



SUPPORT THE RHN WITH A TRIBUTE LAVENDER FUND

Would you like to honour the life of a loved one at the same time as donating to the RHN? Perhaps your loved one worked or volunteered at the hospital, or they knew the building well as a child. Maybe, like the women in this article, you had a family member living here. Whatever the reason, everyone is welcome to set up a memorial Lavender Fund and to plant a lavender in their memory.

Jacky Philips tells us about her late husband Graham and how our special Tribute Lavender Funds help her feel connected.



Graham was born in Thornton Heath, Croydon in 1954. He recalled having a very happy childhood. We met in 1972 on a weekend away to Oxfordshire and two years later we were married. We had two children, Steven and Bridget, who then gifted us five grandchildren.

Graham had a few jobs during his lifetime including lab technician at Kings College London, which he loved. He also worked on the buses and then finished his work life at British Telecom. Graham was a friendly, lovely man who had many interests including motor bikes, banger racing, karate, travelling and sailing (he was a marine volunteer). He was also very sociable and loved to visit friends and family all over the world.

Sadly, later in life it became apparent that he was unwell and we eventually found out that he had Huntingdon's Disease. In June 2014 he came to live at The Royal Hospital for Neuro-disability until he died in October 2016. The family have fond memories of the grounds as they were so peaceful and we could spend time with Graham – it didn't feel like a hospital. This is why we wanted to set up a Lavender Fund, to continue his memory, support the hospital's vital work and; as a family, we have somewhere to visit (the memorial lavender beds) even though Graham has gone.

Michelle Brocklehurst set up a Lavender Fund in memory of her late father Mick, a patient here at the RHN for 31 years and well known by many!



Michael (Mick) was 41 when he had his accident in 1979. He was working for the Gas Board at the time. He had worked as a milkman previously. He was very sociable and loved music and singing. He had a deep baritone voice. He loved singing Irish rebel songs and songs like Jerusalem. He was very mischievous with a wicked sense of humour and he never lost the twinkle in his eye. He could be challenging but the nurses at the RHN were very tolerant and forgiving!

His accident was from a fall downstairs on to concrete when visiting friends. He sustained a subdural haematoma which reoccurred after drainage. He was treated at the old Atkinson Morley Hospital before being transferred to Kingston Hospital while waiting for long-term placement. He had served some time in the Army so he was considered for The Star and Garter but he wasn't suitable due to his high nursing needs so the Royal Hospital for Neuro Disability came to his rescue! He was very content at the RHN and we knew that he had the best care. I was five-years-old when he had his accident, so the staff and hospital became my extended family and home. I still miss the hospital and grounds but feel so fortunate that he lived his life there before his death and the staff supported me and my mum so well, this is why we set up a Lavender Fund in his memory.



Our lavender beds are located in the gardens of the hospital and provide a peaceful and serene space for families to remember and celebrate the life of their loved ones. A plaque sits in front of the beds listing all the Lavender Fund names. Any donations made in their memory are allocated to their own fund. Setting up a fund costs £25 with no minimum annual or monthly donation expected thereafter - you can add funds at your own pace. If you would like to set up a Lavender Fund for someone special please contact Isabel Barrett in Fundraising on 020 8780 4557 or at legacies@rhn.org.uk.



Meet Sarah Hickman, Community and Challenge Events Executive

The COVID-19 pandemic has severely impacted the ability of charities across the UK to raise funds, and provide the services on which communities rely. In June 2020, the Institute of Fundraising estimated that the charitable sector in the UK faced a £12.4bn loss of income for the year. We spoke to Sarah Hickman, Community and Challenge Events Executive about her experience of fundraising during the lockdown.

“The RHN fundraising team plays a key part in raising essential funds for the hospital, as we rely heavily on fundraising to provide additional therapies, equipment and services, which are key to the rehabilitation of the patients and residents here.

“On 11 March the fundraising team and other departments were told to prepare to work from home with immediate effect for the coming weeks, and potentially months, due to the scale of the COVID-19 pandemic and the vulnerability of the patients at the hospital.

“As the Senior Community and Challenge Events Executive, one of my roles is to help plan and organise the hospital’s largest annual fundraiser, the Gala Dinner, which on average raises over £80,000. The event, due to take place in May 2020, was initially postponed until October, but then cancelled altogether. However, we remain positive that we will be able to bring it back for October 2021. In the end the majority of our fundraising events including the Scottish Summer Ball, London Regency Ball and Carol Concert which raise £35,000 annually, were also cancelled.

“As well as our ticketed events we also raise £90,000 every year through mass participation challenge events including the Virgin Money London Marathon and Prudential RideLondon-Surrey 100. Unfortunately, cancellations and postponements have also had a huge negative impact on this source of income, and, as you can imagine, we are relying on these events being able to go ahead for 2021. We were fortunate to be able to hold our annual five-mile sponsored Summer Stroll in September, so a huge thank you to everyone who took part.

“Due to the limitations on holding fundraising events during the lockdown,

the team have had to come up with alternative ways to raise money for the hospital. We have used social media more than ever, utilising Facebook to host our fundraising events. We brainstormed different ideas and themes, and recruited volunteers to take part. So far we have put on two virtual musical events; The Pianothon and The Day at the Movies the Musical, with 60 volunteers taking part raising over £10,000. We also had four inspirational patients, who arrived at the RHN unable to walk, raise money through the RHN Patient’s Corridor Challenge, by walking 100 metres along our main corridor. The team raised an impressive £9,868.25. All funds raised from these events went straight towards the hospital’s COVID-19 emergency fund, helping to keep our patients and staff safe.

“The most challenging part for the events fundraising team during the pandemic has been trying to raise funds for the charity when we can’t physically hold events at the RHN. Some of our regular event attendees have been incredibly kind and made a donation to the hospital instead. However, this has generated only a fraction of our expected income. Even as the lockdown restrictions ease, it continues to be a struggle to engage people in fundraising activities, as hosting indoor or mass participation events remain prohibited.

“The aspect of my job I enjoy the most is building and maintaining relationships with volunteers and community and corporate contacts by meeting them face to face and working with them to come up with fundraising initiatives. Not being able to do this, invite them to visit the hospital, or host their events is very disheartening. It has been important for me to keep them engaged by staying in touch with how the RHN is doing, what we have been up to and suggesting

other ways they could help support the hospital, to ensure they continue to feel part of the RHN community.

“In June we were given the option to come back in to work a few days a week which was a breath of fresh air; seeing familiar faces, meetings that were no longer just on Zoom, and returning to a sense of normality and structure.

“The most rewarding part of the lockdown has been seeing how our community has grown and stuck together, with so many people volunteering to help the hospital by donating funds or goods or fundraising through virtual events. Knowing that this money will help support our nurses, keyworkers and patients and keep them safe from the virus is a great feeling and makes it all worthwhile. A huge thank you to everyone who has supported the RHN during these uncertain times- we truly appreciate your loyalty and dedication to the hospital.”

If you would like to take part in a challenge event, or if you have your own fundraising ideas on how you can support the RHN, we would love to hear from you! Please get in touch at events@rhn.org.uk.

Correction

In the article ‘Fundraising Update’ in the winter edition of this newsletter, we described RHN patient David as having suffered a heart attack. This was incorrect. David was admitted to the RHN after surviving a brain stem stroke and two minor strokes. We’d like to apologise to David, and his family, for the error, and any upset caused.



An appeal for our **Wheelchair Loan Store** with Karen Marshall, Wheelchair and Postural Management Team Lead

The Royal Hospital for Neuro-disability is the oldest independent charity hospital in the UK, caring for over 200 patients at any one time. Of those patients 98% will require a wheelchair during their stay. To meet this demand our Wheelchair and Postural Management Department operate a wheelchair loan service, and aim to assess and provide each patient with a custom seating solution within 48 hours of their admission. It's a challenging, but crucial task, as having a suitable wheelchair means patients can access all the other therapies and services the RHN provides. We spoke to Karen Marshall, Team Lead for Wheelchair and Postural Management about the work of her team.

How long have you worked at the RHN, and have you always worked in wheelchairs and seating?

I have been working at the RHN since 1986 and, apart from a few months working as an OT assistant, I have always been involved with wheelchairs and seating.

Tell us more about your team.

There are six of us all together – myself plus five technicians. Between us we have 132 year's experience! We come from varied backgrounds, from therapy assistants to car mechanics.

What would a typical day be like in the Wheelchair and Postural Management Service?

Most days will be a combination of carrying out repairs, assessing patients and assembling wheelchairs to meet people's needs.

How has the COVID-19 pandemic effected the work of your team?

The main effect that COVID-19 has had is the introduction of zoning around the hospital. For a while at the height of the pandemic in April, we weren't able to go to any of the wards. However, we still managed to carry out repairs and issue new equipment by picking up and dropping off from outside the ward entrances. We weren't able to carry out many assessments but with the help of the therapists on the wards we managed to keep things moving along. Probably though, the biggest impact on our service was that, in order to facilitate patient discharges, we had to let quite a few loan wheelchairs go with patients to their next setting. Usually, by the time a patient is ready to leave the RHN they have a permanent seating solution funded and built, and their loan chair is returned to our stock. Fortunately, we still had plenty of loan equipment in-house to lend to new admissions.

What difference does the support of donors make to your department?

A huge difference. The donations help us to keep our extensive stock of loan equipment up-to-date and in good condition, therefore meeting the needs of our patients, both old and new.

It gives us the opportunity to try out equipment before deciding on what they need longer term.

How does the Wheelchair Loan Service make a difference to a patient with brain injury?

It means that new patients can get out of bed within 24-hours of admission and start their rehab. For patients who may have spent several months in an intensive care bed this is a huge achievement. As they go through their rehabilitation, and their needs change over time, we can adapt what equipment they have to enable them to get the most out of their time here. It also means that by the time we get to the stage where we prescribe their own permanent wheelchair, we have a good idea of what works for them that will help them continue their journey.

Getting a patient seated as quickly as possible would not be achievable were it not for the dedication of the Wheelchair and Postural Management Team. The wheelchair loan service they provide means that every patient who requires a seating solution can have access to a wheelchair that fits their unique needs, and as those needs change, we have the expertise and equipment on hand to adapt their wheelchair to match. But we also need your help. The wheelchair loan service is not paid for by the NHS, which means we have to raise £12,000 every year to repair and replace parts, and to make sure the RHN provides the most up to date seating solutions for our patients. You can help support the work of the Wheelchair and Postural Management Team today by making a donation towards our Wheelchair Loan store. Your generosity will ensure that every patient arriving at the RHN will get the seating solution they need to start their journey to recovery. For more information on how to donate please see the back page.

Welcome to Haberdashers House

In 2019 the RHN opened Haberdashers House, a specialist transitional unit for 11 young people moving from paediatric care into adult long-term care. Making this transition can be challenging for young people and their families, so providing a safe, homely and welcoming environment is crucial to ease the transition process.

Despite profound and significant health challenges, the young adults resident in Haberdashers House are supported to access the community as much as possible. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic the residents visited the local pub, London Zoo, the local shopping centre, and Richmond Park. Each of these trips required a full support team including a registered nurse, health care assistants and various items of medical equipment.

Due to their complex health needs and the restrictions caused by the pandemic, our young patients have had little opportunity to access the wider community this year, therefore the community has had to go to them. Haberdashers House has an onsite activity and leisure programme delivered by the activity coordinators. It includes wheelchair dancing, sensory stories, pampering sessions, baking, games, wheelchair football and arts and crafts.

Here's a look back at some of the activities our younger patients have enjoyed this year.



Meet Health Care Assistant, Kline

Health Care Assistant, Kline Monteron, started working at the RHN at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic in April. Her official RHN uniform hadn't arrived on her first day, so Kline was our first staff member to be issued with one of our colourful sets of donated scrubs.

Gardening Club

Patient gardening is an important activity at the RHN. It provides an opportunity to socialise, and growing flowers and vegetables from seed gives residents and patients a sense of hope and achievement.



The Haberdashers House garden has recently been redesigned, with raised beds accessible to patients in wheelchairs. Thanks to our supporters and volunteers, who regularly donate seed packets, our young residents were able to take advantage of the warm summer weather to start their own vegetable garden.



Film Nights

Film nights are regular events for patients and residents across the RHN. In Haberdashers House staff make hand-made cinema tickets for each film and also help the residents to make their own popcorn.



Sleep Under the Stars Night

8 August 2020 was Global Sleep Under The Stars Night. The staff and residents of Haberdashers House celebrated the event with an evening of star gazing from the unit's garden. The residents also created their own star gazing artwork and began a project to build their own solar system, making individual planets using papier maché.



National Hot Cross Bun Day



Hot cross buns may be associated with Easter, but National Hot Cross Bun Day falls on September 11. At Haberdashers House the event was marked with a day of baking. Staff and residents cooked their own hot cross buns from scratch in the unit's kitchen.

Halloween Story Night

Many of us celebrated Halloween at home in 2020 and the residents of Haberdashers House were no exception. But even though they were unable to go out they still got to enjoy an evening of spooky ghost stories, read to them by members of staff in front of a cosy fire.



Fireworks Night

Due to the COVID-19 restrictions, patients at the RHN were unable to attend any fireworks displays. To celebrate the night at home, they made their own 'firework displays' on paper using colourful glitter paints. Some of their artwork was turned into greetings cards to send to their families.



Christmas Stars

All the wards at the RHN are decorated for Christmas, and at Haberdashers House everyone gets involved in the decoration effort. This year, to celebrate the appearance of the Christmas star in the night sky, the patients made their own stars to hang in their day room. They used a variety of materials, including card, glitter and salt dough. A tree branch was foraged from the garden to create a Christmas garland for the fireplace.



New Year's Eve



Like many of us, our residents stayed in for New Year's Eve. In Haberdashers House they made the most of their night in by opening their own bar, serving a range of non-alcoholic cocktails.

Chaplain's Corner



RHN Chaplain, Geoff Coyne

In 2020 with all its difficulties, whether that be coronavirus or other issues, I made a determined effort once we were out of the first lockdown to do regular walking in the Surrey Hills. It may have been the same few routes but I enjoyed watching the seasons change the landscape.

By the time you read this column it will be February and we will be moving out of winter into spring. And as I am walking the hills I will sense the beginning of spring; the sweet smell in the air, the sounds of the birds, and the hints of warm sunshine to come.

I am always cheered by spring being on the way because it speaks of new life, new energy, new opportunities, new starts. And all these give hope after the bleakness of winter.

And the change of season from bleakness to hope is a picture of our lives. We struggle with those bleak times in our lives, those times of winter. Many things, including coronavirus, lockdowns and personal or family problems, have caused bleak times.

But there is in each one of us a sense that we can go on because we know that there is a spring ahead, there is hope ahead. This may come because we dig deep inside of us and find hidden resources or because we have a faith perspective or because others get alongside us and support us and encourage us.



Lavender Fund Memorials

In their memory we continue to provide the highest level of care and support for our patients and their families.

*Adeh Murray Sellar
Anne Prosser
Antony Olley
Avis June Smith
Barbara Garnham
Barbara Kelly
Catherine Ann Fitzgerald
Christopher Bedford
David Driver
David John Fincham
David John Gillett
Diana Merrick
Eileen Dorothy Barrett
Eileen McKay
France-Raoul Chateau
Gabrielle Orchard
Ghulam Sarwar*

*Graham Boiling
Graham Phillips
Henry John Old
Hugh Munro
James Pirie
Kamaljit Toor
Lesley Jean Hyams
Lucy Jane Denniston
Margaret Deller
Maud Riley
Maureen Lesley O'Brien
Megan Paton
Megan Walters
Michael Brocklehurst
Michael Lindsay
Neale Gordon-Wilson
Omar Hyat Shaikh*

*Patricia Burston
Paul Loft
Peggy Stannard
Peter Gow
Peter John Davies
Peter Newton
Roger Smith
Rosemary Ann Shurrock
Sean Hamilton
Shirley Gill
Taranjit Kaur Chadha
Ted & Gladys Black
Trevor George Kingham
Ved & Helena Aggarwal
Winifred Warwick-Mayo*

We thank the family and friends of those named above for setting up a Lavender Fund in their memory and supporting the RHN in such a special way. To set up a fund or for help donating to an existing fund contact Isabel Barrett in Fundraising on 020 8780 4557 or at legacies@rh.org.uk.

The RHN Celebrates Allied Health Professionals Day



On 14 October the RHN celebrated National Allied Health Professionals (AHPs) Day, a grass roots day of appreciation for AHPs.

Allied Health Professions cover 14 different disciplines. At the RHN these are radiographers, speech and language therapists, music therapists, dietitians, occupational therapists, psychologists and physiotherapists. During the COVID-19

pandemic these teams provided vital support to front line nursing staff, not only in their battle to protect patients from infection, but also to maintain the morale and mental health of patients, residents, their families, and our staff.

As part of our celebration of National AHP Day we spoke to Emma Craig, Clinical Lead Dietician, about her teams' experience of the pandemic.

Emma Craig – Clinical Lead Dietician

“Dietitians are qualified and regulated health professionals that assess, diagnose and treat dietary and nutritional problems at an individual and wider public health level.

“At the RHN, every patient or resident is under the care of a dietitian. We work in a multi-disciplinary team to ensure all our patients and residents have an optimal nutrition and hydration intake. Due to the large number of patients who are fed enterally, or via a tube, the RHN dietitians are specialists in managing enteral feeds, their complications, and monitoring weight and feed tolerance closely. We also work closely with catering to ensure the food provided is balanced, safe and enjoyable..

“During the COVID-19 outbreak, we sometimes had to adapt our way of working to be able to remotely review patients on the wards that we couldn't access. We used electronic patient records and got information from the clinical staff on that ward. We also helped on some wards feeding patients, helping communication with families and their loved ones, ward administration tasks and sorting feed supplies.

“From a clinical perspective, COVID-19 has had implications for how we provide nutrition and hydration and the dietetic input for positive coronavirus patients and residents is extremely important. We needed to make almost daily feed and fluid changes for some people to ensure that their increased requirements were met. We are continuously monitoring national dietetic guidance on management of COVID-19 and adapting our practise to ensure all patients at the RHN receive expert and individualised nutritional care.

“One of the major challenges we had was national feed shortages. We spent a lot of time sourcing alternative feeds/feed products when the regular products were not available. This made sure that no patients were without a suitable enteral feed at any time.

“The dietitians have adapted well to new ways of working, using Zoom for meetings, remotely reviewing patients when necessary, staying positive and making sure nutritional care stays at an exceptionally high standard at the RHN.”

Dates for your diary

Hampton Court Palace Half Marathon 21 March

The Palace Half is a flat and picturesque course which starts and finishes inside Hampton Court Palace. Running at this historic venue offers not only a perfect opportunity to run a personal best, but to visit one of the UK's major tourist attractions. You'll receive a free RHN vest, unique Henry VIII medal, finisher top and goodie bag.



Skydive Anytime, various locations

We're looking for extreme adventurers to take on this 120mph challenge and freefall from the skies! There are various dates and airfields around the country to choose from, so face your fears and tick this off your 2021 bucket list!



Isle of Wight Challenge 1 May

Great challenges need great settings- and none are better than the island's coastal path. Join 2,000 other trekkers along the spectacular south cliffs, past the iconic Needles and up to historic Cowes at the half way stop. For full challengers it's on to historic Ventor, and back to the welcome Base Camp on Chale after an epic 106km journey. You'll get full support and hospitality along the way, and with half and quarter options also- there's an Isle of Wight Challenge for everyone!



If you would like further information on any of these events then please visit www.rhn.org.uk or contact the events team by email events@rhn.org.uk or call us on 020 8780 4560.

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Please click [here](#) if you'd like to support The Royal Hospital for Neuro-disability's Wheelchair appeal.

- £25 will provide padding for a set of wheelchair footplates
- £50 will provide cushioned seating for a standard wheelchair
- £120 will cover all the cost of a wheelchair head support
- £ _____ my preferred amount today!

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Don't forget to let us know whether or not you're a UK tax payer. We can reclaim the tax on your donation and any future donations, to make your donation **25% more, at no cost to you!**

Donate online: www.rhn.org.uk/online-donation / Or call: 020 8780 4568

You can also donate by post, sending your gift to: **Royal Hospital for Neuro-disability, FREEPOST, London SW15 3SW**. Using a stamp will save RHN money. When sending a donation by post, we would appreciate it if you could include your address and email details so that we can continue to keep you updated on our work.

If this project is fully funded by the time we receive your donation, your gift will be used for the general benefit of patients at the RHN.



Thank you for your support!