



SUCCESS AFTER STROKE SUMMER NEWSLETTER 2018

A message from the Chairman ...

Well done and thank you to everyone who has contributed to this newsletter, it is a particularly good read this quarter. Thank you also to Liz Alston and all who worked so hard to stage the BrushStroke exhibition earlier this year; we raised £15,000. The standard of art from our members was outstanding. It was an exhibition that had something for everyone, and we created a lot of goodwill in the community.

The building extension works at the Stevenson Centre should be complete in November, and the Trustees have started a fundraising campaign to help us to cover the cost of any increase to our rent and therapy costs that will result. The volunteer activities we offer are vital to our members' wellbeing, but it is our therapists who keep our members as healthy as possible so that they may lead independent lives and reduce the demands on the NHS. If anyone has any initiatives as to how we may raise more funds, we would be delighted to hear from them.

Richard Furlonger

Some of the articles in this Newsletter ...

BrushStroke Exhibition



Music Therapy



Aldeburgh Trip



BrushStroke Exhibition 2018



This time, we decided to make the exhibition longer, taking in two weekends which proved a great success. However, it was a lot more work for our helpers and I cannot thank enough all the volunteers, especially our wonderful ladies who baked cakes and manned the café, their contribution was immense and much appreciated.



The BrushStroke Café, run by Angie Phipps and assistants.



Marnie Bragg must have a special mention and thank you for co-ordinating the members art work, which gets better and better with each BrushStroke Exhibition. It was an inspired idea to have the 'Fake or Fortune' theme, which set the members creating wonderful paintings.



Some of the paintings produced by SAS art group members, inspired by 'Fake or Fortune'.

The opening night was a crush, with art collectors busy chatting, drinking and, thankfully, buying lots of art. Another great success was our 'lucky dip', lots of tickets were sold with each one getting an original piece of art.



Opening Night

I must not forget our wonderful Artists for providing us with some unique paintings and for giving us paintings for the 'lucky dip'. We made over £1,000 on opening night.



Top left, Marnie Bragg and Bridget Allen who run the SAS art group alongside views of the exhibition.

Our special events were also well attended and I hope everyone enjoyed them. Sally, Barbara, Maryanne and Cary and their helpers were amazing on these days, providing wonderful lunches and brilliant inspiration on the life drawing and flower arranging days.



More views of the exhibition, including work by the SAS pottery group.

Every time I am so delighted at the way the BrushStroke Exhibition is orchestrated, my committee members are dedicated, efficient, thoughtful and so supportive, an enormous thank you to them all. Also, a huge thank you to Richard Furlonger, our wonderful Chairman.

See you in two years!

Warmest Wishes,

Lizzie Alston

BrushStroke Flower Arranging Event

A very enjoyable fundraising event during the BrushStroke fortnight was a Floral Demonstration by Jonathan Moseley, the well known floral designer and President of the North of England Horticultural Society, which was followed by lunch.



He gave a very entertaining demonstration, keeping the audience amused with lively anecdotes and flower arranging tips, and in a short space of time created a series of striking flower arrangements.



The event raised over £1000 for BrushStroke. Many thanks to everyone who helped to make it a success.

Sally Furlonger

One of the wonderful artists exhibiting at the 2018 BrushStroke Exhibition was Wladyslaw Mirecki. He suffered a stroke in 2015 and this is his story.

WLADYSLAW MIRECKI

Written for The Jackdaw 28.01.18.

Sometime between getting 1st Prize in the 2015 Lynn Painter-Stainers competition and my last solo exhibition in the same year at Piers Feetham Gallery, I suffered a stroke. This put me out of action for a spell. Luckily although my neural pathways were knocked out of kilter they were not entirely severed. So I was still able to do most things but ever so slowly and for only very short bursts with long naps in between.

I spent the first few months getting myself fit. Painting for me is mostly sedentary so I was overweight and didn't take enough exercise because getting on with the next picture was always more important. As soon as I was able I was taking walks and doing gardening.

By the end of the year I was back in the studio. I started with some small paintings (Barn

Door VII onwards) but soon needed to get really stuck in. Oak Tree in Winter came next (122 x 122 cm). Pre-stroke, this would have taken 6 weeks or so to do. It was on the board for 6 months. I had to alter my technique slightly because normally at the end of a piece I unify the disparate parts of a painting, by what I call, 'crawling' over it with the slops of the colours I'd been using mixed together. This is intensely physical which I was too weak to do. So I had to make sure each separate part was as complete as the next as I went along.

The next few paintings were more modest in scale until I'd built up stamina and the next major piece was Salisbury Cathedral. It began swimmingly but it wasn't until the end, which also went well, that I realised I'd worked through a severe depression. I think it was due to the medication.

The next couple of years have been a joy. I have become an Arborealist which is great for getting my work around the country. Besides the Arborealists are a great bunch of people and I am grateful to Tim Craven for accepting me.

I still tire quickly and can only work at paintings in snatches. I'm taking a break from the studio whilst the show is up. Reading, writing and playing music are all a trial and after a day in the studio all I'm fit for is to blob out in front of the telly. But I'm less irascible now and have cut down on the hooch. I've not had to alter my painting style, so I'm grateful for not having to re-learn things. My shows will not be as frequent as they were, alternating yearly between London and Chapel. Edna, my wife, has re-instated exhibitions in the Gallery which I no longer participate in. She has been wonderful in her help and support and our relationship is closer than ever. I feel very lucky indeed.

(Re-printed by kind permission of Wladyslaw Mirecki and The Jackdaw).

SAS visit Nedging Hall

On April 17th several of us met at Mrs. B's beautiful home and gardens for coffee and to meet her two beautiful Shire Horses. On arrival we were welcomed into the barn to be faced with a fire of all fires, enormous and most welcome, as it was sunny but a little chilly.



We were given lovely refreshments, some cake which Shirley Davies had made and then it was out into the yard to meet the horses. Pearl and Rosie who are mother and daughter were both beautifully turned out and received much attention from the members.





We all managed to wander round the gorgeous gardens which were alight with ‘a host of golden daffodils’, magnolias and too many other plants to mention. On returning and regrouping in the barn we were given soup and sausage rolls.

A very big thank you from us all at SAS to Mrs B and her wonderful team of helpers. We all really enjoyed our visit as the pictures relate.

Sj

2018 AGM

This year’s AGM was held on Tuesday 8th May and was well attended by both members and volunteers. A synopsis of the year’s events was given by Sj Lewis, SAS Manager, followed by a report by Treasurer, Loudon Greenlees. Chairman, Richard Furlonger explained intended fundraising strategies, as well as SAS compliance with various Government guidelines and legislation. Richard also thanked all those who contribute to the success of SAS. A buffet lunch was enjoyed after the meeting, organised by Debbie Buckenham.

We mentioned in the Spring Newsletter that Sandy Larkman, SAS pottery and art teacher had decided to retire. Sandy could not be with us at the AGM, but Viv Bourne accepted a gift and bouquet of flowers on her behalf, which were later presented to Sandy.

Viv also read out the following statement from Sandy:

“It has been a privilege to have been associated with SAS. I have seen the membership swell and people, who face a bleak future, joining SAS and feeling that life is worth living again. I would like to quote Viv Hatfield who said that ‘whilst of course she wishes she had never had a stroke, she has done so much that she would not have experienced without SAS’. It has been a real pleasure to work with my lovely pottery people for ten years and my painters before that. There is so much care and concern for each other’s welfare within the group and within SAS as a whole. I hated making the decision to stop but I hope that the new pottery venue will be a happy and fruitful one. With love and thanks to you all.”

Sandy’s time at SAS

Sandy became involved with SAS very early on in its life. She had always taught pottery to Liz Green and one day Liz brought her into SAS. Liz introduced her to us and that was it!

She started teaching the group to paint and then invited them to go back to her home in Edwardstone. Everyone absolutely loved it and a lot more went on than just the painting!

Ivan, Sandy’s husband, was equally wonderful

with all the members and he too became a friend to all of them.

I can't quite remember when the transition happened. However, it was decided that the members would be offered lessons in both art and pottery. As Sandy had all the equipment for the pottery at Edwardstone, those lessons remained with her. The painting classes came back to the Stevenson Centre with a few different teachers until we eventually found Marnie.

The pottery was an enormous success and later on when BrushStroke started, their pottery was in great demand. There were Highland cows, dragons, hares, otters, plaques, plates, night lights, bowls and many mythical figures completed by Des. One of these, which was created on the theme of 'caring', we at SAS presented to Anesta Newson when she retired from the Bridge Project.

I know that Sandy has found it a wrench to leave her group but there is never a right time to say 'goodbye' and we will continue to see her as she is remaining part of BrushStroke.

Dear Sandy, what a large part of SAS you have been and you (and Ivan) have become friends and confidants to your class.

Thank you so very much for all the years you have given us, you will be greatly missed.

Viv Bourne

Holiday Meet-up!

Two of our members, Bryan Moss and Sam Wright, recently informed us that they would not be at SAS the following week because they were going on holiday. What neither of them realised, until they arrived to catch the coach to take them to Scotland, was that they had booked on the same trip!



Sam's wife, Norleen, said they all had a fabulous time and the scenery in the area around Loch Long was fantastic. They enjoyed visiting various places and whilst the weather was chilly, the welcome was warm!

The Isle of Wight Challenge Rebecca Symons

The Isle of Wight Challenge is now a classic annual event on the island, so myself and three friends decided, in the usual post Christmas January slump, to sign up. It was great to have something to aim for that got us out in the fresh air and improved our fitness too. This particular event is part of the 'Ultra Series' of extreme challenges and consists of walking or running around the Isle of Wight doing either the full circuit of 106km over 2 days or half the island in one day – a mere 52 km (33 miles). We opted for the latter!



Rebecca, second from the left

As a group we thought what a wasted effort it would be not to use this experience as a fundraising opportunity too. We all had different causes that were important to us. My mother has endured and amazingly sur-

vived several strokes so my family know only too well what a potentially devastating impact strokes can have on individuals as well as the people who love them.

Since her recovery she has regularly volunteered for Success After Stroke in Sudbury and often said what a valuable and rewarding resource it is for everyone involved. Be it social or therapeutic, how important it is that people with shared experiences come together in this way to support each other. I am so proud of her and it was easy to decide to fundraise for this super group.

After many weeks gradually building up the distances we could walk, the first Bank Holiday weekend in May came round all too fast and we were off.

The weather was beautiful and with fantastic scenery, white cliffs, sandy beaches and an undulating coastal path we couldn't have asked for a better weekend or location to attempt this. It took us 13 hours, but we were triumphant in the end and crossed the finish line at 9.30pm! Amazingly I had no blisters but it took a good week or two to feel 'normal' again and to be able to walk up or down a flight of stairs without whimpering!



However the feeling that remains is one of happiness at having completed a tough challenge, whilst also helping a very good cause close to home. Thanks so much to all those who supported me!

Who knows, maybe next year we'll do the whole island....

A huge thank you to Rebecca for her generous support from all at SAS. At the time of writing, Rebecca has raised £1,371.

Little Cornard Church Flower Festival



Over the weekend of May 12th and 13th, Little Cornard Church held a flower festival. Sue Macdiarmid, SAS volunteer, put our name forward as a beneficiary from the proceeds. Our thanks are due to all those who organised or visited the event, in the region of £2,000 was raised from the sale of refreshments and plants, of which SAS will receive a third. SAS members David Bullock and Trevor Green and their wives, Maureen and Val, visited the event and David reported as follows:

"The four of us went on Saturday afternoon. We were met by Sue, who quickly got the ramps down for my wheelchair. Inside the church we met the Vicar and his band of flower arrangers ... and what an array there was. The flowers were beautiful and the scent out of this world. I had a lovely surprise as we bumped into a relative with her friend whom we last saw nine years ago! It was then time for tea and, as by then the sun was out, we found a lovely cool spot in the well-kept churchyard. The tea and cake was very welcome and all in all, we had a lovely afternoon. Thank you all at Little Cornard Church".

David Bullock

Music Therapy (or, SAS has talent)

At SAS, we are always looking for new and exciting ways to provide helpful therapies in a fun and engaging way. Ray Travasso, Music Therapist from the Suffolk Community Therapy Service, visited us bringing along masses of wonderful instruments and encouraging everyone to take part in the session – whether they thought they were musical or not!



Before starting the session, Ray explained a little about the Music Therapy service and why music can play an important part in rehabilitation from injury. A Music Therapist is a State Registered profession and they often work in conjunction with Speech and Language Therapists and Physiotherapists. Ray runs a team of twelve, working across Suffolk, Norfolk and Essex at all sorts of venues. Typically, Ray and his team go into schools, care homes and groups like SAS to write and record songs or simply to encourage people to exercise their vocal cords, relax, have fun and join in. Ray said that in the opinion of music therapists, everyone is musical. The human response to music changes our heart rate and breathing, as well as having a neurological response – research has shown that the whole brain lights up when we listen to music and it can stir memory, speech and movement, helping to strengthen muscle tone and improve co-ordination.

During both sessions, Ray asked if anyone in the group had ever wanted to play an instrument but had not been able to achieve the aim. Up stepped Tuesday group's Sheila

Frampton and Judy Davey from the Friday group and, after a few minutes quiet tuition, they both had the confidence to play a duet with Ray on his electric piano in front of the whole group. Go Sheila and Judy!



Ray produced an enormous quantity of instruments (Mary Poppin's bag springs to mind) for the whole group to join in a musical ensemble. The Tuesday ensemble transported us to a Caribbean beach with waves gently lapping on the shore – no mean feat on a miserable March day! The Friday group had something of a carnival vibe going!



Ray also introduced us to a fantastic app that enables a person to 'play' almost any instrument they choose using only one hand. Alan Barrett gave us a tune using the flute and Stuart Walton played the electric guitar, something he had always wanted to do!



It was amazing and everyone had a great time. On both occasions the hour flew by and at the end, Ray was besieged with people asking questions (chief of which was, “when can you come back?”). No one wanted to go home, and it was fantastic to see members and volunteers from both groups so enthused.



To quote Fiona Yerofeyev in answer to Ray asking the question “what does music do for you?”, she replied “It gets into your soul.” Well, it certainly seemed to do that!

We will be seeing Ray again soon. Can’t wait!

Jan

The Martyn Chapter

On 15th May, Mark Kiddy and I went to the

Masonic Hall in Sudbury and received £500 from the Martyn Chapter. This was all due to Mark who had a friend who was a Mason and had suggested SAS was worthy of some funding.



We were extremely privileged to be presented with the cheque in The Temple which normally we are not allowed into, even the Masons’ wives.

Thank you Mark for all your continued support. We are much indebted to you.

Viv Bourne

Seated Dance with Sharon Massey

On Friday 27th April we were lucky to have a visit from Sharon Massey and her friends, demonstrating that you can still enjoy dancing, even if getting on your feet is a bit of a challenge.



Members and volunteers rocked to the gentle strains of the bossa nova (plus other beats not quite so gentle) and enjoyed having a go at

some quite complicated hand and foot co-ordination!



At the end Sharon and her dance partner Ralph, who also lives with the after-effects of a stroke, demonstrated some amazing moves!

Jan

Aldeburgh 2018



The day started well if a little grey up above. Rain was threatened but luckily we avoided it all day and the sun shone after lunch. The journey fortunately went without any problems and the very helpful Jonny made it all that much easier for everyone.



Jenny Tanner and I collected our huge order from the fish and chip shop and wheeled it back to the sea wall as everyone arrived and got settled for an afternoon of music and laughter. "Meals on wheels" as Norleen commented!



With the fish and chips delivered successfully and Gary-the-gull overhead, doing his dive bombing, hoping to steal someone's lunch again (all part of the trip now), everyone was happy! My Mother-in-law, Celia, appeared with an enormous box of brownies and ice creams which we all enjoyed and were very grateful for!



Various people wandered around the town and shopped, enjoying a coffee stop and soaking up the seaside atmosphere.



A very successful trip with not one hiccup!
Yeah!!

Sj



Hungry 'Gary the Gull' who didn't manage to steal Ray's fish and chips this year!

Lavenham Hidden Gardens



Member, Geoff Heald and his wife Sue, opened their stunning garden in Lavenham as part of the Lavenham Hidden Gardens weekend. Sue says; "The event was a great success with 450 people through our gates over the two days.



With the help of friends and very kind dona-

tions of wonderful cakes, which were served all day with tea, we managed to raise nearly £500 which was shared between Success After Stroke and the Lavenham Dementia Alliance."

Many thanks to Sue, Geoff and their helpers for their hard work and kind donation.

Thank you!

Many thanks to all of you who generously donate biscuits, cakes and other goodies to SAS, we all very much appreciate your kindness. We would also like to express our heartfelt thanks to all the volunteers and therapists for their continued and unwavering care and professionalism in the support of Success After Stroke members. You are an amazing team.

Sj

Stevenson Centre Redevelopment

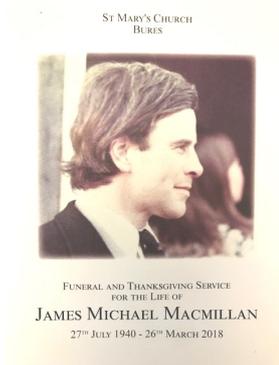
As you may have noticed , the Stevenson Centre is currently undergoing a major makeover. It is really quite exciting to turn up to each session not knowing which walls will have been removed and to find new ones put up!



We apologise for the impact that this has had on our members, but hope that once the work is complete, we will be able to expand and improve the services provided by SAS. The work is scheduled for completion by November and we look forward to using the new space.

Jan

James Macmillan



Many of you will remember James who died on the 26th March. He had been unwell for some time and I think we felt that he was ready to go and join his beloved Caroline who had died over three years ago. He had greatly missed having her by his side and now we will all miss him terribly.

James had many roles at SAS, beginning as Chairman in 2005. He took over from David Clapp at a time when we needed more space and he oversaw our move from the Bridge Project in Gainsborough Street to the Stevenson Centre. Perhaps more importantly he arranged for us to become a Registered Charity in our own right which required a considerable amount of administrative work on his part. We then went from strength to strength and our success today would not have been achieved without his help. In 2007 James told me that he 'did not do big' and as the group had grown significantly by that time he felt he would like someone else to do the job and so Geoffrey took over from him. He continued as a volunteer right up until some months before he died.

James was extremely good with all the members and being a practical man he was able to sort things like Andy Eilbeck's car and bicycle, which he did on numerous occasions!

He became very involved with the swimming class and when Jeremy Hill's pool house burnt down he found another pool in Alphamstone and arranged for the class to move there. He

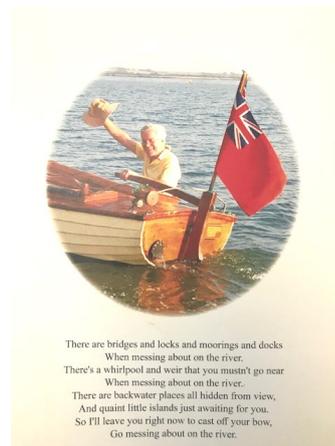
was a keen swimmer himself and enjoyed his weekly sessions with everyone.

On one occasion he brought his boat, the Charlotte Rose, to Woolverstone and took out both members and volunteers on the river alongside the Woolverstone Project boats.

Following Caroline's death he returned to the group to help the physios with their 'pedalling'! He also set up a fund in memory of Caroline to be used to take members to see gardens which she had always loved. We had a wonderful outing to Hyde Hall.

James was an extremely caring and sensible man, he was interesting and interested in everyone. He was a good mediator and saw things clearly. He brought all of these attributes to SAS overseeing everything with a good sense of humour.

Viv Bourne



Reminders

Forthcoming events!

NB. NO ART Wednesday 5th September or Wednesday 12th December due to blood donors.

Tuesday 24th July 2018 - Sailing at Woolverstone.

Sunday 2nd September 2018 - Garden open at Leaven Hall, Leavenheath 2 pm—5 pm . Refreshments sold in aid of SAS.

Tuesday 4th December 2018 - Carol Concert at Long Melford Church

Term Dates

Tuesday 31st July, SAS closes for Summer AFTER the session.

Tuesday 4th September, SAS re-opens.

Tuesday 18th December, SAS closes for Christmas after the party.

Members' Committee Meeting - Friday 21st September, 9.45 am The Stevenson Centre.

SAS and social media

You can view recent highlights and photographs on our Facebook page; Success After Stroke, Reg Charity: 1115016.

For information about SAS please go to our website;

www.successafterstoke.org.uk

Ideas please ...

If you have any suggestions for talks, events, outings or just general thoughts about things you would like to do during our meetings, then please do not hesitate to let us know. Ideas are always welcome so don't be shy!

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

PLEASE COULD YOU ALL, INCLUDING VOLUNTEERS AND THERAPISTS, CHECK THE DIARY THROUGHOUT THE TERM FOR ANY CHANGES WE HAVE TO MAKE.

FOR THOSE OF YOU WHO WOULD LIKE A PAPER COPY OF THE DIARY, NEWSLETTERS ETC, THERE SHOULD ALWAYS BE SOME IN THE CLEAR TRAYS BY THE MEMBERS' PIGEON HOLES. IF NOT, OR IF YOU TAKE THE LAST ONE, PLEASE LET US KNOW AND WE CAN MAKE SOME MORE COPIES.

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

Facebook: Success After Stroke,
Reg Charity: 1115016.

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 with 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
- Pottery

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

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

ACTIVITIES SUBJECT TO AVAILABILITY