

Eight Bells for Mental Health

Friends Meeting House, 1 Highfield Avenue, Newbury, RG14 5DS

November/December 2013 and January 2014

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Happy New Year!!



A very Happy New Year to all our members, Trustees and supporters of Eight Bells for Mental Health. 2013 was a busy and exciting year for our charity with ten new members, several successful fund raising projects, a new catering enterprise and awards for our artwork. Fasten your seat belts everyone for 2014!

New Members



HELLO to our latest new members Eric, Stuart, Nicholas, Marion and Franco who have all said how much they are enjoying their time at Eight Bells and are grateful for the support and warm welcome they have received from everyone.

New Volunteers



Welcome to our two new student volunteers Hannah and Harriet who have joined us on a placement scheme from Reading University. Harriet has been busy compiling and carrying out a satisfaction survey amongst members, please see her if you haven't had a form yet and would like to take part. Hannah has been showing off her artistic talents supporting members in our weekly art classes and asking members what new activities they would like to see at Eight Bells. Suggestions so far are: A Football Team, Board Games, Quizzes, Jewellery Making, Come Dine With Me, Mini Sports Day, A Darts Team, Cinema and Bowling Trips. Please see Hannah or Harriet if you have any ideas you would like to add.



Val at the Reading University's Psychology Placement Fair

Christmas Lunch



We had a record 26 members at The Eight Bells Christmas Lunch this year who tucked into starters of prawn cocktail, soup, melon or pate, followed by turkey, beef or nut roast and, if there was still room! Christmas pudding or chocolate gateaux with lashings of fresh cream for dessert. Many thanks to our chefs Eric, Eileen and Val who had a seven am start that morning to make sure everything was cooked to perfection.

Thank you to Newbury Mayor Anthony Pick who donated £50 towards the cost of the food and to our treasurer Colin Mansell for his popular contribution of mulled wine.



Eight Bells members enjoying Christmas lunch



Maggie and Val decorating the Christmas Tree

TRIPS AND OTHER FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Winchester Trip: A group of members enjoyed a shopping trip to Winchester Christmas Market where they snapped up a few festive bargains while browsing the many stalls on display. Well done to Val who was the only member brave enough to get her ice skates on for a twirl around the rink. Despite it being her first ever time on the ice and a few wobbles she didn't fall over once! Watch out Dancing on Ice there's a new girl in town! Many thanks to a generous but anonymous donor who covered the cost of hiring *Handybus* to transport our members to and from Winchester.



Eight Bells members about to hit the shops in Winchester



Eight Bells' very own Jane Torvill

Hawk Conservatory

Hurry limited spaces....Our next Eight Bells trip is to the award-winning Hawk Conservancy Trust in Andover on February 28th and there are just two places left. If you would like to join us details are on the notice board. This trip is being organised by Rose and Phil.



BONDS and BUMPKINS!

Eight Bells is among 40 local organisations taking part in West Berkshire's Volunteer Recruitment Fair on Saturday January 25th 2014. This is a great opportunity to tell people about our charity and recruit volunteers to help support us. We need members to help man the Eight Bells stand during the day from 9am to 3pm at the Corn Exchange Newbury. If you can spare an hour or two please sign the form on the notice board or speak to Kathryn. The fancy dress theme is James Bond or Country Bumpkins and there is a £100 prize for the best dressed team!

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AN EVENING AT THE RACES: On Friday Feb 28th at St Joseph's Parish Hall, Newbury. A fun evening of eight races – including the Eight Bells for Mental Health Hurdle – Joe's Tote to pick your winners and a fish, chicken, sausage or veggie supper. There is also an opportunity to "own your own racehorse" which if a winner will earn you a bottle of whiskey, gin or vodka. To book your grandstand seat see the notice board or let Kathryn know, help with transport available.



VISIT TO ST LUKES: Neil has invited fellow Eight Bells members to visit his home in rural PADWORTH for tea, to look around his carpentry workshops and see some of the crafts he makes. Kathryn can take 6 people in her car on either a Tuesday, Wednesday or Friday. Please sign the form on the notice board if you are interested and which day suits you best, Kathryn will then liaise with staff.



MANAGEMENT BOARD MEETING:

Fourteen members turned up to recent management committee meeting chaired by Brenda and supported by our vice chairs Eileen and Rose. The main topics up for discussion were future fund raising ideas, designing a new logo for Eight Bells and members sticking to the cleaning, cooking, opening up and tea and coffee rotas. Angie drafts the rotas a month in advance so everyone gets plenty of warning when it's their turn to help. James C reiterated the need for members to pull together as a team and not leave the work to the same few each week. The next meeting is on Monday January 20th at 1pm.



FUND RAISING:

THE LOTTERY BID application was submitted in November by our Trustees Chair Judith and we may have to wait several months for a decision. We will let you know of any news as soon as we get it. Kathryn's six month contract as Coordinator ends on January 22nd but she will continue to work for Eight Bells on a temporary basis until funding for a full time Coordinator is hopefully secured.



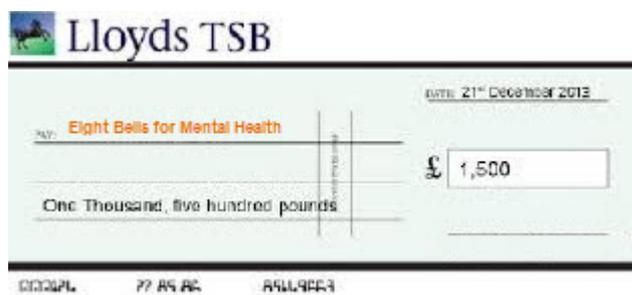
NEWBURY TOWN COUNCIL awarded Eight Bells £640 towards our art classes. Funding coordinator Angie and member Val were invited to the Council Chambers where they were presented with a cheque from Newbury Mayor Anthony Pick and Cllr David Fenn, Chairperson of the Grant Sub Committee.



Angie & Val receive a cheque from Newbury Mayor

SOVEREIGN HOUSING REGIONAL PANEL: Eight Bells fund coordinator Angie applied to Sovereign's Berkshire Regional Panel for a grant towards our new catering enterprise. We were asked to make a presentation to a panel of the company's representatives at Sovereign's offices in Newbury, along with a number of other charities, to decide if we would be awarded the money. Our Vice Chairs Eileen and Rose gave an excellent presentation on the day supported with photographs of our chefs working at The Lions District Service an estimation of costs for cooking equipment and clothing Eight Bells needs and samples of our menus.

We were subsequently awarded a cheque for £1,500 well done girls!



CLASSICAL MUSIC CONCERT The Eight Bells Classical Music Concert at St Nicolas Church raised £1,859.18. A huge thank you to Royal College of Music Musicians pianist Stephen Meakins, violinist Savannah Brown and bassoonist Lucy Dundas who all performed for free on the night, Newbury Lions who paid for the hire of St Nicolas Church, our host Chris de Souza, guest speaker, journalist and author Charles Rae, and Eight Bells member Val who read a poem.



RCM musicians receive rapturous applause after performance

The hugely popular raffle raised more than £500 on the night and Eight Bells is enormously grateful to the generosity of the following businesses and organisations who donated prizes:

* **LEADING** London restaurateur Paul Corrett who donated the top prize of lunch or dinner for two at his multi-award winning restaurant Clos Maggiore - recently voted one of London's top ten restaurants and the City's '*most romantic restaurant*'



* First Great Western which donated 2 First Class tickets



* Newbury Racecourse which donated two Premier Enclosure tickets



* Tiffany and Co. which donated a boxed silver pen



* Tesco Superstore London Road, Newbury which donated a case of fine wine



**ART
Fest**

ATM ARTFEST This unique local event raised £590.87 for Eight Bells. A huge thank you to artist Charis Simpson who organised the event in the Monument Pub in Newbury which included a display of paintings by our members. Two framed works by Roy and Pam were bought by members of the public which raised a further £100. Earlier this year paintings by Eight Bells members won an award at the Open Studios exhibition and went on display at The Corn Exchange. Eight Bells had been entered into Open Studios again this year, the exhibition takes place in May.



Art Fest's Charis Simpson with Eight Bells art tutor Bruce Bamber

MICRO FOCUS The Charity Committee of Micro Focus Ltd has chosen Eight Bells as it's charity this year and will be raising money from cake sales, raffles and tombolas. Every penny raised by employees will be matched by the company, so far they have raised £630 for us. Many thanks to Sales Order Specialist Tracy Benning for nominating us.



HALLOWEEN & CHRISTMAS COFFEE MORNINGS

Our two themed coffee mornings raised a total of £26.72. Angie and Roy won joint first prize for the spookiest Halloween costumes and Val and Angie were the best dressed Santas.



Spookingly good Angie and Roy
HO HO HO Val and Angie

RIP to former Eight Bells member Mike "Speedy" Smith who died last year. Tributes were led by Mikes ex-wife and close friend Eileen, our Vice Chair who said "Many of us have lost a good friend and a great character. Mike will be sadly missed."



MENTAL HEALTH FORUM Eight Bells is helping to create a monthly Mental Health Forum specifically aimed at members to keep them up to date with services available and where they can voice concerns and raise issues. A flyer is currently being drafted with further details and the first meeting will take place at Eight Bells in the near future.

ROSE'S MARKET STALL

Rose's market stall in Newbury Town Centre attracted large crowds and raised £83.15 for Eight Bells. Roy, Angie, Eileen, Val, and James C helped man the table which sold a great variety of handmade crafts, jams and chutneys, toys, smellies and books.



Our Eight Bells Market Traders with Newbury Town Crier Brian Sylvester

THATCHAM Town Council unfortunately turned down our application for a grant, you can't win 'em all!

EIGHT BELLS CATERING

Our Chair Judith Colby, who is also President of Newbury Lions Club, presented our catering team with personalised Certificates of Achievement for their sterling work at the charity's District service where they prepared a buffet and drinks for more than 100 guests including Mayors and other Civil Dignitaries from across the South of England.



THE MEETING HOUSE we are grateful to The Quakers for allowing us to rent The Meeting House and for the two rent-free days they gave us over Christmas! Please can we all make sure we leave the house tidy and clean after our Drop In sessions and put rubbish in the correct bins. If we have generated a lot of rubbish or the bins are full please let Kathryn know and she will take bags to the tip.