



SUCCESS AFTER STROKE SPRING NEWSLETTER 2017

A note from the Chairman ...

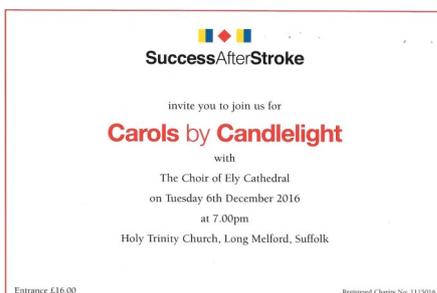
Alongside our Brushstroke Art Exhibition, our biennial carol concert at Long Melford Church is our main fundraising event. This was held in December and was organised by Henrietta Drake, Susie Fenwicke-Clennell and their experienced committee. They broke all records with attendance, sponsorship and overall fundraising, and we are all very grateful to them. These funds have helped us to expand our physiotherapy sessions at the Centre and we are already seeing benefits from this.

Sarahjane Lewis and Jan Williamson, who run the administration of our charity, are doing fantastic things and we now have record membership.

We go from strength to strength. Our members' self-motivation and the support they receive, mean that we have a very optimistic atmosphere at the Stevenson Centre, which is so important in helping our members get the most from life.

Richard Furlonger

Carols by Candlelight Holy Trinity Church, Long Melford



The Carol Concert was held on Tuesday 6th December which turned out to be a chilly foggy evening. When we entered the church it was magical, the church full of candlelight and the sound of the choir having a quick rehearsal. The church quickly

filled up and the concert began.

The Ely Cathedral choir was wonderful with angelic voices and the soloists were brilliant. The readings were well read, especially by members Alan Barrett who had a long reading and Fiona Yerofeyev who read a poem she had written which was very emotional and brought a lump to your throat.

Thanks and congratulations to all those who organised such an enjoyable event.

**Diane Bayly and Linda Jackson
Members**

And on behalf of the organising committee ...

With over 600 people packed into the pews at Long Melford Church, this year's Carols by Candlelight was as popular as ever.

The evening opened with an unconventional 'tune up' for the congregation conducted by Paul Trepte, the Organist and Director of Ely Cathedral. This caused great hilarity and made everyone feel very much part of the service.



Decorating the windows

Both the hymns and readings flowed from Advent to Christmas and, with the wonderful singing by the Choir of Ely Cathedral, especially the two soloists, it felt that Christmas had begun. The eloquent readings by Hilda Crapnell and Jeremy Fraser enthralled us all and the actor Hugh Fraser had everyone laughing with his very amusing delivery of 'The Twelve Days of Turkey'. But, the stars were SAS members Alan Barrett and Fiona Yerofeyev, whose readings were very moving and beautifully spoken.

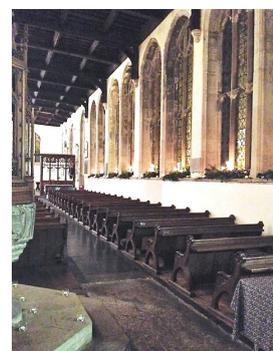
We are extremely grateful to our sponsor, Housesimple, the award-winning online

From left to right; Debbie Buckenham, Barbara Slade and Viv Bourne who assisted with everything from collating invitations to decorating the church.



estate agency, and TGA Mobility for their kind donation. Thanks to other extremely generous donors, advertisers, Deltaprint, local businesses and supporters of SAS, we raised over £19,500.

Special mentions must go to the flower ladies who created beautifully festive windows and Henrietta Drake, who organised the wonderful evening together with her committee. Also, The Rev'd Matthew Lawson and Patrick and Jane Kohler of Long Melford Church for giving us so much support and help.



Entering the church via a candlelit path through the fog, it looked stunning with beautiful window displays and candles everywhere!

We have received many kind messages of thanks for a magical carol service.

Susie Fenwicke-Clenell



Henrietta Drake and Susie Fenwicke-Clenell worked tirelessly with their committee to organise a spectacular and successful event.

Christmas Party 13th December, 2016

The theme of the day was Christmas jumpers and/or hats! It was wonderful to see everyone taking part.



The buffet table was groaning with gorgeous food organised and prepared by Debbie Buckenham - many thanks to all those who contributed and helped.

We were entertained by the Music Makers Choir, led by Mrs Ann Platten.



The Croquembouche Challenge!!

How many people does it take to build a croquembouche? Quite a few as it turns out. Much hilarity was had by all who chipped in - impossible not to as you were passing. Susan Sanderson presents the finished result, and it tasted good too!

And Richard presented Brian Hart with a Christmas cake made by Diane Bayly.



And more photos ...



Di Bayly and Linda Jackson sold and folded rather a lot of raffle tickets - which were then drawn for rather a lot of raffle prizes!



David Padwick
29th November, 2016

David entertained us with some country and western songs which soon got everyone tapping or clapping along. He even had Sarah dancing!



His songs ranged from Jim Reeves to Elvis Presley with numerous stars in-between.

Thank you David for a most enjoyable morning leading up to the Christmas festivities. We hope you had a good Christmas and are enjoying a healthy 2017.

David Bullock

Diane Aldridge's Christmas Swim



Di took part in the annual Christmas Day swim organised by the Bude Surf Club, Devon with her son, his wife and her two grand-daughters. Over 700 people took part in the swim to raise money for charity. The event was started by two brothers in memory of their father.

Well done Di!

Carers' Group

After much thought and with great sadness Angie Phipps has decided that she can no longer carry on running the Carers' Group. We are all very grateful to her for the dedication and enthusiasm which she has shown over the years, not only in organising the carers' meetings but also in taking charge of the catering at numerous events. We are delighted to say that Angie and her wonderful cakes will still be very much part of SAS.

Thank you Angie!

If any of the "other halves" would like to consider running the carers' group, something which we feel is crucial to the supportive atmosphere of SAS, please speak to Sj or Jan. You will have plenty of support and backup, so don't be shy!

A fond farewell to Trudy Cullen

In December we said our goodbyes to Trudy Cullen, our Friday Physiotherapist. Trudy has been successfully running the Friday physio group for many years, with enthusiasm and energy, which all the members really enjoyed. She always took the time to speak with each member before her group, a quick catch up on how they were doing and to check if anything had changed that she needed to be aware of. She was happy to give advice and support to anyone. In the last couple of years she had also started a post coffee group allowing her to give more 1:1 assistance to those who wanted it. Trudy didn't think there would be much take up, but was happy to give it a go ... it wasn't long before she had reached full capacity!



Trudy's leaving was marked by a warm speech given by Chris Clark, presentation of a gift of earrings and flowers together with a beautiful cake made by Diane Bayly.

Trudy is passionate about her work, clearly very fond of the members and with their best interests central to everything she did for SAS. I know she misses SAS and we miss her too, so it was lovely to see her again in February when she dropped in and joined the group, armed with a freshly made cake!

Trudy, thank you and we wish you all the very best!

Chris Clark

Welcome to new members of the SAS team

I would like to welcome on board Carolyn Olvera who has joined us this term to work alongside Halcyon - they are working tirelessly to help you all and we very much appreciate all their hard work in doing so. Having moved to a bigger room, new physiotherapy equipment has been purchased which, I am sure, will be very beneficial to many of you.

Also, we have a couple of new volunteers in our midst. Sue Macdiarmid on a Tuesday and Ray Sears who brings his wife on a Friday. Invaluable help to us all - thank you so much.

Sj

"I wouldn't mind having a go but I can't draw ..."

Well, the good news is you don't have to be able to draw to enjoy art! SAS runs an art class most Wednesday mornings from 10am until 12 noon and some of us won't pick up a pencil for weeks.

A typical morning starts with a warm welcome from Marnie, under whose non-intrusive guidance we amateurs seem to blossom, and her group of knowledgeable assistants who willingly help her and who also make the hot drinks we all enjoy, along with a piece of cake.

All equipment is supplied and we are encouraged to try new ways of expressing our art, but if we prefer to continue in our own direction that is also fine. There is a great bonhomie between us and an appreciation of other people's styles and work. We can browse through the many books, magazines and pictures to see if we would like to try something similar. The atmosphere is relaxing and a great way to wind down for the morning.

I am a carer and first attended art with my daughter but although she does not attend much now, I am still made very welcome. Under Marnie's care I have learned to use colour and shade amongst other things. Members have learned to produce their art even though some have lost the use of their dominant hand after suffering a stroke and their work continues to improve week after week.

So after all that, what I am trying to say is, come and give our art class a go. Its not school and no one will be laughing at your work unless you want to show someone and have a giggle about it - as we often do!

Shirley Davies

Pottery Group

We are driving along country lanes having survived the usual bustle of preparing for a morning out. Thankfully Thursday mornings are not too difficult as Louise is as keen to get going as I am. We are on our way to see Sandy and Ivan, not forgetting Nellie the dog for a morning of pottery.



Shirley is creating a wonderful head, Viv works on a sculpture of a hare, Diane is beginning work on a toadstool sculpture and Louise is at the wheel

As we arrive the stress seems to flow from my body, entering the studio it is hugs and laughter all round with a touch of sympathy for those who need it and then we settle down to the task in hand. Now this

varies between us all from a decorated plaque to a bowl turned on the wheel or maybe a sculpted figure or animal. You choose to do what you want and with help from Sandy, encouragement from Ivan, all eased along with hot drinks, biscuits, a lot of laughter and friendly banter, you somehow, after a little trial and error, emerge with that 'masterpiece' you always knew you could achieve.



Andy Eilbeck is making a plate to commemorate his cycling achievements. The medals have been won at different events and the bike on the plate is the one on which Andy took part in the London Bridges ride.

Time goes all too soon and we are packing up ready to leave. Some have done more than others, some have preferred to wander round the beautiful gardens for a while just to chill out but all will be back the following week because we would not miss it for the world .

Shirley and Louise Davies

And how SAS came to have a pottery group ...

The pottery group came about as a result of knowing Liz Greene who had a stroke at the age of 45. I was already teaching pottery in my studio at home, Lizzie Alston was in one of my groups, and introduced

Liz to the group thinking it might help in her recovery.

Liz was my first Stroke Potter, although I had previously been working with Headway Colchester, another group of amazing people.

Liz learnt to make a pot on the wheel using just her left hand. Her right hand was totally lifeless. She was steely willed, very determined to succeed and determined everyone else would as well!! A couple of years later she introduced me to SAS at Bridge Street and in January 2006 we started painting classes with Viv, Andy, Des, Gillian, Pauline Salt and others as time went on.

A year later we moved to the Stevenson Centre. Debbie, a wonderful artist taught by Terry Frost and Patrick Heron took over from me when family events meant I could no longer run the group.

We started pottery classes in my studio in October 2008 and have been running ever since. Des, Andy and Viv were my first SAS potters and are still happily potting!

We've been joined over the years at various times by Shirley and Louise, Tony Le Voi, George Sturdy, Debbie Freese, Mike Green and Marnie Jerrold. Debbie made the most fabulous goat, Tony made beautiful sculptures of his French Bulldogs and garden ornaments/plant holders that were full of fun. George had a wonderful sense of humour as well and made pots and sculptures from which he derived a great deal of pleasure.

Many wonderful sculptures/pottery/ceramics have come out of the studio; Andy with his hawks, owls, bulls and deer, Viv the master of dragons and hares, plus a fabulous Raku fired lion that I was very sad to see go. Des constantly amazes me with his masterful construction of anything he turns his hand to. He has made so many wonderful pieces from a gentle wolf and princess

from Firebird to the wild dog straining at the leash. He sees an image of something that fires his imagination and translates it into an image in clay. He is an amazing talent that may not have been discovered had he not suffered a stroke. Louise is making some very smart pots using the wheel, not easy with just her left hand and Shirley has made some beautiful sculptures of tigers and is finishing glazing the sculpted head of a very endearing old gentleman. Diane brings her cake decorating skills to pottery with her beautiful illustrations on plaques, plates and bowls ... and now mushrooms for the garden, just for fun!

Examples of work by Tony Le Voi



And Des Rodzeiwicz



All these potters have come out to the Studio come rain or shine, always helping each other, making a sometime huge effort to get into the studio however unwell they may feel. Classic FM, cups of tea and

coffee, biscuits and chat always help keep the energy levels up for the next project! All of you Potters are an inspiration.

Thank you!

Sandy

Canine Partners Visit

Friday 27th January 2017

Today we had a special visit from Barry, his wife and Barry's assistance dog, Guy. Not just any old dog, but an incredible couple who have an unbreakable bond, the phrase "one man and his dog" takes on a whole new meaning!

Barry gave us a talk that just took our breath away and the honesty with which he spoke about his previous life before his life-changing injury was amazing. Barry explained the training that Guy had to undertake prior to being accepted as a Canine Partner and I was mesmerised by the love and adoration they have for each other. It made me cry especially as I had to let my dog, cats and five horses go when I became ill and miss them all terribly and hope they are happy.



Meeting Barry and Guy was amazing and such an inspiration because just maybe in the future I may be able to have another

dog, not to replace Mason but to have companionship again and I have so much love to give. Being able to meet people such as Barry, who has come so far, makes you realise that it is possible to survive illness and break depression and anger - so why not me?

I also have a canine friend called Kane who comes to meet me each week. She is a Blue Staffie and I can't put into words how I feel when she (and her owner) are with me. Love, calmness, tearful and very grateful to the both of them for their support and time they give free of charge. It has enriched my life after my life-threatening illness. There is hope with these most wonderful dogs who are loving and completely underestimated by most people who will never understand the magic these special dogs give to us.

Susan Hume

John Fielden

I find it difficult to believe that John will not be coming into SAS anymore (although maybe we could try and persuade him to come to talk or even on an outing)!

He and Barbara have been an enormous part of SAS since we began and they helped to guide us as we manoeuvred our way through registering as a charity. They have both been incredibly supportive and believed in what we were trying to do. John was our treasurer for many years for which we were eternally grateful and Barbara was extremely influential in setting up the carers' meetings. She was able to point a new carer in the right direction as she had all the answers at her finger tips.

Financially, they have also donated a huge amount to us and it was because of them

that we sang in the Stowmarket Church alongside a wonderful male Welsh choir. John's branch of The Rotary put the concert on in aid of SAS and we sang "Always look on the bright side of life"! John and Barbara's daughter also gave generously to us and asked for donations to SAS instead of presents when she got married. Barbara and John themselves have donated to SAS instead of birthdays and anniversaries over the years. Their generosity towards us has been enormous.

John read quite beautifully at our very first Carol Concert and to this day I will always remember his words; "To have formulated in one's mind what one wanted to say and not be able to voice it, is a grotesque situation". So very apt for many of our members. He was also one of our best collectors when we used to take our boxes around Sudbury. He got into one of the TGA wheelchairs and insisted on rattling his box which we had been told we were not allowed to do. This, of course, made John rattle his even harder!

So many members have come and gone at SAS but John has been a constant and has always been the first to introduce himself to a new member and welcome them and make them feel at home.



We will miss John arriving in the morning answering to "No name, Janet, Sheila" or whoever took his fancy that day and we

will miss the cry of "cup of tea, cup of tea" as he stomps through the door.

Dear John, please make the journey occasionally and come to make sure that all is well with your SAS!

Viv Bourne

Sue rides again!



A couple of weeks ago Sue and I visited a lovely lady, Caroline Fardell who lives on a farm in Stansfield with her horse Athena and her Springer Spaniel.

Caroline with the help of Athena specialises in Equine therapy. As you know Sue misses her horses, cats and dogs, which she sadly had to give up following her illness. Imogen Sherwood, a point of help given to us by Sarahjane, contacted Caroline on our behalf, with a hope that she would allow Sue to spend some time with herself and her friends.

Caroline kindly invited us to visit and we had a lovely morning, and Sue surprised us all by actually getting up onto Athena's back and being led round the pen, something that she never thought she would be able to do again only a couple of weeks ago.

Lesley Smith

Felgains 7th February 2017

Linda Best from Felgains visited SAS to demonstrate various aids that are available to assist with day to day tasks. Felgains is a family company established in 1977 which provides specialist equipment in the care sector and mobility aids to the general public.

Linda brought many examples of useful aids, one of the most popular being a simple but very effective lid opener.

Coffee Caravan

Gary Simmonds visited both the Tuesday and Friday groups once again, bringing with him lots of useful information and leaflets to let us all know what help is available in the community.



During the Tuesday visit, Gary demonstrated an indoor curling set which can be used by everyone, whether standing or sitting. Great fun was had by all those who had a go. Shouts of encouragement to team

members could be heard, not to mention a rendition of 'We Are The Champions' by certain members ... its good to know the competitive spirit is alive and well! Gary has kindly offered to apply for funding on behalf of SAS to purchase a set for the club.

Interact

31st January 2017

Nicola Goodchild, a professional actress, who works with the charity InterAct Stroke Support, visited SAS in February. She explained how the charity aims to improve recovery from a stroke by using actors to give readings to people who have had a stroke in hospitals and at stroke clubs. The importance of emotional well-being in relation to physical improvement after a stroke now receives increasing recognition in health circles.



Nicola asked members whether they would prefer readings of short or long stories, jokes, poetry or quizzes and then she began by telling a few jokes. These were followed by a 'facts of life' story which made

everyone realise just how much society has changed during the last century. A poem written about reading to patients in the Royal Hampstead Hospital came next and Nicola explained how a reading, especially something familiar, can sometimes unlock speech in someone who has been in rehabilitation for several months.

A reading of a piece by Graham West, who was in Mile End Hospital in 2010, gave an insight into recovery from a patient's point of view. An entertaining, but rather creepy, story by Roald Dahl kept everyone listening before the session was brought to a close with some more jokes.

Many thanks to Nicola.

Jenny Tanner

A letter from a new member to all at SAS

“Dear Members and all at SAS,

I would like to thank everyone who has welcomed myself and my best friend of over 40 years, Lesley. Lesley introduced me to SAS and has organised, well encouraged me, to book the ‘go-start’ bus on my own which would have terrified me but I have done it twice now and the drivers are so helpful.

I am so impressed by the commitment of the members to move on when I’m still stuck at the ‘feeling sorry for myself’ stage. I watch and listen to people who all say ‘it takes time’ but am so impatient - I want to be better now!

I didn’t only have a stroke. My problems started with a nasal infection and after 2 years getting no where, my headaches be-

came worse and I collapsed at home and was found unconscious after four days.

I was then taken to Colchester where they did a CT scan and rushed me to Addenbrookes with meningitis, an abscess on the brain due to my sinuses, stroke and now, seizures. After five and a half months and three operations I came home to convalesce (and if you want to lose weight - go into hospital).

After coming home with no help I had intravenous medication and full blown depression kicked in. Without the help of my best friend in all the world I wouldn’t have coped and the advice from all the members has helped me no end.

I now have a visit each week from a lady called Veronica and her Staffordshire Bull Terrier which I look forward to as I let my dogs go because I wasn’t at home to look after them.

So anyway, a huge thank you to you all for your kindness, you have made Lesley and myself feel so welcome. We both enjoy the quizzes (but never know the answers) and look forward to joining in many more activities.

Thank you for giving me my life back.

Susan xxx

Members’ Committee

The next members’ committee meeting will be held on Tuesday 4th April. If you would like anything raised at this meeting, please speak to one of the committee. They are Diane Bayly, Janet Harrington, Linda Jackson, Sheila Marchant, Peter Cornell, Ken Howell and Bryan Moss.

Joan Lynton



JOAN CECILIA LYNTON

8th May 1924 - 1st January 2017

Joan joined our art class in 2015, she was instantly loved by all, such a wonderful character, she would chat away to everyone and very much enjoyed the banter that we have going in our art class. Her enthusiasm was very infectious!

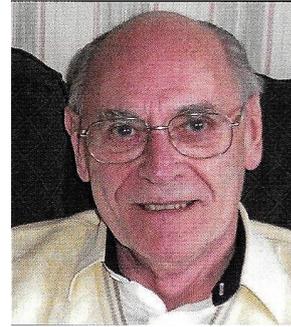
Joan loved to paint and was a very good artist always ready to learn new techniques and produced some beautiful pictures, in fact Joan sold ten of her pictures at our 2016 Brushstroke exhibition, donating all of the proceeds from her sales back to SAS.

Joan would often come into our class black and blue where she had taken a tumble and just be really cross with herself for being so silly, she would tell the story of how she'd fallen and in the process make us all laugh, she was made of strong stuff!

For me Joan reminded me so much of my lovely grandma, both born in the 1920's and from a stoic generation, I felt a real connection with her and along with everyone who knew her will really miss her.

Marnie Bragg

Ron Cox



9th May 1927 - 3rd January 2017

Ron joined SAS in February 2013, having had 3 strokes between June 2010 and April 2011 as well as having several other health related issues. His wife died in June 2010 after which Ron lived alone.

However, when he was feeling well enough, Ron was a regular at SAS and would drive in on his mobility scooter, looking very dapper, usually wearing a suit.

Ron has been in the forces in his early career and had served in East Africa where he was part of a Medical Team as a Theatre Assistant. He seemed to have really enjoyed his time in Africa and consequently had a good medical knowledge.

In 2013 he took part as a member of a control group in a research project investigating whether stroke patients given oxygen recovered more quickly than those who weren't given oxygen.

Unfortunately, during the last year Ron's visits to SAS became less frequent as his health declined. He will be missed.

Pam Lawrence

Reminders

Term Dates

Friday 7th April - SAS closes for the Easter break after the session

Tuesday 25th April - SAS re-opens

Friday 28th July - SAS closes for the summer break after the session

Tuesday 5th September - SAS re-opens

Tuesday 19th December - SAS closes for the Christmas break after the session

Forthcoming events!

Amongst other exciting things planned for the summer term are;

Friday 5th May - visit to the Newmarket Stud

Tuesday 20th June - Barge trip to Papermill Lock **To be confirmed**

Friday 14th July - Fish and chips at Aldeburgh

Tuesday 18th July - Woolverstone Sailing Day

Friday 28th July - Members' Sponsored Walk and Barbecue at Malting Farm

The Success After Stroke **Annual General Meeting** will be held on **Tuesday 16th May, 11am at The Stevenson Centre**. All members, carers, volunteers and professionals are welcome to attend.

Training for Volunteers/ Professionals

There is a First Aid course taking place on Tuesday 21st March. Please speak to Sj if you have not registered and wish to take part.

On Tuesday June 27th, Neil Chapman of the Stroke Association will deliver training on '*Stroke Fundamentals and Supporting People with Aphasia*'. This will take place after the normal session and last 2.5/3 hours. It is an interesting course and well worth doing. Please speak to Jan if you would like to take part. Carers who would like to attend are also welcome.

Please remember to inform Sj or Jan if you have a change to your medication or contact details. In the event of an emergency, it is vital that we have accurate information.

SAS meets at

The Stevenson Centre

Great Cornard

Sarahjane Lewis:

07434 931 962

By Post:

Success After Stroke

The Stevenson Centre

Stevenson Approach

Great Cornard

Sudbury

Suffolk

CO10 0WD

E-mail:

info@successafterstroke.org.uk

Web:

www.successafterstroke.org.uk

Success After Stroke - Activities

Success-after-Stroke is an active and motivated self-help support group where the members are helped by dedicated volunteers and therapists in their efforts for rehabilitation, independence and confidence.

Monday mornings: sailing at the Woolverstone Project.

Tuesday mornings: the group meets at The Stevenson Centre for;

- Socialising
- Physiotherapy
- Speech & language therapy
- Reading and discussion groups
- Well-being therapy
- Brain Training
- Basic nail care & massage therapy

Wednesday mornings: Art, drawing and painting at The Stevenson Centre – beginners welcome

Thursday mornings:

- Swimming Group
- Riding at The Shelley Centre for Therapeutic Riding (RDA)
- Pottery

Friday mornings: the group meets at The Stevenson for;

- Socialising
- Physiotherapy
- Speech and language therapy
- Reading and discussion groups
- Well-being therapy
- Brain Training
- Nordic Walking
- Basic nail care & massage therapy - alternate Fridays by appointment.

ACTIVITIES SUBJECT TO AVAILABILITY