

News From:



...linking our community in Edenbridge

The BRIDGES centre will be open during Easter as follows:

Good Friday,	10th April	Closed
Saturday,	11th April	Open
Easter Monday	13th April	Closed



The Trustees and Management Committee wish all our friends and visitors a very Happy Easter.

Annual Review

The annual review on 21.3.09 gave volunteers the opportunity to appreciate all the achievements of 2008, and put their questions to the Trustees, though only about a quarter of BRIDGES membership actually came to the meeting, which was disappointing. We knew the year had seen an increase in visitors and this was reflected in the provisional financial results presented by Tony Woodward, which showed an increase in BRIDGES' cash reserves for the first time in many years. The Trust had also received some unexpected donations. We were particularly honoured to be recipients of money held by the Bowling Club, following its closure. Insurance claims had covered most of the costs involved in repairing the roof after damage to the lead. BRIDGES' funds are therefore in a good position to pay for the redecoration of the hall in 2009.

Trustees apologised for the inconvenience caused by the persistent failures of the boiler, explaining that they are duty bound to try to repair this, before deciding to replace it, as it is only 4 years old. Jane Cain paid particular tribute to Mary and the Management Committee, thanking them for their commitment and hard work. The nominations of Dot Francis, Sue Thurston, Jan Lewis, Jo Cobley, Alison Hunnam, Judy Webb and Beverley Pritchard to the committee for 2009 were approved; Heddwyn Jenkins will be co-opted as Secretary, Ron Sutton will be taking over the Chairmanship of the committee, and Dorothy Sutton will be Vice Chairman.



Q!Z NIGHT

This year's Quiz Night on 31st. Jan was a great success and raised £1116.58 for BRIDGES funds. With the catchy title and logo (see above) which it certainly lived up to. So great was the interest beforehand that we had to turn down four would-be teams as we already had the maximum number of 120 competitors.

A dynamic buzz pervaded the evening - a mix of fun and serious competitiveness, mingled with good food and lively background music. Our thanks go to Pam and Jeff Dench (Ron Sutton's sister and her husband) who provided an excellent blend of questions posed with style by Pam as 'Quiz Mistress', to Ron for the electronic scoreboard to Andrew Davis for stepping in at the last minute to manage the sound and to the reliably excellent catering team.



Sue Oldfield introduced Crispin Jewitt as the new Link Trustee with St. Lawrence's church. She thanked Jane Cain for her 3-year stint as Management Committee chairman, and on behalf of all BRIDGES members, made a presentation to Jane on her retirement as a Trustee. Jane responded with a heartfelt poem, one couplet of which caused gales of laughter, and a promise that she would continue to hold BRIDGES in her prayers.



Jane Cain retires from the Trustees

Jane came to Edenbridge in 1993 and took an immediate interest in the fledgling BRIDGES project. She put her professional expertise to use from the start, advising on environmental health issues, and she has trained ALL the volunteers who have held Food Hygiene certificates since BRIDGES opened in 1995! Her determination that BRIDGES should maintain the highest standards possible resulted in the 4* award we hold today.

As the first Internal Links Secretary, Jane created the illustrated newsletter that has become such an essential aid to keeping all volunteers informed of current events. Two years later she became Secretary to the Management Committee, a post she held until becoming a Trustee in 2003. Jane's administrative and creative talent led to a complete revision of all BRIDGES policies and procedures, putting legal requirements into language we can all understand. Her husband, Clive, helped her to create the database on the new computer at the Centre, which now holds all the information needed to manage BRIDGES' affairs. We have all appreciated the lovely posters she has designed, and we are grateful for all the printing she has done – notably the Christmas cards.

Although much of her work has been behind the scenes, volunteers showed their appreciation of her contribution by making a substantial retirement collection. Jane was presented with flowers, and vouchers for her to spend at Farrington's, The Craft Barn and the Bookshop, to indulge some of the hobbies she has not had time for in recent years. Jane will be sorely missed as a Trustee, but we look forward to seeing her enjoying BRIDGES as a visitor.



PORCHLIGHT

Porchlight, (formerly East Kent Cyrenians), is a registered charity that was established some 17 years ago, partly funded by local authorities to support single homeless people throughout Kent (except Medway).

The drop-in service, held at "BRIDGES" in Edenbridge is part of our outreach service which attempts to make direct contact with single homeless people by running drop-ins, and actively searching for the single homeless person. Once allocated to an outreach worker, the homeless person is then supported by Porchlight in accessing appropriate accommodation. The vast majority of homeless persons will have either an alcohol, drug or mental health problem and part of our role is to find the right type of housing best suited to meet the needs of that person, This may be supported accommodation, (where the person will receive one-to-one key working around their problems), we may support them in finding private rented accommodation or represent them when applying for local authority housing.

Part of the outreach work is to support our clients with basic living and life skills, such as managing their budget, shopping and paying bills etc., we also support our clients by referring them to the appropriate service as required, i.e. mental health teams and drug and alcohol services, which can offer more specialised support.

We also run several of our own supported accommodation projects, which at this time are the only in the East Kent area. These vary from a young person hostel, a mental health accommodation and a generic hostel for the single person aged between 18 and 65.

Single homeless persons can refer themselves direct to Porchlight by attending one of our twelve drop-ins throughout Kent, or by ringing our freephone Number (08005677699), or by referral from any other service or organisation.

For further information visit our drop-in, held every Friday morning, between 10.00am and 12.00 noon at BRIDGES. You can call in anytime, ask for Mary, who will gladly give you one of our leaflets.

Mick Collier

Outreach worker

07734 595325

mickcollier@porchlight.org.uk

Farewell from Jane:

When I was at school my school reports said either “Jane struggles with this subject” (French springs to mind under this category) or they said “Jane is a methodical and conscientious worker”. I used to think that these reports were so boring. How I longed to have a report that said “Jane shines at this subject” or “Jane shows a real flair for that subject”. One of BRIDGES’ strengths is that it brings out the best in people and allows them to develop gifts that they didn’t know they had and it has certainly done that for me. So I would like to thank BRIDGES for not only giving me the opportunity to use my professional training in Food Hygiene in a very worthwhile way but also to help me to see that being methodical and conscientious are qualities to be proud of and that are valued. Had I but realised it at the time my teachers were actually pointing me to a vocation as an administrator. I could stand here for hours talking about what BRIDGES means to me. I am passionate about what BRIDGES has been, is and still can be. Instead of giving you a long speech however, I have written a poem.

JANE’S FOND FAREWELL

When I first came to BRIDGES in 1995

I hoped to teach food hygiene and keep visitors alive.

Keeping food and volunteers safe was then my main concern,

So courses and leaflets I soon devised to help you all to learn.

I quickly got more involved in all that BRIDGES offers

And got drawn in to management and helping swell the coffers.

I first became the secretary for internal links

And wrote about everything from training to blocked sinks.

I next became committee secretary and started typing more

My writing, listening and memory skills were tested to the core.

From there I moved to Trustee band and here my work began

Of writing plans and policies - adding pictures whenever I can.

Through all of these activities I’ve learnt a huge amount.

I’d tell you all about it here but there’s too much to recount.

I may have tackled many jobs; I’ve loved the learning process

But BRIDGES has given **me** much more than I could ever guess.

I started as a volunteer and there I’ve ended too.

We all have equal value in this work we have to do.

To welcome folk, smile at them, make BRIDGES the best it can be

For everyone who ventures here to have a cup of tea.



I'm leaving BRIDGES working band but I will still be near.
I shall always pray for you, I hold you very dear.
So I will end this poem now and leave you with just one thought.....
Remember to wash your hands as often as you ought!

Closing Prayer

My poem left you with a final thought but this is my final, final thought.

One way of describing a pilgrimage is as a journey of faith. I believe that I have been on such a journey with BRIDGES. I know that God prompted me to get involved with BRIDGES right at the start and has been with me on that journey guiding me to my next step, including this last one of 'retiring'. I also know that God is with BRIDGES on *its* pilgrimage. I have found this short prayer, which is based on a New Testament passage, very helpful and inspiring recently and when I use it I think especially of BRIDGES so I hope you too will find it inspiring.

The Pilgrim's Prayer

**Help us, Lord, to persevere in prayer,
with minds awake and thankful hearts.
That we may share the secret of Christ
with those we meet on our earthly pilgrimage,
following in the steps of Jesus,
our Master and our Friend. Amen.**

(based on Colossians 4: 2-4)
by the Revd Canon Derrick Walters,



Dear Friends,

I was quite overwhelmed by all of the good wishes and the very generous gifts I received at the Annual Review Meeting, I shall have a wonderful time deciding how to spend the vouchers. A huge THANK YOU to all who contributed to that farewell, and to all who have made my time at BRIDGES so rewarding. As you know I will not be disappearing altogether and have already been into BRIDGES as a visitor, receiving the usual friendly welcome. Long may it continue!

With all good wishes,
Jane



HAPPY EASTER ONE AND ALL!

It's unfortunate that lots of people think Christmas is the most important Christian Festival because it isn't. **Now** is the time of year which 'all other doth deface' for it's all about new life and forgiveness and all those things which give this often sorry experience any sense of meaning or purpose.

Come and celebrate this great festival with your fellow Christians! Easter Day at the Parish Church begins at 05.00 (yes! 5 o'clock in the morning) and continues at 08.00, 09.30 and 18.30.

Sharing in worship will, I hope, make yours A HAPPY EASTER!

Fr Stephen Mitchell



Don Hodge



Many people will remember Don as a frequent visitor to BRIDGES. He died on 14.3.09 aged 90, a few days after an operation to set a fracture sustained in a fall at his home in Godstone. His funeral was on 7th April at The Eden church.

A Personal View of BRIDGES by Ashley Bushell



As a mum to a young daughter we regularly use BRIDGES to have lunch where I am able to meet up with friends. The children can play in a separate area allowing you time for a cup of tea and a chat. The food is good and well priced, the volunteers are always happy to please and always wear a smile for you.

Mondays at 12.00 pm is Story Time where Margaret reads stories to the children, which they love.

It has a great community spirit where I have met many people and indeed made some good friends.

Both my daughter and I look forward to our lunch times on Mondays at BRIDGES. So much so, my 3 year old daughter now often asks "Can we go to BRIDGES for lunch please?" rather than going home!



We note with a deep sense of loss that Michael Baines died in Kent and Sussex hospital on Friday 27th March, soon after his 86th birthday. We send our sympathy to his wife (and our fellow volunteer) Caroline. Michael had the foresight to say publicly, on his retirement from the PCC in the mid '80s, that the Parish Church needed 'a people project'; he was therefore the first person with whom the idea was discussed when the Ebenezer chapel became vacant in 1991! At an age where many are seeking to do less, Michael immediately volunteered to join the feasibility working party after the first public meeting in 1992. His legal knowledge, particularly relating to property and charity matters was truly a God-given gift to the emerging organisation and without his expertise, common-sense and wisdom BRIDGES would not have such a soundly-based and democratic structure, which has stood the test of its first 14 years since opening. He also served for most of that time as Secretary to the Trustees and for a time combined that role with Secretary to the Management Committee. He held BRIDGES' welfare deeply in his heart, and ideas for its future development were on his mind even in recent weeks.

If you're as glad as I think we all are that BRIDGES exists and survives, thank God for Michael and all that he contributed. His funeral was at the Parish Church on Weds 8th April - but his life will be commemorated at a Memorial Eucharist there on Sat. 30th May at 11am.



A Prayer:

Every single evening
As I'm lying here in bed,
This tiny little prayer
Keeps running through my head.

God bless all my family,
Wherever they may be,
Keep them warm
And safe from harm
For they're so close to me.



And God there is one more thing
I wish that you could do,
Hope you don't mind me asking,
Please bless my computer too.

Now I know that it's unusual,
To bless a motherboard,

But listen just a second,
While I explain it to you Lord.

You see, that little metal box
Holds more than odds and ends;
Inside those small compartments
Rest so many of my friends.

I know so much about them
By the kindness that they give,
And this little scrap of metal
Takes me in to where they live.

By faith is how I know them,
Much the same as you,
We share in what life brings us
And from that our friendships
grew.

Please take an extra minute,

From your duties up above,
To bless those in my address
book
That's filled with so much love.

Wherever else this prayer may
reach,
To each and every friend,
Bless each email in-box
And each person who hits send.

When you update your heavenly
list,
On your own great CD-Rom,
Bless everyone who says this
prayer
Sent up to god.com.

Amen



Meet 'n eat in a sociable atmosphere with old and new friends



A 'caerphilly' arranged BRIDGES event in tasteful 'vein'.

Michelin-trained chef
Ryan Smith
(of our local delicatessen 'Ryan's Table')
presents samples of locally-produced cheeses
for you to taste (with an accompanying
glass of wine) and advises on their uses

Enjoy yourself and help raise funds for BRIDGES

A must for enthusiasts for locally-produced
food and sustainable communities
Saturday 25th April 7.30 pm at
The BRIDGES Centre
(High Street, Edenbridge. Tel: 868186)
Tickets £7.50 from BRIDGES
and from The Edenbridge Bookshop
(The Square, Edenbridge. Tel: 862180)
(includes a glass of wine - extra wine £1.50 per glass)

Prize Sudoku

The first entry drawn on Monday
27 April will win lunch at BRIDGES!

Good Luck!!

How to Play:

Fill in the empty fields with the
numbers from 1 through 9, with
each column, row and 3x3 square
containing each number once, and
once only!

	3						4	
		7				5		
6	8		5	2	7		9	3
	5		4		6		8	
9								4
	4		3		1		7	
7	1		6	4	5		3	9
		3				8		
	2						6	