals.



Updates Continued...

Volunteers Engage In Interesting HAZMAT/CBRNe Training

A group of dedicated volunteers recently participated in a specialised training session focused on Hazardous Materials (HAZMAT) and Chemical, Biological, Radiological, and Nuclear (CBRNe) incidents. The one-off training session drew a full house of attendees from all volunteer areas at the hospital.

The event aimed to equip volunteers with the necessary skills and insights to effectively manage emergency situations, providing valuable knowledge for unforeseen circumstances.

Participants described the training as "really useful" and "interesting," highlighting its practical applicability to their roles as being the first to interact with patients arriving to site.

The volunteers expressed their appreciation for the training received from fellow RJAH colleagues, Health and Safety Advisor Hannah Howells and Health and Safety Manager Ian Gingell.

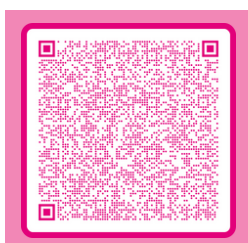


Nurse Takes On Boxing For A Knockout Fundraiser

In a remarkable display of courage and commitment, Rebecca Warren, a dedicated nurse, Army Reservist Warrant Officer, and charity supporter, stepped into the boxing ring to raise funds for the League of Friends. The local boxing event, held on Saturday 18 November, saw Rebecca showcasing her boxing skills, with fellow Friends in the audience rallying behind her in support.

Rebecca's bravery in taking on the challenge and her triumphant effort resulted in a draw in her fight. Beyond her performance in the ring, Rebecca's fundraising progress has been equally impressive. Through her JustGiving platform, she has raised a noteworthy £1,370. Rebecca's fundraising platform remains open, allowing for further contributions even after the event.

You can make a donation to Rebecca's JustGiving page by scanning the QR code.



Festive Fun!

The League of 'Elves' Help Spread Festive Joy

Christ Church in Oswestry recently invited and brought together local charities in a festive display of 4 foot Christmas trees dedicated to individual causes. Volunteer and events coordinator Julia took a creative charge and set up a dazzling display, with a tree that stood out in a vibrant shade of pink.

Adding to the display was the inclusion of The League of Elves who helped bring an element of playfulness and charm. The theme 'League of Elves' has served as a running promotion this year at RJAH helping to encourage donations to the Friends to help support those spending the festive season in hospital.

The tree has since been moved and is displayed now in the League of Friends coffee shop at the main entrance and continues to collect donations.



A Heartwarming Christmas Carol Service

On Tuesday 12 December, Denbigh's restaurant was filled with festive spirit as members of the public, patients, staff, and volunteers joined together for a heartwarming Christmas carol service.

The event featured performances by The Orthopaedic Male Voice Choir and The Orthopaedic Ladies Choir, alongside traditional congregation carols, and readings from different speakers across the hospital site, including Lead Chaplain Reverend Simon Airey, LOF President Lady Kenyon, RJAH Chairman Harry Turner, Chaplain Member Denise Buchinshaw, RJAH AHP Consultant Geraint Davies, and LOF Veterans Volunteer Peter Leech.

Following the service, everyone gathered for warm drinks and enjoyed a delicious mince pie generously provided by Ellesmere Tesco.



Festive Fun Continued...



Whitchurch Wreath Making Success

Our Friends branch in Whitchurch have been busy again this year holding another hugely successful wreath making class. The session took place at Tilstock Village Hall early December, where Friends impressively raised over £1000 for RJAH.

The groups were led by flower arranging specialist, Mrs Janet Blake. Participants were able to enjoy wreath making along with mulled wine, mince pies and festive music.



Kicking Off The New Year With A Volunteer Celebration!

As we bid farewell to 2023, and embrace the new start and challenges ahead for 2024, we're excited to announce a special New Year celebration dedicated to the heart and soul of our organisation – our incredible volunteer team.

Come and join us for an evening of amazing food, gratitude, and fun, starting at 6:30pm on Thursday 18 January 2024.

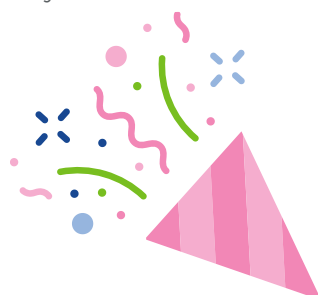
The celebration will take place in RJAH's Denbigh's Restaurant, where a complimentary evening meal and drinks will be served to our volunteers.

Dedicated staff from the Friends office and some familiar faces from across the hospital site will be at your service, ensuring you feel appreciated and cared for throughout the evening.

This celebration is more than just a gathering – it's a heartfelt "thank you" to each and every volunteer who has contributed their time, passion, and dedication throughout the year 2023. Your hard work does not go unnoticed.

We kindly ask you to **RSVP by Thursday 11 January**. You can confirm your attendance by reaching out to the Friends' office.

We can't wait to celebrate with you!



Friends
At the heart of RJAH

SAVE THE DATE

Volunteer Celebration

JANUARY
THURSDAY **18** AT 6:30 PM
2024

Evening meal and drinks
will be provided

LOCATION:
DENBIGH'S RESTAURANT
RSVP BY JAN 11TH

Please ensure to RSVP by Thursday 11 January 2024 if you would like to come and join us!

Email: **Melanie.Bygrave@nhs.net**
Phone: **01691 404527**

Or pop into the office to see us!

Christmas Bazaar

The Spectacular Return Of The RJAH Christmas Bazaar

On Friday 8 December, Friends held their fourth Christmas Bazaar after a three-year hiatus due to Covid restrictions. The RJAH's main entrance once again became a hub of festive excitement, welcoming a diverse crowd throughout the day.

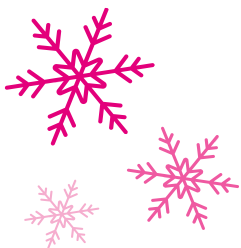
Eager shoppers, including members of the public, hospital staff, patients, and their friends and family, flocked to the 30 stalls showcasing a delightful array of gifts. The event featured both familiar faces and new stalls, offering everything from paintings, trinkets, and jewellery to clothing, food, fun and games.

One standout attraction was the League of Elves, knitted by the Crafty Knitters, adding a magical touch to the festivities. Each elf was individually named after a Friends' volunteer, and buyers witnessed their elf zip-lining down to them as part of a special raffle.

Entertainment filled the air throughout the day, featuring carol singing from local primary schools, performances by The Orthopaedic Ladies Choir, festive jingles from The Clive Handbells, and historical dancing by The Gracechurch Historical Dancers. The event's special guest, Santa Claus, made a grand entrance on his sleigh with the help of Oswestry Cambrian Rotary, and generously distributed teddy bears to all attending children from an incredible donation made to the hospital by Build-A-Bear.

Amidst the festivities, Friends coffee shop catered to the rush of visitors, offering chai lattes, special hot chocolates, and the popular brandy loaf cake.

While final figures from the event are forthcoming on social media, a heartfelt thank you extends to all who contributed to making this event possible—staff, volunteers, entertainers, and the participating stalls. The overwhelmingly positive feedback ensures the Christmas Bazaar will become an eagerly anticipated annual tradition once again.



Volunteer Updates



Festive Outing To Theatre Severn

Volunteers from the team recently enjoyed a delightful escape to Theatre Severn in Shrewsbury for a lively pantomime performance of Jack and the Beanstalk.

The trip was organised by Friends' dedicated Volunteer and Event Coordinator Julia Morgan, who commented: "We all had an absolute ball! I hope to make it an annual social trip for our volunteers. It was lovely to see them all having such a wonderful time getting up and dancing and singing along. I'm looking forward to arranging for the next one!"



Join Us In Making A Difference!

At Friends RJAH, our team is always in motion, whether lending support, organising fundraisers, or making a positive impact across the hospital site. The backbone of our endeavours is our incredible volunteer team, currently comprising 149 active volunteers.

Welcoming individuals from all walks of life, our team is a diverse community where everyone's contribution matters. We offer flexibility to suit your preferences.

Our volunteers play vital roles in various capacities, including gardening, help desk assistance, coffee shop support, chaplaincy services, veterans' outreach, acting as ward friends, managing shop trolleys, and providing general shop support.

As we step into 2024, we're pleased to introduce a new volunteer role: 'Percy Pals.' This role involves dedicated volunteers engaging with patients on Sheldon Ward, particularly those with dementia. Percy Pals aim to befriend patients, encourage fluid intake, and promote activities that alleviate boredom, emphasising our friendly human touch in healthcare provided here at RJAH.



If you or someone you know would like to become part of our Friends volunteering family, please don't hesitate to contact us. We'd love to hear from you!



Email: Melanie.Bygrave@nhs.net OR Julia.Morgan7@nhs.net



Phone: **01691 404527**



Website: <https://www.friendsrjah.org.uk/volunteer/>

**JOIN US
NOW**

How you can help...

Make a donation!

From providing toothbrushes to funding an endoscopic surgical kit, we are at the heart of RJA H as a good friend should be. Together, our staff, volunteers and trustees do all they can to support, enhance and improve the environment, facilities and care delivered.

Your support helps us to continue to take care of the well-being of patients and staff. Every donation, large or small, will make a difference.

Visit our JustGiving page to make a donation:
www.justgiving.com/robertjones-agneshunt/donate

Donations may also be made via BACS, cheque or over the phone - call 01691 404401 for further details.



Can you fundraise for us?

Can you help support the work we do? Whether it's raising £10 or £10,000, every bit helps. There's no limit to the imaginative ways in which you can help us raise money, especially in the current climate.

Your fundraising activity can be anything from hosting a quiz, to completing a sponsored 'Couch to 5k'.

If you would like to fundraise for us please do get in touch, we would love to hear your ideas.

Email us on rjah.communityfundraising@nhs.net



Contact us

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