

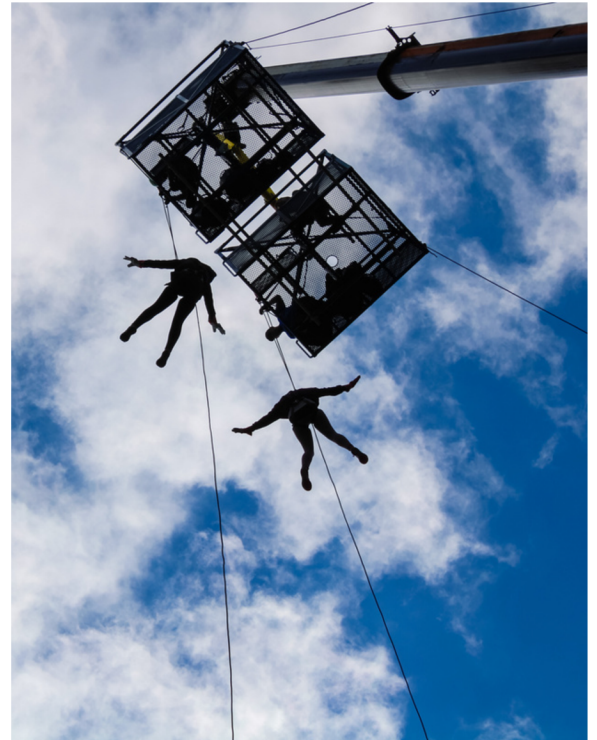


Friends
At the heart of RJA



LET'S BE FRIENDS

Summer 2024 Newsletter



60 Participants Brave The Edge To Make A Difference Below!

Brave participants raise an incredible £13,000 for 'Garden for Alice' Appeal

The Cliffhanger challenge, held outside RJA's Veterans' Orthopaedic Centre on the 8th and 9th June 2024, saw 60 amazing participants abseil from a 150ft crane, collectively raising an incredible £13,000 for the children's ward. The Garden for Alice fundraising appeal has been an ongoing project for RJA Charity, aiming to create a sensory garden for paediatric patients and their families on Alice Ward.

Some of the brave participants included RJA's Chief Nursing and Patient Safety Officer, consultant orthopaedic surgeons, nursing staff, previous patients, and volunteers.

One of the League of Friends very own, 80 year old volunteer Beryl Angel was the first to brave the heights, saying: "It was truly an unforgettable experience; I have never done anything like it before but I'm so pleased to have taken part. Getting off from the platform was the most nerve-wracking bit, just for a moment I thought I couldn't do it but thanks to some encouragement from my son and daughter-in-law who had gone up with me, and the calm and reassuring event crew, I did it!"

"I am so pleased that I have been able to help and want to offer a heartfelt thanks to everyone who has donated so generously – support from everyone at the hospital, family and friends has been overwhelming."

Featured:

- League of Friends AGM
- D-Day 80 Art Exhibit
- Coffee Shop Updates
- Gardening Support

Friends Updates

RJAH's League of Friends Reflects on Yearly Achievements at 2024 AGM

Members, branches, volunteers, and staff to The League of Friends RJAH gathered for the 2024 Annual General Meeting (AGM) to discuss a variety of updates and progress collected from the last 12 months.

The meeting saw several Friends Branches in attendance in the afternoon, offering updates on their fundraising efforts and many events hosted across Shropshire. From fashion shows and coffee mornings to wreath making classes and book evenings; the branches all reflected on the fundraising challenges faced in the current climate, whilst also congratulating each other for all their hard work and determination to find things that appealed to the public.

The branches collectively handed in payments raised from their events since the last meeting, totalling to an impressive £3,275.00

The afternoon was shortly followed by an insightful talk from RJAH Consultant Orthopaedic Spinal Surgeon, Mr Birender Balain; who offered his time to discuss with all in attendance what the future looked like for orthopaedic surgeries with new technology and machinery that is supporting with better patient experience and recovery time for spinal surgeries.

To close the AGM, attendees were treated to a special performance of 'Aggie' - a biographical showcase taking a dive into the life and memoirs of Dame Agnes Hunt.



A Warm Welcome For Shropshire League of Friends Meeting

April saw Friends hosting the Shropshire League of Friends Meeting, for the first time in 10 years. Held in the Conference Rooms, the morning welcomed League of Friends from across Shropshire to gather with special guest and speaker; David Wood OBE the C.E.O of Attend, who are the membership body for all League of Friends charities across the UK.

Collectively the charities conversed on the highs and lows since the Covid-19 pandemic and reflected on the effects it had amongst members and local communities. Sharing ideas and collectively looking to the future, the meeting was a success, with David Wood offering his thanks to RJAH for hosting, with several comments made on how advanced and wonderful our League of Friends is.



You can read the blog post written by Attend about our League of Friends by scanning the QR code above or visiting the link below:

<https://blog.attend.org.uk/2024/06/27/the-nhs-belongs-to-the-people/>

Updates Continued...



Coffee Shop Celebrates Achievements and Awards at Bi-Annual Meeting

Staff and volunteers met for another fantastic bi-annual meeting for the coffee shops. The meeting was a great opportunity for volunteers to feedback their thoughts and discuss changes and challenges faced day to day.

The meeting, hosted by Charity Manager Julia Morgan, focused on the updates made in accordance with NHS programme 'Getting It Right First Time' (GIRFT). Julia touched on small but impactful improvements made; including the new fruit stall helping to provide healthy alternatives, changes made to the layout of the main entrance coffee shop, user-friendly changes made across the customer station to help with accessibility, and new comfy seating alongside the addition of a wheelchair friendly table in the RV café area in Veterans'.

The team were also proud to formally announce that the catering department had been awarded Exemplar Status for 2 years, with The Veterans' RV Café also receiving an audit rating of 100% - followed by a 5-Star rating being received after a visit from Environmental Health earlier this month.

Julia commented: "Myself, the Catering, and Facilities team could not be prouder! Thank you for all your hard work, and for being the best!"



LOF Team Shine in Improvement Champions Programme

Two team members to the League of Friends RJA, Charity Executive Yasmin Heath and Grants and Sponsorship Officer Sophie Taylor, recently celebrated a successful showcasing event highlighting their Improvement Champion project to RJA's Board of Directors.

The programme, aimed at staff members at RJA, provided a space to learn and implement improvement methodology. Yasmin commented: "I thoroughly enjoyed the programme, and the sessions gave me so many new ideas and tips that I can now apply day to day in my role at the charity".



Veterans' Orthopaedic Centre



Telford College Students Honour Veterans' with Stunning Portrait Exhibit for D-Day 80th Anniversary

Students at Telford College were given a unique opportunity to create portraits for a range of staff and volunteers that hold connection to the Veterans' Orthopaedic Service (VOS), in honour of the 80th anniversary since D-Day.

Commissioned by Lt Col Carl Meyer, the students created over 50 creative portrait pieces as part of their course work and work experience. Students were provided with photographs and a brief statement describing the subjects background within the hospital. From this they then went on to develop artwork in various media styles, including paint, print, digital, biro, textile, pencil, and ceramic.

The portraits varied in sizes from A0 to A3, creating a dazzling and colourful exhibit display welcoming visitors and patients in the main entrance to the hospital.

Thursday June 6th saw many students, teachers and our Veteran volunteers and staff gather for a private viewing and celebration of the exhibit with a cheese and wine evening. Students were congratulated for their hard work and many hours invested into creating the art. A moment of reflection was taken to remember and honour all those lost during D-Day with a speech from Lt Col Carl Meyer, before a sealed bids auction took place with proceeds raised in benefit of the Veterans' Centre.



Lt Col Carl Meyer Awarded OBE for Veterans Service

Congratulations to Lt Col Carl Meyer, Clinical Director, and founder of our Veterans' Orthopaedic Service, who has been awarded an Officer of the Order of the British Empire (OBE) in the King's Birthday Honours. This honour acknowledges his dedicated service to the British Army and the veterans community.

Upon receiving the news, Carl expressed his surprise and deep gratitude: "I am both proud and extremely honoured by this recognition. It reinforces the importance of supporting our veterans, to whom our nation owes a great debt of gratitude. This accolade strengthens my commitment to advancing our veterans services at RJAHS and supporting other hospitals in enhancing their own services."





Exciting Green Developments and Staff Celebrations!

Above Team Brightens Path of Positivity

The wonderful team at Above Oswestry recently volunteered their time and green thumbs to help enhance our Path of Positivity. Their hard work helped us rotavate an area to plant wildflower seeds, that were generously donated by Dobbies, in support of 'Operation Pollination' and 'No Mow May'.

'Operation Pollination' aims to create habitats for essential pollinators like bees and butterflies, while 'No Mow May' encourages leaving green spaces uncut to allow wildflowers to bloom.

Thanks to Above's dedication and hard work supporting us, our Path of Positivity will soon be flourishing with wildflower, helping benefit the environment.



Moreton Hall Students Beautify Hospital Gardens

27 students from Moreton Hall School visited site to help in Professor Richardson's Memorial Garden and the Tumour Unit Garden. Their hard work involved pruning, weeding, and planting some new blooms to help transform the space and restore it to a relaxing green space for staff and patients.

Their efforts did not go unnoticed, with many staff members commenting on how the garden has never looked better and is a lovely place to go sit and relax.



Funky Socks and Care Pack Treats for International Nurses Day 2024

League of Friends organised and assembled care packages for nurses at RJAH in celebration of International Nurses Day. The care packs included a variety of treats, chocolates, and wacky socks, kindly donated by Cleversocks.

Chief Nurse Paul Kavanagh-Fields, senior nurses and ward sisters then made their way across the trust to distribute the care packs and goodies.



Volunteer Updates



Volunteer Pam Helps Spread Joy in MCSI Staff Rooms

Our volunteers across the RJAH never fail to amaze us with their kindness and generosity - with the lovely Pam being no exception, after spreading joy to staff in MCSI with a thoughtful delivery to staff rooms with some homemade cupcakes.

Pam works closely with the staff and patients on MCSI within her voluntary role and wanted to give something back as a small thanks to the staff on the ward for their support and hard work.



Volunteers Launch 'Percy's Pals' to Support Patients at RJAH Hospital

A new role has been officially launched across the RJAH trust with an initiative to assist patients and staff on Sheldon Ward. The role, known as 'Percy's Pals' means volunteers will help provide non-clinical support to selected patients identified by nurses.

Sheldon Ward at RJAH supports with general medicine, dementia, and elderly rehabilitation, often seeing patients stay for extended periods of time before returning home or moving to care facilities. Michelle Williams, Activities Coordinator, noticed several patients lacking visitors and approached The League of Friends to seek volunteer support to enhance patients' hospital experience.

Before launching, volunteers that expressed an interest in the new role were trained in safeguarding and dementia care by Michelle and Anne Worral, Adult Safeguarding Practitioner. This meant volunteers were provided with the knowledge needed to give an appropriate level of support.



Crafty Friends Club Proves a Hit Among League of Friends Volunteers

The Crafty Friends Club, a monthly gathering organised by Charity Manager Julia Morgan, has become an increasingly popular social gathering for both staff and volunteers across RJAH.

Volunteers and staff come together for an afternoon of knitting and socialising whilst creating items such as blankets for patients, cream egg holders, hats, seasonal goodies and adorable teddies. Items from the sessions can be found for sale in the LOF Shop.



Branches Updates!



Welshpool Branch Have Successful Coffee Morning

Our wonderful Welshpool Branch hosted a successful coffee morning at Guilsfield Old School village hall in April.

Serving up some delicious coffee and biscuits with a lovely selection of stalls to browse through selling plants, bric-a-brac and yummy cakes, with a raffle to finish the morning!



Whitchurch Host at Gredington Hall

Another successful coffee morning was hosted by our fantastic Whitchurch Branch raising more than £1200. It took place at the idyllic Gredington Hall in Hanmer, with the kind permission of Lady Kenyon.

The morning had a variety of stalls offering cakes, plants, crafts, and handmade greetings cards. With an ample supply of biscuits and hot drinks available.

Visitors were also given the chance to explore the charming 16-acre garden full of a national collection of viburnum and Sarcococca, along with an extensive collection of oak trees.



ORA Holds Delightful Tea Party at LOF Coffee Shop

The Oswestry Rheumatology Association (ORA) hosted a charming summer tea party at RJAH, drawing a lively crowd of attendees. The tea party gathering is an annual fundraising tradition for the ORA, with the League of Friends delighted to support.

The event took place at the League of Friends Coffee Shop, where more than 30 guests enjoyed a delightful afternoon filled with hot drinks, cakes, sandwiches, a lively raffle, and a performance from the Orthopaedic Female Voice Choir.



SOME UPCOMING EVENTS FOR YOUR DIARY!

- **23rd October 2024 - Baking Evening at Tilstock Village Hall**
(for tickets: contact Whitchurch League of Friends on 07966490372)
- **11th November 2024 - RJAH Veterans' Centre Remembrance Service**
- **27th November 2024 - Wreath Making Classes at Tilstock Village Hall**
(for tickets: contact Whitchurch League of Friends on 07966490372)
- **6th December 2024 - LOF Christmas Bazaar at RJAH Main Entrance**



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



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