

Update on our fundraising events, personal donations, and from one of our members a tribute to a great friend.



Fundraising

• The year got off with a great start with an Easter Wreath making event on the 25th March led by Suzanne Indge, at LLanfoist Hall. A great evening spent with people who enjoyed lots of chat and laughter while making beautiful, completed wreaths. We made £245.

• This was followed by a sell-out dance and buffet organised by one of our main supporters Alun Williams on the 18th of March at Nantyglo Rugby Club. Delayed due to COVID it was a great to see so many on the dance floor. Thank you to Dai Hayward for doing a grand job as master of ceremonies, Byron Hayward for getting the Wales rugby shirt signed by all the players and Mike Jenkins. Thanks also to the band 'A Whole Lot of Rock', to Nantyglo Ruby Club and to everyone who donated the many raffle prizes! Alun raised £490.80p

• Mary Wakeling hosted the first of a series of coffee mornings on the 16th of April at The Priory, St Marys Church Monmouth. Great coffee, delicious cakes, and good company you can't beat it! Money raised £191. Be there for the next one on Sept 24th, 10 - 12p.m.

• Phil Miles ex cardiac rehab fitness instructor and BGfm radio presenter (tune in Tues 12.00 – 14.00!) organised a Music and Quiz Night on the 29th of April in The Tredegar Arms which raised £700. Seven teams of ten people competed for the top prize of two bottles of champagne. Many thanks to friends and members of Parc Bryn Bach Running Club who came along. The winning team was captained by Marcus Smith the club's treasurer.

Donations from 1st March

Thank you so much to the following people for their generosity; Trevor Edwards, June O'Brien, G Jarrett, CR Meek and E Hemson.

To Andrea Jones for holding a strawberry tea at her farm in memory of her husband Glyn. Glyn attended our Usk class several years ago and was a great supporter and friend. And to Mary Wakeling for holding her regular coffee mornings in Monmouth supported by a lovely group of people.

We have received two donations in loving memory of Mary Robson and John Howard Daley.

Tribute

Huw Crawshaw, would like us to mention his great friend Barry McCarthy who sadly passed away earlier this year. Huw tells me he first met Barry, a highly esteemed pilot and one of the first to fly a jet plane out of Bristol, at our class in Llanfoist 10 years ago.

A big thank you to James Jones who is leaving us and our current trustees for their commitment during this challenging time - Gareth Davies, Tony Lowery, Nigel Dancer and Greg Overs and to our fundraising support group - Andrea Davies, Suzanne Indge and Kath Cleveland. From a very grateful Jacky Miles M.B.E Chair



Gwent Defibbers

Gwent Defibbers is a support group for people who are going to have or have had an implantable cardioverter defibrillator (ICD) fitted. An ICD is a device that controls an abnormal heart rhythm. The device is the size of a matchbox and fitted under the collar bone on the left side of the body. Leads go into the heart, and this will detect if the patient is having an abnormal rhythm. The device will try to bring the heart rate back to normal but will give a shock if this fails. Shocks are described as having a horse kick you in the chest, but this varies from person to person.

The group have worked in partnership with several health boards to produce an information booklet about living with an ICD. Hospitals give these booklets out when patients are being told they need an ICD. The booklet looks at all aspects of life with an ICD.

The group meet at Abergavenny and Radyr Cardiff, on a quarterly basis and invite guest speakers. These have included a range of topics such as the importance of checking your blood pressure, what a Physiologist is checking for when you attend clinic to check your ICD, explaining heart failure, and a Pharmacist to explain cardiac medication.

Gwent Defibbers continue to receive support from health boards across Wales, University Hospital of Wales Cardiff, Prince Charles Hospital Merthyr Tydfil, Royal Glamorgan Hospital Llantrisant, The Grange Hospital Cwmbran.

Recently the group have made a strong link with Morriston Hospital Swansea, The Princess of Wales Hospital Bridgend and are excited to have been asked to get involved with hospitals across North Wales and Save a Life Cymru.

Committee members continue to raise awareness of the importance of learning CPR in schools and within the community and making public access Defibrillators (AED's) accessible to all. It is important that everyone learns CPR and how to use an AED. The AED's 'talk' to you and tell you exactly what to do, so you cannot give anyone a shock by mistake!

If you would like more information about the group, please contact the group Secretary Sandra Davies email: gwentdefibbers@gmail.com

August 2022

TICKER NEWS

Official newsletter of the North Gwent Cardiac Rehabilitation & Aftercare Charity



Dear Members

I would like to share with you some fabulous news! Over the last couple of months, we have received three substantial donations. Ladies Moose International Tredegar £500, Waitrose £1000 and N.F.U. £6379. This money along with a successful application to the National Lottery Community Fund will, as you will read below, help us to benefit a lot more people.

"Congratulations on getting National Lottery funding Thank you for everything you do to help your community thrive. We're so happy to be funding projects that make a real difference to people across the UK"

As you know after suffering a cardiac event it's vital to take on board the early support and advice given by the hospital cardiac rehab team and your G.P. But keeping the health advice going after the initial shock wears off can be challenging. This is where we can help. We provide long term exercise classes for you and your partner. Classes run by specialist fitness instructors, in your local community.

People tell us that since joining one of our classes they are fitter, healthier, more confident, and independent. Many are friends with others who know exactly what they are going through.

Sadly, the number of people going to our classes in Blaenau Gwent is poor. To reverse this trend, we successfully applied to the Wales Community Fund for money to help us improve things.

We are -

1. Increasing awareness of our service through the production of a 'Welcome Video'. Including testimonials from class members it will be shown to patients in early cardiac rehab. It will also appear on our web site and Facebook page.
2. Give people a choice of how and when they wish to take part in CR. We will offer live stream classes on social media alongside telephone support. Supporting people who may not for whatever reason be able to get to a class.
3. Give people reassurance and feedback on their progress. In a time when GPs are struggling with their workload, we will give members the opportunity to have an annual health and fitness assessment.



Llanfoist Thursday Class with the Community Fund cheque £9939

WE NEED YOU!

We are looking for a TRUSTEE to join us. If you value what we do and want a new challenge then this could be you. email me on cardiacarecommunity@outlook.org Jacky Miles M.B.E. Chair

Our Community Classes - want to join just email or call us

Mon	Llanfoist Community Hall NP7 9LP.	15.15 - 16.15
Tues	Wyndham Vowles Abertillery NP13 1PJ.	11.45 - 12.45
Tues	Usk Memorial Hall NP15 1LH.	14.00 - 15.00
Wed	Orpheus Hall Tredegar NP22 9LF.	10.30 - 11.30
Wed	Ebbw Vale Catholic Church NP23 6JQ.	12.00 - 13.00
Wed	The Band Hall Blaenavon NP4 9JQ.	14.00 - 15.00
Wed	Winches Town OAP Hall NP23 4BD.	16.00 - 17.00
Thurs	Monmouth Leisure Centre NP25 3DP.	13.45 - 14.45
Sat	Llanfoist Community Hall NP7 9LP.	09.00 - 10.00, 10.00 - 11.00



POTATO GROWING CHALLENGE – THE RESULTS!

A 93-year-old gardening veteran and a nine year old with just one season of veg growing under her belt took the top prizes at the North Gwent Cardiac Rehabilitation and Aftercare Charity's Potato Growing Challenge weigh-in at Abergavenny Garden Centre last Saturday [25 June].

Bryan Jones from Govilon and Llangattock youngster Isabella Lewis both achieved a respectable 49oz (1.39kg) harvest, securing them first place in the adult and children's categories respectively.

Bryan was unable to attend the weigh-in in person, but Isabella, who gardens with her grandparents Brian and Jan Williams on their family allotment in Llangattock, said the secret of her success was simple: "They need plenty of water."

Garden Centre Manager Gavin Trinder agreed. "Isabella is spot-on: potatoes need a lot of water to form good tubers, and it's been such a dry spring that keeping on top of the watering will have been crucial."

The three-month Challenge, which started on 27 March, was set up to raise funds for the charity, which runs community-based exercise classes for cardiac patients across Monmouthshire and Blaenau Gwent. Sponsored by the Garden Centre, it drew 80 entries, with participants competing to grow the heaviest crop of spuds in a 10-litre pot from a single organic "Colleen" seed potato.

Isabella's sister Olivia, aged 8, proved green fingers run in the family with a 44oz (1.25kg) haul – comfortably securing her second place in the children's section, followed by Darcy Francis, aged 5, with 243/4oz (702g).

Runners-up in the adult category were Tony and Ann Heming with 441/2oz (1.26kg), and Les Bailey came third with 39oz (1.1kg).

Prizes, provided by the Garden Centre, included a mini cactus display, a bug hotel and a seed and cutting tray, and were awarded by charity chairperson Jacky Miles, MBE.

"We're really grateful to everyone who took part in the challenge," said Jacky, "and of course to the Abergavenny Garden Centre for sponsoring the potato growing kits and the prizes. I'd also like to say a big thank you to Andrea and Gareth Davies and Nigel Dancer, who helped out so efficiently with unearthing and weighing all the potatoes."

"We're already planning to repeat this very successful event next Spring. Together we've raised a fantastic £450, which will help the charity provide one-to-one rehab support at home for people who can't get to community classes."

And in a postscript to the event, Isabella and Olivia's grandmother Jan Williams said the girls ate their prize-winning spuds for tea that evening. "They really enjoyed the afternoon," said Jan, "and they reckoned their home-grown potatoes were the best they'd ever had!"

CAPTION 1:

L-R: Children's section winners Isabella Lewis, Olivia Lewis and Darcy Francis with their prizes.

Photo credit: Simon Walter

Thank you to Dianne Spencer for writing this press release: email: dianne@diannespencer.com; Tel: 01873 811147

MAKING SENSE OF EXERCISE- THE BRAIN BODY LINK.

Tony Lowery

Last Saturday I visited the Llanfoist class to drop off some leaflets. When I was there, I had a quick chat with Tom Stone about the class. He was praising the members for their extremely positive can-do attitude towards supporting each other and how it was a real pleasure to lead the class. What struck me more was the happy demeanour of the members of the class. The exercise was not only influencing the physical but was also playing an important role in maintaining good cognitive fitness. As I left the hall I started to think about the positive link between the Brain and the factors that we can control to keep us mentally active and agile.

Our brain typically finishes developing by our late 20s, after which there is a gradual decline as we age. It's a fact of life that we will all suffer this. But what we can do is to slow that decline. There are factors that help us slow this decline, scientists call them "modifiable risk factors". If we can control these factors, then all of us can maintain our brains sharpness as we age.

Be Mentally Active

Our brain can adapt in the face of aging and illness. This is referred to as our "cognitive reserve". To build up our reserve there are simple activities then can be done to do this. It could be reading, playing a musical instrument, singing, doing puzzles, or learning a new skill.

Socialise

One of the reasons why going to an exercise class is important is that it stimulates social participation. Seeking out company and lively conversation will give the brain a great workout and the feeling of belonging to a group like the North Gwent Cardiac Rehabilitation Group will be a great boon to your mental health too.

Exercise often

It is well established fact that exercise is good for your brain. Your brain depends on nutrients and oxygen and exercise not only gives a boost to your cardiovascular health but will make your brain fitter and healthier. The

type of exercise could be going to a class, gardening, or walking. The latest research tends to indicate that even 2 brisk walks a day of between 10-15 minutes could be enough to support brain health.

Eat Healthily

Much has been said how important a good diet is to maintain overall health. A lot has been written on what we should eat and why. But one of the factors that prevents a lot of families considering a healthy diet is the cost and it can be overwhelming. An easier strategy is to try to eat one piece of fruit a day and staying away from supermarket ready meals.

Stay Curious

Being open to new experiences can boost brain health. There are habits that you can adopt to boost your openness to new experiences. It could be taking a walk with a friend in new surroundings, watching a nature documentary or going to a cultural event. This doesn't have to be expensive, having access to free bus pass could well be that opportunity to explore new surroundings.

Think Positive

Being optimistic about your physical and mental well being can play a very important role in how our brain changes as we age. If you expect to grow old and forgetful, then this will become a self-fulfilling prophecy. But, if you realise that your brain health is in your hands, and that with the right lifestyle and routines then you will remain agile throughout your life. Seek out a positive role model. I have a friend who last week celebrated his 92nd birthday. He still cycles on his electric bike, into his 80s he was still doing 12-hour time trials (188 miles wasn't bad for an 84-year-old). He is my role model and I look to him as how I want to be when I get to 92.

P.S Apologies to those people who sent in material that we just didn't have room for. Saved for next time!

