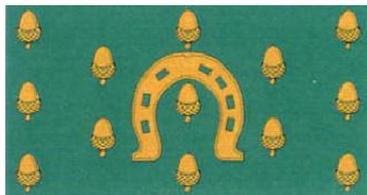


Rutland Reminders

Therapy through singing for people with dementia

Newsletter No. 3

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www.rutlandreminders.org.uk

In the past few years, awareness of the increasing number of people with dementia has been raised through articles in national newspapers and magazines, features on radio and TV, and by well known people who have made known that they too have dementia. Funding for research has been publicised by The Times newspaper's 2011 Christmas Appeal and Tesco's adoption of the Alzheimers Society as its charity of the year.

Research has shown that engaging in music based activity, especially singing together, brings back memories which had seemed lost forever. Rutland Reminders aims to provide an opportunity for dementia sufferers and their carers to meet to sing songs learnt when young, and chat over tea, in the comfortable surroundings of Rutland Care Village, in Oakham. Our first session was held in September 2010; our December 2011 session was a relaxed, happy afternoon: our guests with dementia, their carers and volunteer helpers sang Christmas songs and carols enthusiastically and all enjoyed a memorable tea.

Musical Memories

by Julia Thompson, local Dementia Support Worker for the Alzheimer's Society.

My family is not musical: none of us is a member of a choir and we don't play musical instruments, but we all enjoy music. My mother listened to music whilst doing housework and at Christmas there was always a background of Christmas carols. Whenever I hear 'Away in a Manger' I can visualise my mother, with my small son on her knee, singing this carol. So it is no surprise to me that music plays such a big part in memory. Researchers do not yet know why a person with memory problems can recall the words of familiar tunes when other words are lost to them, but a visit to Rutland Reminders is all that is needed to see how beneficial music can be, both for those with dementia and as

respite for those caring for them. Even those with quite severe dementia can benefit from the therapeutic effect of music and Rutland is fortunate to have such a committed group of singers, organisers and volunteers to bring music to their lives. Thank you Rutland Reminders!

Developments

- Sessions in Oakham are now held on the first and third Tuesdays in the month.
- Over the summer of 2011 a pilot group, “Rutland Reminders Outreach”, was welcomed enthusiastically at three residential homes caring for dementia sufferers. Regular visits begin in January 2012, on the second Tuesday of the month. This is taken from the evaluation of a return visit in December:
“We did the usual mix of jolly songs, Christmas songs and carols. Two ladies danced, one gentleman had a bit of a jig, and a visitor came in and requested us to sing “The Lambeth Walk” for her husband, who was in bed in his room. So we went to his door and sang for him. We were all very touched by this”.
- Members of the dementia support groups based in Stamford and Melton Mowbray have been invited to come to the Oakham sessions, commencing in March 2012.
- Training sessions for new volunteers and “Singsongs” (afternoons when volunteers sing their way through our new songbook) are scheduled for fourth Tuesdays.
- A speaker is available to talk about our activities.
- Visit our website www.rutlandreminders.org.uk for the calendar for 2012; a review of past activities; reminiscent Rutland photographs; Newsletters 1 and 2; useful addresses; dementia links; our Library inventory and much more.

Please pass this on to anyone who would be interested.

**Newsletters will be issued twice a year, keeping all in touch.
Contact our Organiser, Diana Ellard, on 07779 413889**



Honorary Helpers:

Legal Adviser: Philip Robson of Daltons, Market Place,
Oakham
Accountants: Lamin & White, Dean Street, Oakham
Trainer in Dementia: Jill Perry
Pianist: Diana de Wet

Our sponsors:

Jean Adderley, Sir David Davenport-Handley;
The Rutland Trust; Rutland Lions; Walking For Health;
Linecross plc; Melton Mowbray Building Society;
Lands'End, Oakham; Reed Plastic Containers, Oakham;
Hambleton Hall, The Rutland Singers, Pryke Hygiene.

Photographs: Christmas party, December 2011
(by Richard Adams)