

News From:



New Trustees

In recent months we have welcomed three new Trustees, Crispin Jewitt, David Stafford and Martin Perrett, who join Ron and Dorothy Sutton, Val Bantin and Sue Oldfield in sharing the responsibility of managing the Trust. This involves the maintenance of the BRIDGES Centre, fundraising to meet the costs of running the project, employing the Manager, and ensuring that the aims of the Trust are being fulfilled through all that goes on there – see the BRIDGES Vision Statement by the office door if you wonder what the aims are!

Crispin and David have lived in this area a very long time, and we welcome their local knowledge and the professional expertise they bring to managing the Trust. Martin, (probably better known to you as Mary's husband) brings much needed experience of the legal and practical aspects of looking after the building and those who use it. We hope that you will soon get to know who they are, and that you'll tell them about what you do at BRIDGES!

Supporters' Network.



There are many ways of offering time and talents to help BRIDGES. The Supporters Network provides a channel for making donations to BRIDGES. Some donations come monthly by direct debit, at others come as and when people want to. helps to bridge the gap between what the Centre earns from the sale of refreshments and the total costs of running the project. We thank Chee Foster for her help in setting up this scheme and wish her well as she attempts to juggle family life with studying for her

Bridges Cream Tea

As part of our contribution to Edenbridge Festival, Bridges organised a cream tea on the last Sunday of May. Mary and two volunteers manned the counter, and several more provided delicious scones and cakes. Nina put up an impromptu art exhibition, and a display of her hand painted cards was well received.

In spite of a fine sunny afternoon, there were not as many customers as we had hoped for; the fluttering bunting and announcements from the pavement failed to target the figure-conscious passers-by! However, those who did join us were delighted by the delicious fare and amazed by the excellent value offered.

The success story of the afternoon was a couple from Essex passing through the town on their way back from Eastbourne; attracted by the bunting they found the refreshment they had been looking for on their journey (and passed some long while reminiscing about a childhood spent in Biggin Hill!). They vowed to tell all their friends about the friendly Edenbridge welcome.

Any scones left found a good home in the Bridges freezer, or were taken home to our loved ones by way of compensation for our missing company on a Sunday afternoon.



accountancy exams! There are leaflets about BRIDGES Supporters on the counter – do take one to a friend.

A message from the new chairman of the Management Committee:

In all my involvement in BRIDGES I've only ever attended one Management Committee meeting! But my (very few) fellow trustees approved my nomination. There wasn't anyone else, it seemed (though we've gained some new trustees since). So here I am, needing to gain experience in a new job.

The place has run very well without my interference at the practical management level, so I'm hardly qualified to say much before I've begun to get stuck in, even if I have served long and often behind the counter and in the kitchen. Thank goodness my precursor Jane Cain has sorted out all the hard technical stuff so that we're well set up organisationally. That doesn't mean there's nothing to do, though. But what? That's what the management committee is there to recommend. Any organisation needs to continually change and develop, else it stagnates and decays. So as well as watching over day-to-day matters, the MC needs to encourage the BRIDGES community to look out for and bring forward ideas that will extend BRIDGES benefits to the Edenbridge community.

So let the committee members have your ideas. One thing occurs to me at this stage, though. How do we make more people aware of what BRIDGES is and does (or could do)? Do we all take responsibility for publicising BRIDGES and all it does to everyone we meet? When working in the centre do we advertise BRIDGES events to all our users? Do we think creatively about fresh ideas? Do we bring people we know to BRIDGES for a cuppa when we're not on duty? So publicity is the area of my first questions to think about. The second is the matter of making people feel 'at home' in BRIDGES. This is especially important for first-time visitors. I notice that not every volunteer spends time chatting to customers. Now I know each of us has a different level and different kinds of social skills and that we're sometimes too busy - but I would encourage you all to spend a little time on each shift (when there's a lull) getting to know someone. If you're not easy with that, watch and join those who do it, or ask for tips on how to open up a conversation.

Our aim, after all, is to build bridges in our community and to build BRIDGES.

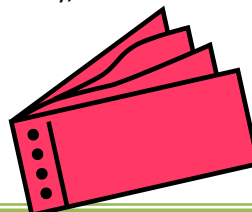
Ron Sutton



GRAND SUMMER DRAW 2009

This is BRIDGES big fundraising effort of the year, and we hope you will be able to help us by selling the enclosed two books of tickets to your friends. (If you don't want to do this please return them to the office as soon as possible.) The draw will take place on 12th September. All unsold tickets, stubs and money must be returned to the office by 12.00 on Sept.11th, and please check that whenever you return them your name on the allocation list has been ticked off to save unnecessary phone calls!

If you could help to sell tickets on Thursdays at the Market, or outside the Co-op on Saturdays 11th or 25th July, or 8th or 15th Aug, please contact Jan Lewis (862924), or leave a message for her in the office, so she can organise the rotas. Thank you.



Bridges Redecoration:

Considering how well used the Bridges Centre is every day of the week, it never ceases to amaze me how well the decorations stand up to the pressure! This is clearly due to the care that both our customers and volunteers give to the Centre and supports the old saying "I look after it because I love it".

The Bridges Management Committee and Trustees decided a few months ago that, although clean, the hall decorations were looking a little tired! They therefore decided that the hall should be redecorated from top to toe and to this end the Centre was recently closed for a week. After much discussion it was finally decided that the existing colour scheme should be retained. We appreciate that some might think that indicates a lack of adventurous thinking, but the existing scheme has served us well and a significant alteration to colours would probably involve the need to replace the carpet!



The contract for the redecoration work was therefore sent to three local Contractors and it was gratifying that they all expressed a real interest in undertaking the project. The three prices received by the Trustees were all competitive, but that of Marlpit Hill Developments was the lowest. I personally did not know this Contractor so I met one of the Partners at Bridges and discussed the work with him in detail. It quickly became apparant that Steve Wilton was very well experienced in decoration works of this type and scale and the Trustees therefore decided to offer his Company the Contract.

I am sure that many of you reading this account will be aware that Contractors very often do not achieve the results and programmes that they promise. I am very pleased to say that Marlpit Hill Developments not only produced a very good standard of work but they also completed the Contract ahead of the promised six days. As a result Mary was able to arrange for the hall carpet to be cleaned on the Saturday before we reopened for business.

A job well done, I hope you all agree! For those who are considering employing a Contractor to undertake decoration work at their homes in the future, I can happily recommend Marlpit Hill Developments and Steve Wilton, and I am not being paid a single penny for the recommendation!!

Geoff Cory



Cooking for Fun and Flavour!!

A few years ago Bridges successfully laid on some cooking classes and there would seem to be considerable interest in doing so again.

I'm particularly keen on cooking to achieve flavour – so thought anything from Soups, Sauces and Salads making particular use of seasonal fruits and vegetables along with some herbs and spices. An example would be to make a really tasty Italian sauce to go with pasta – and of course this type of recipe, if made in bulk, could be frozen for later use – so time saving too!!

A name for the club hasn't sprung to mind yet – but I'm sure we'll think of something apt over the coming months.

The club would run for 2 hours over eight weeks in the coming Spring 2010. Either in an eight week block in March, April, May or 4 weeks each side of Easter – but as I'm not sure when Easter weekend will fall we will have to confirm absolute dates and day/time at a later stage.

If you, think you'd like to join the group please contact either Mary at Bridges or myself, Alison, on 01732 866685 – and please do pass this information to anyone else you think might be interested – we look forward to hearing from you.

Incidentally if like me, you've succumbed to buying too many strawberries this year and want to use them up before they go off – here's a suggestion. I bought 8 punnets (500g each) at Sunday's Party in the Park!!! I made strawberry jam with 4 punnets and with the remainder made a Strawberry compote – as follows:

Slice the strawberries into a bowl, and for each punnet add one tablespoon of balsamic vinegar and one tablespoon of caster sugar, a little ground black pepper – give it a stir then leave overnight in the fridge in a Tupperware container – and use over the next few days. The flavour of the compote is surprisingly good and goes so well with natural yoghurt for breakfast (with a little granola sprinkled on top) or with good quality vanilla ice-cream for a dessert.



Have you read our display boards???

BRIDGES aims to raise awareness of ethical issues which arise both here at home and in relation to the developing world.

Where necessary and appropriate we may give practical support.

The displays are changed roughly once a month, so do look at them and also, make any suggestions for topics that you think we should highlight. This coming month the display will feature the work of 'Porchlight' in helping the homeless.

Read and become aware!!

