



**Success  
AfterStroke**

Registered Charity No. 1115016



## SAS Newsletter December 2023



The Queen's Award  
for Voluntary Service

### Message from our Chairman

The festive season is nearly upon us and there is no doubt that to a person we will spend some time over the holidays doing some reminiscing.

We will chat about good times and less so the bad. A time to remember those we have lost and toast their memory.

It is vital to remember the past but essential we all think of the future. For SAS 2024 is going to be an extremely exciting and busy one.

In about 75 sleeps from now it is the long-awaited return of Brushstroke at St. Peter's Church. A poignant event for me as it is my first ever SAS memory.

I wandered into the Brushstroke exhibition around 7 years ago with my daughter Darcy. A painting by one of the members was acquired and now it is my privilege to be SAS chairman.

We then fast forward to the end of 2024 and our Carol concert. I know there are big plans a foot to make it another unforgettable occasion.

Two special events, organised by special people for special people.

I wish our wonderful staff, members, therapists, volunteers, trustees and to everyone who so generously support SAS a happy and healthy festive season and a 2024 that only creates good memories.

**CHEERS and a Merry Christmas!!**

**Haydn Hertz  
Chairman**



#### Coffee time on a busy morning



### WELCOME

A very big welcome to those members who have joined our happy throng in the past few months:

Barbara Pilkington  
Graham Wood  
Steve Simms  
Frank Balls

Also a warm welcome to Jemma Andrews who has stepped up to the plate with helping with Art & Brushstroke 2024 with our social media and electronic tickets!

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Tel: 07434 931962



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## Message from Sj

As we head towards 2024 with frightening speed the year has nearly ended. This term has been filled with lots of therapy progress in our active departments, all extremely positive for the members which often involves several of our volunteers too.

We have all enjoyed our social chats at coffee time, not to mention the games and quizzes our volunteers strive to do, taxing all our brains. A lovely talk from a regular volunteer about her past career as a headmistress, brought moments of laughter throughout the room.

The weather as always throws a spanner in the works from time to time....the rain came and didn't go away without leaving carnage everywhere....floods galore, then gales and more rain....we managed to remain open, but some of us had exciting journeys in and less exciting ones going home! Anyway we all survived for another day!

We managed to visit The Wolsey in Ipswich to see the Dick Whittington Pantomime which was a huge success, so much so a member asked me to book it for next year!! Oh no they didn't ... oh yes they did!



As always I would like to thank Jo, (Miss Money Penny 3), the Therapists, Volunteers and the wider SAS family team for all your help and support. A couple of farewells this term. Sadly one a member, John Fry, but also a good luck farewell to Nadine who runs the Stevenson Centre office and has done for 23 years; we wish her well and luck and thank you for looking after our every need!

Here's to an excellent Christmas party filled with entertainment, food, raffle and tinsel! We look forward to meeting you back in the new year for a very exciting 2024. I would like to wish each and everyone of you and your families a very happy Christmas and a healthy new year.

Happy Christmas and Happy New Year  
With love  
Sj xxx

*Mandy Squirrell presenting  
SAS with the monies raised  
at the wonderful Whatfield  
Craft Fair in October*



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The Queen's Award  
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**SUFFOLK  
Free Press**

## Whatfield Craft Fair raises nearly £2,000 in support of Success After Stroke charity

### Whatfield Craft Fair October 2023

For Lynne and I, this was our first SAS Craft Fair. The weather was good and we were looking forward to it. What we didn't expect was just how busy it was. It certainly generated a lot of interest and had a vibrant feel to it. I found a seat at a table by the serving window while Lynne, after 'woofing' down a bacon roll, promptly left me to my tea and cake. There were a multitude of stalls selling all manner of things, like pottery, paintings, hand-made purses and bags, cards, etc. After some deliberation,

Lynne settled a hand-painted white and black bowl, a figurine of The Buddha and an assortment of printed cards from the artwork of talented Amy Ditheridge, who is regular attendee at Brushstrokes. All together a good mornings work, and I didn't even leave my seat!  
**Ricki Sams**



### Editor's note

A huge thank you to Mandy Squirrel for organising another wonderful Christmas fair. Her happy band of volunteers included her sisters Noreen and Deidre at a particularly difficult time for them with their mum, Mary, who was in hospital with pneumonia (she is now home and back at SAS!) Their efforts raised an incredible £1800! Their efforts even made it into the Suffolk Free Press... very well done!



Some of the Team busy in the Kitchen as well as taking a breather!

A happy Raffle Prize winner!



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## Visit to Newmarket Stud



We started our journey to Newmarket on a very breezy but warm morning, in a very luxurious coach, with a very affable driver, who could easily do stand-up, should he wish to change career's.

Soon we were on our way, to Newmarket a fine market town which has been synonymous with the rich and powerful due to the horseracing it has been hosting from at least the

17th century, when King Charles II was on the throne. We are now in the 21st century with the third King Charles as Head of state, but while much of the business of horseracing and the money it brings to the area are still evident, some of the procedures Newmarket racing do to get the next Red Rum are firmly placed in the 21st century.

Our coach driver was very informative about the area. Unfortunately, our visit was the wrong time of year for the foals, at the Newmarket stud, but we did happen to see some fine specimens of horses, and Nigel our guide was very entertaining and knowledgeable about the place he clearly loves.

It was soon time to get back on to the coach for lunch. When we got to the hotel we were extremely grateful, that the coach driver wasn't on his way to a gig, given the small gap he had to manoeuvre the coach into, so that we could partake of our lunch. We soon palled up and took our places in the hotel restaurant. Every thing was cooked beautifully whether it be carnivore or vegetarian and we all had a lovely natter.

Then it was off to the Newmarket Horse Racing museum, on foot this time. It was fascinating and most stunning was the size of a horses heart, real organic racing machines, and stunning creatures to boot.

From there we went to a pre-arranged talk about the stables while a beautiful grey horse performed some dressage.

All too soon it was back to the coach, and again the mastery of manoeuvring out of the hotel car park, by the lovely driver, ably assisted by SJ.

Thanks to all for arranging it, and even the weather gods were kind. We look forward to our next trip out.

Fiona Y



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The Queen's Award  
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### A Visit from the High Sheriff of Suffolk

On the first day of December we were extremely lucky to have a visit from Mark Pendlington who is The High Sheriff of Suffolk. He came to see SAS in action and was absolutely brilliant with all our members.

He told us that during his term of office which lasts for a year, he visits many Charities and groups like SAS. However, he went on to say that none had matched up to the atmosphere of warmth and laughter that he had experienced at SAS. What a compliment!

Mark also gave us an award! A Certificate of Gratitude and Recognition from The High Sheriff of Suffolk, Mark Pennington, DL—it will take pride of place.

We spent a very happy morning with him and I like to think he felt the same.

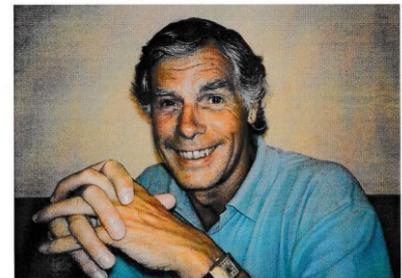
Viv Bourne



### Remembering

#### John Fry

In Loving Memory and  
Celebrating the Life of



#### John David Fry

15<sup>th</sup> August 1943 ~ 1<sup>st</sup> November 2023

Three Counties Crematorium

Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> November 2023  
2.30 pm





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### Deadman's Painting

What a splendid evening we had on the 28<sup>th</sup> October attending the play 'Dead Man Painting' written by Rachel Bennett, John Lovett and Jonathan Moore and others who are all members of the cast.

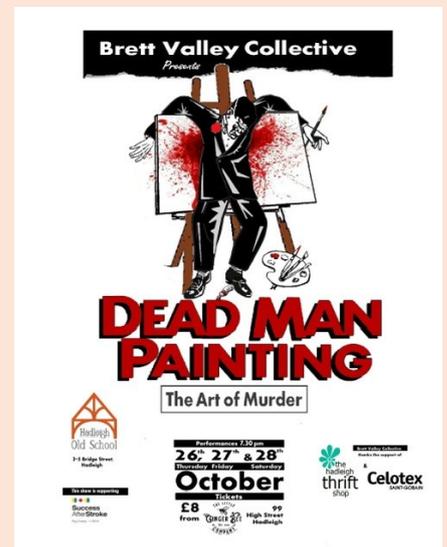
This was a performance over 3 days organised by the Brett Valley collective on behalf of SAS. It was very wet evening to be travelling but very well worth the effort travelling to the Hadleigh Old School that was full to capacity. The play was introduced by our very own Claire Bunting as Professor Pennington. Anne and I both enjoyed the performance very much sitting up close to the stage (we are both hard of hearing) so it was so much more enjoyable to be able to hear every word spoken and whispered.

The play was intriguing plot very well played and with minimal props. Congratulations to all of the cast and helpers behind the scenes.

Michael Percival

#### Editor's note:

We were delighted to welcome two members of the cast, Sarah Nicholson and Jonathan Moore, together with our own Claire Bunting at morning coffee as they wanted to announce that they had raised a phenomenal £1,000 for SAS. We gave them a resounding cheer of thanks!



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### Benenden Student Visit

I had a phone call from a sixth former at my old school Benenden in Kent. I think they were probably trying to extract money from me but I explained that any spare cash I had went to SAS.

She asked me to explain about SAS and then after a few days, I got a phone call asking if she and a friend could come and spend a morning with us.

Two charming girls, Molly and Amelia duly arrived and spent time with all our therapists seeing how they operated. It was deemed to be a success as I got a further call asking if I would talk to all of the sixth form at Benenden as they thought the school would like to become involved with SAS.

The girls are sending Christmas cards to all the members, are hoping to raise some money for us and are contributing to Brushstroke by sending paintings for the lucky dip.

I will keep you informed of later developments.

Viv Bourne



### Fund Raiser By John Knapman's son in law Paul Foster

I would like to share my fundraiser for next year, and I hope to get many of you on board!

My father in law, John Knapman, had a stroke during Covid playing golf and has been in a care home in Sudbury ever since.

He was a great man and in his day a great sportsman. He played rugby for Torquay and represented Devon. He also played football and ended up choosing to play Semi professional for Torquay, Enfield, Redbridge, Dagenham and Bishop Stortford. He was also Captain for England Under 18's so he is proud of his England medal, cap and his England shirt!

John has been a regular member of Success After Stroke who are doing a great job in helping him to try and walk again so I want to do something for him and to raise money for SAS.

I am going to raise as much as I can by doing a full Ironman in Italy next September. I'll be setting up a Just Giving page and I hope some of you will help me support for wonderful SAS

More details will follow.

Many thanks

Paul Foster



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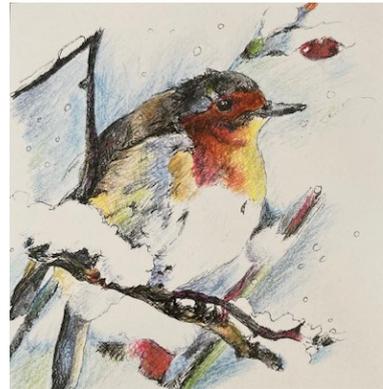


The Queen's Award  
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**Our very own Brushstroke Group produced a beautiful set of  
Christmas cards for 2023**



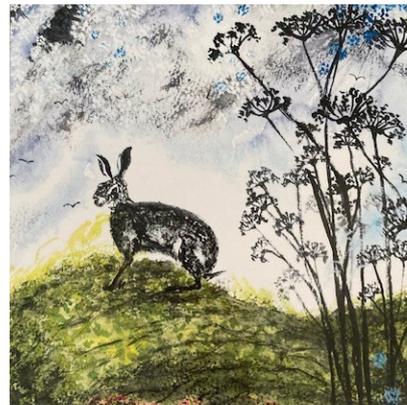
**Viv Hatfield**



**Amy Ditheridge**



**Judy Davey**



**Barbara Slade**



**Christine Stibbe**



**Linda Jackson**

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### My life as Headmistress

Debbie Buckenham gave a most interesting talk on her time as Headmistress firstly at Runton in Norfolk and then Fairstead House in Newmarket where her daughters Lucy and Sophie joined as pupils.

As is the case in most schools the support staff can make or break you. She inherited her first caretaker at Fairstead House who was more than upset when she decided to uproot the orchard for improvements. It became apparent that he sold the produce of the orchard annually (thus increasing his income!). But then - created bowls from the wood of the pear trees - also for profit! Her third caretaker could never be contacted particularly when the racehorses exercised on the Gallops which adjoined the school grounds which was a perfect spot where he got his 'tips for the day!' Fortunately her fourth caretaker was brilliant - thinking and putting into action all she needed. A perfect Righthand man.

When she left Fairstead House she was presented with a book - This is Your Life - contributed to by absolutely everyone connected with the school - containing special memories of their time with her whilst at Fairstead House. What a lovely record to remember. Boarding schools don't just run on three terms. There were trips and camping to be organised - with her residing in a tent aptly named Buckingham Palace. One very memorable occasion was during 'the storm' when everything was blown away but fortunately the site belonged to a school which ushered the children into two rooms of the kindergarten department (boys and girls) over night before their own pupils arrived in the morning.



Kate B.W. (with Viv Hatfield)

She finally became a School Inspector inspecting and regulating schools throughout the country. She was thrilled that Fairstead House choir performed at the first SAS Christmas Carol Service.

Unfortunately we ran out of time to ask questions.

### Christmas Shopping

Rachel Rogers of The Boutique in Lavenham made a special visit for members to do a bit of Christmas shopping.... Including a 20% discount! The girls descended on the clothes rail like vultures and I think some members' partners will be receiving some nice surprises for Christmas! Viv and Barbara were kept busy with the gift wrapping service!

With many thanks to Rachel for bringing her "mobile" shop.





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### Book Club

Reading difficulties are common for people who have aphasia following stroke, however reading abilities vary between people with aphasia, just as they vary between people without aphasia. Reading difficulties can be very frustrating, especially for those who enjoyed reading before their stroke.

The level of impairment in reading comprehension can vary from no difficulties at all to severe difficulties. Some people may still understand what they're reading, but complex information may be more difficult to read, and the pace of reading may be slower than it was before the stroke.

Some people may find lengthy text difficult, and find short, simple sentences easier to read. A severe impairment could cause the person to have no reading ability at all, or to be able to read only simple, familiar words.

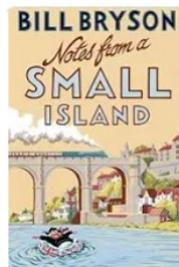
At SAS on a Friday morning, we have an Aphasia Book Club. The club aims to help people with aphasia to read using various 'reading ramps' - these are different strategies that help people access text. These include:

- A large print copy of the text, which the Speech & Language Therapist reads through at the start of the session.
- A bookmark to place under the sentence being read.
- Simple, summary sentences for the members to read.
- Pictures to help members understand the summary sentences.
- Phonological cues - members are given the first sound of a word if they are struggling to read the word.
- Reading together.

We're reading Bill Bryson's *Notes from a Small Island* at the moment, and our members are using the ramps to help them enjoy Bill's amusing view of Britain and its people.

It's a jolly session!!

Wendy Austin  
SALT



Enjoying Dick Whittington  
Oh no they are not ..! Oh  
yes they are!





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### Spring Term 2024

Regular activities at The Stevenson Centre **EVERY** Tuesday & Friday commencing at **9.30 – 12 noon**, from **Tuesday 9th January 2024 to Friday 22nd March 2024** unless otherwise stated. Please be aware these activities can be subject to change.

**PHYSIOTHERAPY:** Every Tuesday & Friday mornings at 9.30 - 10.15 am with Jeanette or Nick.

**SALT:** Every **Tuesday at 9.30 am & Friday at 11.00 am** with either Chris/Clare. **Book Club** every Friday 11.00 am—12.00 noon with Wendy.

**WELLBEING THERAPY:** 1-1 Sessions, with Pam every Tuesday, plus group meditation at 10.15 am. (Tuesday). Appointments can be made for Fridays with Pam. Also Carers meetings organised with Fran and Lynne—see below for dates.

**ART GROUP:** Every Wednesday at The Stevenson Centre starting Wednesday, 10th January 2024 with Marnie, Bridget and others. New members always welcome. (**No Blood Donor Dates** this term)

**GUITAR MAN – Richard:** Every Friday from 11.00 am – 12.00 noon.

**BRAIN TRAINING & COGNITIVE THERAPY:** with ipads etc when requested on Tuesdays.

**NAILS:** Please book your slot with either SJ or Jo so that your name is on the list and in the diary.

#### Other dates for your Diaries:

|  |   |
|--|---|
| Friday 12th January                          | Nails   |
| Tuesday 16th January                         | Carers Meeting 9.30 am—12.00 noon. All welcome          |
| Tuesday 23rd January                         | Trustees Meeting  |
|  | Nails   |
| Tuesday 30th January                         | Informal Moving & Handling Cares/Volunteers             |
| Tuesday 6th February                         | Nails   |
| Thursday 8th February                        | Informal Talk Re: Stroke 9.30am—12.00 noon              |
|  | All Welcome   |
| Tuesday 13th February                        | Pancake Day   |
| Friday 16th February                         | Carers Meeting  |
|  | Nails   |
| Tuesday 27th February                        | First Aid Course 12.30 - 2.30 pm                        |
| <b>Wednesday 6th March—Sunday 17th March</b> | <b>Brushstroke Exhibition</b>                           |
|  | <b>St. Peter's Church, Sudbury</b>                      |
| Friday 8th March                             | Nails   |
| Tuesday 12th March                           | Members Coffee Meeting at St. Peter's Church            |
|  | <b>(Please note No SAS session at Stevenson Centre)</b> |
| Tuesday 19th March                           | Carers Meeting  |
|  | Nails   |
| FRIDAY 22nd March                            | End of Term   |

**END OF TERM FRIDAY 22nd March 2024**  
**SUMMER TERM STARTS TUESDAY 9th April 2024**

Some activities are subject to staff availability. Prior notice will be given wherever possible if changes have to be made. For any further information please don't hesitate to get in contact

E Mail :

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**Website:**

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**Administrator:**

Jo Riddleston :  
[jo\\_riddleston.sas@gmail.com](mailto:jo_riddleston.sas@gmail.com)

PLEASE REMEMBER IT IS VITAL THAT ALL MEMBERS/CARERS/VOLS/THERAPISTS & VISITORS SIGN THE REGISTERS. THIS IS FOR FIRE SAFETY & ALSO PROVIDES US WITH CONTACT INFORMATION. BUT PLEASE RESPECT OTHERS SHOULD YOU FEEL UNWELL & STAY AT HOME.

#### **IMPORTANT DATE FOR YOUR 2024 CALENDARS:**

**Brushstroke Exhibition**  
**6th—17th March**

**Annual General Meeting**  
**Tuesday 14th May**

**Sailing Day at Woolverstone**  
**Tuesday 23rd July**

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**BrushStroke**  
FESTIVAL OF ART

# ART EXHIBITION

**Saturday 9th March - Saturday 16th March 2024**

10am-4pm daily (closed Monday 11th March)

Sudbury Arts Centre, Sudbury (Formerly St Peter's Church)



**Guest speaker followed by lunch**

**10:30am, Monday 11th March**

Lucinda Hawksley: Author, Art Historian,  
Biographer and Broadcaster

Tickets £35. For information please email:  
[sas.brushstroke@gmail.com](mailto:sas.brushstroke@gmail.com)



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