

Spring 2010

MARTHA NEWS

Room to grow



Coming soon...

Keep an eye on Martha's website. We'll soon be launching a whole new range of merchandise through our online shop including t-shirts, mugs, bags, mousemats and Christmas treats.

Royal appointment

Residents and staff were in jubilant mood on 10 December when HRH The Princess Royal officially opened the new extension to Frances House, Deal. The visit marked a return for The Princess who opened Frances House itself in 1998.

The extension has added three, fully-equipped bedrooms, all with en-suite facilities, and a bright new sunroom, allowing Frances House to offer residential care to eight people, in addition to respite and day centre care. Much of the funding for the extension was donated by the Development Trust (for the Mentally Handicapped), of which The Princess Royal is Patron.



Graham Simmons, Chief Executive at Martha was honoured by the visit: "Her Royal Highness showed a real understanding of the impact we have on people's lives and the value of our work. Her visit has given us all a day to remember."

However, as Kent's only provider of residential and respite care for people with profound disabilities, Graham is acutely aware of the challenges facing Martha: "The extension is helping us to achieve our aim – to provide the very highest standards of care in the best possible environment. But as the only organisation in Kent offering this level of specialist support, there is always more to do."



Flowers kindly donated by Sian at Teasles Florist, Deal

Cake kindly donated by Sue Minnock at Personalised Cakes, Deal



ALEXANDRA

One resident in particular to have benefited from developments at Frances house is Alexandra.

When she joined us in January 2009 aged 20, she lit up the home with her vitality and love of life.

Until then, Alexandra had lived with her parents, enjoying her travels to France and Germany, sailing off the French coast, and even spending a Christmas in New York. At school she had flourished, but when college became unable to manage her needs, Alexandra's parents were forced to consider her long-term future.

It's hard for any parent to watch their child move on in life but for John and Linda, handing over the care of someone as special as Alexandra was almost impossible.

They couldn't imagine that anyone could love and care for Alexandra as much as they had, but as they watched their daughter settle into life at Frances House, they saw her blossom into a confident and outgoing young woman.

In their words, Alexandra is a 'normal kid'. She loves her friends and is a keen musician – especially on the drums and keyboard. She likes going to church, enjoys computers, and is partial to an audience, holding court and happily teasing the staff at Martha.

From the ordinary pleasure of having her hair brushed, to the extraordinary benefits of hydrotherapy and one-to-one therapy sessions with Tracey, Alexandra loves the life that has been made possible for her at Frances House.



Over hot coals

In October, 23 plucky volunteers walked over hot coals and broken glass for Martha at Basepoint Business Centre in Folkestone.

Among the brave participants was KMFM Breakfast Show presenter Adam Dowling, a firewalk veteran and Lorraine Grover, Basepoint Centre Manager and keen supporter of Martha who has helped to raise over £20,000 in just two years for the charity.

The Fire and Glass Walk was sponsored jointly by JC Office Supplies, Basepoint and The Art of Design Ltd, with match funding from leading UK grantmaker the ACT Foundation. In all over £4,000 was raised.

The next Firewalk is scheduled for later in the year so if you're feeling daring, give Serita Boxall at Martha a call on 01304 610448.

A Trail of 3 Cities

Drivers are clamouring to sign up for this year's 1,000 mile **Trail of 3 Cities** Martha car rally. Teams will set off from Dover on Saturday 25 September and travel to Frankfurt, Geneva and Paris, before returning on Tuesday 28 September.

This year's challenge is for each team to raise £1,500 with deposits of £400 due by the end of June. As usual, no vehicle can cost more than £100 and it has to be taxed, insured and carry a valid MOT in order to qualify.

Hopes are high of beating last year's fundraising total of £20,000, and as well as organising ferry crossings and overnight stops, Martha staff will be on hand to offer fundraising advice to anyone taking part.

For a small taste of this epic adventure, visit www.marthatrust.org.uk/mad_for_madrid_video.html

For further information or a registration pack, please contact Serita Boxall Tel: 01304 610448
email: seritaboxall@marthatrust.org.uk



Virgin fundraising

Martha supporters can now register with fundraising website Virgin Money Giving.

As a charity, Martha pays only a modest, one-off set-up fee and because the site is entirely not-for-profit, Virgin Money Giving passes more of the donation, and all of the Gift Aid, on to Martha. There are no monthly subscription costs, no charges on Gift Aid, and low transaction charges so even more of the money you raise for Martha will actually go to Martha.

If you're thinking of participating in an event, running a Marathon, or you'd like to sponsor someone else, then visit www.virginmoneygiving.com and find out how it can benefit you and Martha.



A catwalk first

Sandra Howard, 1960's supermodel and wife of former MP, Michael Howard, joined an audience for the first ever Martha Trust Ladies' Lunch and Fashion Show.

Held at the Leas Cliff Hall in Folkestone, the event attracted support from Basepoint with matched funding from the ACT Foundation, Ella Boutique, Debenhams, The Art of Design, Leas Cliff Hall itself, Sure Slim and JC Office Supplies. But the real stars of the show were the Martha Trust and Basepoint staff who volunteered to model a range of glamorous day and evening wear. Along with a raffle and auction, the day raised over £2,000 for Martha and plans are already underway for a repeat performance.

On your bike

After a reckless promise made in a pub over two years ago, a group of five friends finally made the 115 mile trip from London to Aldeburgh in Suffolk – by bike.



The journey took two days and saw Julian DiMauro, Mark Hamilton, Chris Vaughan, Sam Latter and Kevin Newton travel across East Anglia leaving a trail of bicycle parts and scraped shins along the way. Support drivers for the trip were John Thomas and Jan Szczegolski and it was Jan's stepson, Robbie, who provided the inspiration for the trip.

As a Martha resident, Robbie benefited greatly from hydrotherapy, which allows people who are unable to walk to develop muscle tone and maintain joint flexibility. The group came up with the cycle trip as a way to raise funds for a new hydrotherapy pool at Mary House, Hastings.

The team's efforts were matched by funding from HSBC Bank plc and on 2 March, they were able to present Martha's Judy Heath with a cheque for £6,370.

Fundraising on the fairway

This year's Golf Day at the Prince's Club in Sandwich raised an incredible £14,000 including £6,000 from our long-term supporter Basepoint.

For the football fans among you, a signed Ronaldo shirt and Joe Cole's football boots were just two items snapped up in the charity auction, along with a chance to play golf on the spectacular Valderrama course in Spain.

Plans are already underway for two further golf days, so if you know any keen golfers, be sure to let them know.



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A Marathon for Martha



Nick Pullen has conquered the Virgin London Marathon, finishing the punishing 26 miles in just 3 hours and 37 minutes.

Nick Pullen

Nick described the experience of running his first ever marathon as 'amazing' and overcame a turned ankle, screaming muscles and utter exhaustion to raise a staggering £3,000 for Martha.

In his final blog, Nick summed up his feelings in a quote from Sir Edmund Hillary: "It is not the mountain we conquer, but ourselves". And in a thank you to everyone who sponsored him Nick added: "You have helped me to raise £3,000 for the residents of Martha Trust who have to daily climb their own mountains."

Charles Knight also pledged his support for Martha in the Virgin London Marathon and we are extremely grateful to both runners. Martha has no places itself in this event so if you plan to run in 2011 and you have yet to nominate a charity, please get in touch.

Supporting Martha just got easier



Martha has joined forces with easyfundraising.org, an online shopping directory, to generate a donation for Martha every time you make a purchase.

The directory lists over 2,000 of the biggest names in online retail including Argos, Next, Boots, Amazon, Debenhams, John Lewis, Toys R Us and HMV. Joining the directory is free and allows you to choose from thousands of products, with up to 15% of the purchase price going to Martha.

Sign up at www.easyfundraising.org.uk/mt and enjoy a myriad of free offers, discounts and Eouchers on offer at stores throughout the site. And don't forget to 'Refer a Friend' so that they too can support the vital work of Martha.