



Spring | Summer 2013

News from Megan Baker House

MBHousecall



Reaching further with MBH REACH OUT

Fundraising Heroes

A special thank you

MBH at work

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WALK for Kids

7
JULY

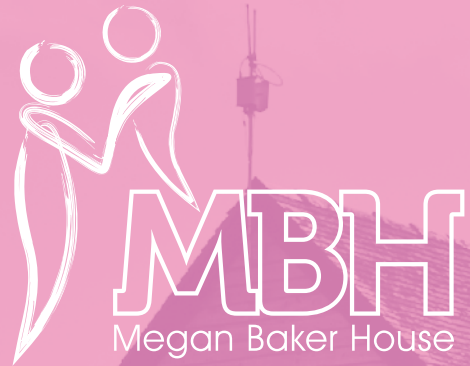
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A pathway to independence

Cover stars...

MBH (Megan Baker House) near Leominster in Herefordshire, currently offers free conductive education for children with cerebral palsy, dyspraxia and other motor related disorders at our centre.

We also offer help to adults with Parkinson's disease or suffering from stroke or head injuries.

Megan Baker House provides a range of sessions delivered by highly qualified and experienced professionals. MBH also provides support to families and carers through advice and information, referrals, befriending and mentoring.

If you would like to know more please contact us.

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Megan Baker House
Conductive Education Centre

Charity number 1141827



This issue's cover star is Harry with MBH's Lead Conductor Judith Ziman.

MBH would like to thank Lee Jenkins for design and artwork and ABC Print for the production of this newsletter.



WELCOME

MBH has worked hard delivering its life-changing services to those with motor-disorders and in this edition you will see just how dramatic our interventions can be.

It is the nature of what we do that our staff-to-child ratio is high and this of course impacts on the cost of providing this vital help. It is no secret that the NHS is severely limited in what it can provide for the children and many are lucky if they receive an hour or two of physiotherapy each month. MBH therefore fills a huge gap in statutory service provision and yet receives no statutory income – every penny we need must be raised.

Since the last edition pressure on the charitable sector has continued to increase as many people see their household incomes squeezed. Charities are therefore asked to do more and yet fundraising becomes ever-more challenging – a double-whammy! The staff at MBH are therefore extremely grateful for the help you continue to give, whether as individuals, companies or charitable trusts and we hope that you will continue to support us in any way that you can – hopefully encouraging others to also become 'fundraising heroes'.

I hope you will be inspired by the stories and appreciate just how hard the children work to achieve their remarkable improvements. You should also know that our conductive education specialists are extremely diligent and work long hours to design, deliver and monitor sessions for each individual, to best help them on their pathway to independence.

John Gough
Editor



Contents

MBH AT WORK	4
REACHING FURTHER – MBH REACH OUT	8
MBH CENTRE NEWS	12
DIARY OF EVENTS	11
FUNDRAISING HEROES	16
EXECUTIVE CHAT	22
MBH – THE STAFF THAT MAKE IT WORK	24

The charity continues to deliver daily, block and outreach services for diagnosis-specific conditions and cerebral palsy. The staff are also building an extensive portfolio of knowledge and experience in the relatively new area of Selective Dorsal Rhizotomy (SDR) and how conductive education can help to build on the potential gains from the operation – see ‘Easter Block Session’ below.

SDR involves sectioning (cutting) of some of the sensory nerve fibers that come from the muscles and enter the spinal cord. Two groups of nerve roots leave the spinal cord and lie in the spinal canal. The ventral spinal roots send information to the muscle; the dorsal spinal roots transmit sensation from the muscle to the spinal cord. At the time of the operation, the neurosurgeon divides each of the dorsal roots into 3-5 rootlets and stimulates each rootlet electrically. By examining electromyographic (EMG) responses from muscles in the lower extremities, the surgical team identifies the rootlets that cause spasticity. The abnormal rootlets are selectively cut, leaving the normal rootlets intact. This reduces messages from the muscle, resulting in a better balance of activities of nerve cells in the spinal cord, and thus reduces spasticity.



Easter block session

This specialised block had been designed specifically for children having, or about to have, the Selective Dorsal Rhizotomy operation. Attended by Ethan, Eliza and Ellie the children worked hard but really enjoyed the week. Ethan and Eliza had already undergone the SDR operation and by the end of their week at MBH were taking independent steps, much to the excitement of Ellie who hopes to do the same after the operation.



Judit, Zoe and Chloe with Eliza, Ellie and Ethan

Both girls achieved outstanding results from their hard work during the week.



Tiegan

Intensive block sessions

Two very successful block sessions were held during the February half-term. We welcomed back Tiegan and Emily for our cerebral palsy basic block when the girls enjoyed five days of intensive sessions. Both girls achieved outstanding results from their hard work during the week.



The dyspraxia block saw four boys returning and a new girl starting. All five participants settled into the group well and quickly, with the children lining up behind their plinths ready to start as soon as the conductors entered the room on Monday morning. They all worked extremely hard and had lots of fun as well – an important part of the conductive education lessons and activities. All of their hard work and determination could be seen in their achievements and successes throughout the week.

SKI SUNDAY...

Thanks to the support of South Wales based charity Ice Cool Kids, Isabelle Wilshaw went on the trip of a lifetime last month – skiing at La Plagne in France. The charity provides leisure and recreation facilities for children and young people with special needs who live in the area of Neath, Port Talbot, Swansea and Bridgend. Isabelle was one of a group of eighty children, parents, guides and volunteers to make the two-day trip to the French Alps. Isabelle had some exciting runs on a sit-ski with her instructor Josh, while the other children skied, sledged and went on black runs. Depending on fundraising success, the trips happen every two or three years. Isabelle thoroughly enjoyed the trip as she is so social and enjoys being around so many people. Talk about the trip to Isabelle and you will see the largest of smiles as she remembers her fun in the snow.



Isabelle

A year earlier saw Megan Baynham off to Italy on a trip organised by another charity – Katie's Ski Tracks. MBH's Chief Executive Lee Gough had discovered the charity for Megan's mum. Megan had a wonderful time, not only on the slopes but also the après-ski activities. Every night there were parties, karaoke, fancy dress and dining at a selection of venues. As if that wasn't enough the children all received a present under their pillow, every night. Megan says that the ski trip has changed her life forever and made her realise it doesn't matter about her disability. She is very thankful to MBH for putting her name forward for this life-changing opportunity. She can't wait to go skiing again and would love to be an instructor.



Megan

...and lots of other days for Isabelle and Megan

OLYMPIC STARS AT MBH



Sascha Kindred and daughter Ella, (far right) with MBH staff and children

Paralympic swimmers Nyree and Sascha Kindred (MBE and OBE) along with their daughter Ella, visited MBH centre to see two groups working with their conductors.

The couple are patrons and great supporters of MBH and their legendary achievements (22 medals between them including 8 gold) act as a source of inspiration for the children.

Georgina Bufton and Thomas Carter in the advanced mobility group and Ella Kirby and Ruby Phillips in the Primary 4 group thoroughly enjoyed meeting the sporting stars. Thomas, who loves sports, was especially interested as the staff explained how, if he works as hard as Nyree and Sascha, he can be successful and fulfil his dreams.

VASILLI

A tragic story told by his mother.

"Vasilli was born a 'normal' baby and was sent home the same day however he became jaundiced very quickly which resulted in him being diagnosed with Kernicterus due to the brain damage caused from the jaundice. Usually loss of hearing is a result from this however Vasilli has lost both his hearing and sight".

Since coming to MBH Vasilli has shown great improvements during the weekly sessions he attends and mum stays with him to learn as well. Both mum and dad are very hopeful that Vasilli may well, one day, be able to have some vision and hearing and are currently looking into all possible options that are available. The staff at MBH are committed to helping Vasilli and his family.



The **REACH OUT** project now includes seven schools benefitting from the provision of our conductive education sessions. In our last edition the charity was hoping to have completed over 100 assessments and this target has now been exceeded. So far 121 have been completed and feedback from parents, teachers and adult participants will be gathered formally in May-June as now increased effort is being focused on this as a vital part of our monitoring and evaluation process. In addition MBH receives many letters from parents who are amazed at the progress their children are making and this is also important feedback for us.

REACHING FURTHER



St Richard's Group

"We just wanted to write to tell you how grateful we are for the input that Alexandros and Aliko have from you during your REACH OUT project run at their school, The Vale of Evesham.

When we were contacted by school and told that you were starting a programme there I can't tell you how happy we were. Alexandros and Aliko were lucky enough to already have accessed some sessions at your centre in Leominster, but being offered the opportunity to be part of a programme every week at school was a perfect solution given the distance that we had to travel to Leominster and that they had to miss days from school to attend.

Conductive education has done wonders for my children and I was delighted to hear about the outreach programme beginning at the Vale of Evesham School, as it would give other children the chance to benefit from the wonders of conductive education.

For Alexandros and Aliko the conductive education that Megan Baker House offers is valuable beyond words. They can go from being unable to walk to being up on their feet walking around after only a couple of sessions. Neither of the children has ever really enjoyed 'conventional' physiotherapy and Aliko particularly has always protested and even refused to participate. With conductive education it is totally different, they both love taking part in the movements and exercises, in fact they don't even realise that they are actually doing physical activities. It is always such a pleasure to see Aliko up on her feet walking, it's just a shame that Megan Baker House were the first to realise that she had the potential to do this and was capable of more than just sitting in her wheelchair all day! As a parent it is so important for professionals to see the child's abilities and not their disabilities, which the staff at Megan Baker House do. I hope that many more children in the future are able to access conductive education through Megan Baker House outreach programme and that Alexandros and Aliko continue to do so, thus improving their quality of life".



HARRY

Harry is a 2 year-old boy who attends individual CE sessions with his parents when MBH staff visit the Forest Opportunity Centre in the Forest of Dean, Gloucestershire. During his initial assessment Harry was lying on the floor and he could only turn to the side to reach toys independently and needed full support to move. Although MBH have seen him only once a month, since September 2012, the increased level in Harry's independence is remarkable. The sessions also provided an opportunity to teach his parents how to help him to achieve his aims, especially to move around to play and discover his surroundings independently. He is now able to sit independently, rolling, crawling, and to stand up with help at his front! This is surely a fitting testament to the determination of Harry, the dedication of his parents and the expertise of our conductive education specialists.



MBH, CONDUCTIVE EDUCATION AND ME

Trustee and participant Len Vidlar puts pen to paper

As I sit in our summerhouse in the last week of April, overlooking the garden, the neighbouring field and the Welsh hills beyond, (and listening to a tremendous crack of thunder, the like of which I have not heard in a long time,) I find myself thinking how lucky I am. It will soon be the eighth anniversary of my Parkinson's disease diagnosis (more thunder and heavy rain... but I digress). I was not surprised at the news, as my GP had suggested as much before I saw the specialist (hailstones the size of marbles outside now).

Once under the care of Caroline Evans, our local specialist Parkinson's nurse, I was told of an "open evening" to be held at a barn in the middle of nowhere, near Leominster, where "Conductive Education" was practised. Looking back, like most people, I vaguely remember having seen a TV documentary about the Peto Institute some years earlier but could not recall much about it except that not everyone agreed that it was effective. At first, I was not sure that I wanted to go along, fearing seeing people with advanced symptoms, in other words, "my future." Once there, my fears subsided and I found a team of dedicated professionals with my best interests at heart. I still, however, could not put my finger on exactly what "Conductive Education" was.

That was some years ago and I am now a regular participant who, whilst probably not able to give a textbook definition of what it is, feels the benefit of Conductive Education every day of the week. Because

"it helps to retrain the brain"

Parkinson's disrupts "instructions" from the brain to the muscles (through reduced levels of Dopamine) my understanding of Conductive Education is that it helps to "retrain" the brain to help with movements that other people can carry out automatically. As I said, I am no expert, all I can say is that every Monday I carry out tasks in response to commands which mimic everyday actions and help me with the simple things, like getting out of bed, getting dressed, maintaining my balance when moving around or walking without stumbling, all thanks to MBH. I will carry on helping where I can and would ask everyone, whether a parent, participant, carer or just a "friend of MBH" to do what they can to keep this marvellous organisation going. You might be interested to know that the sun is now shining brightly on the garden – how appropriate.

diary dates

May 18th

Kyre Railway Day

June 1st

Car Boot at Cobb House, Worcester

June 8th

Asda collection, Hereford (volunteers needed please)

June 21st & 22nd

Morrisons collection, Leominster

June 29th & 30th

Shobdon Food Festival

July 7th

FreeRadio's THE BIG WALK FOR KIDS, Malvern to Worcester in aid of MBH (sign-up at www.freeradio.co.uk/walkforkids)

August 1st

MBH stand at the Burwarton Show

August 3rd

Roller Disco at Halo, Leominster

September 20th

Big Wine Quiz, Bishops Frome Village Hall

October 18th

Band Night and Auction at Luctonians Sports Club

Please contact Zoe or Julia at MBH for full details.



CENTRE NEWS

Zombies invade MBH

No not a new horror movie but a visit by new MBH patron singer/songwriter Colin Blunstone, front-man for the band formed in 1961 and still going strong.

Colin had just returned from another tour of Canada and the US which he will visit again twice this year. Lee Gough was thrilled to welcome him to the centre "Colin is charming and unassuming – probably because he has nothing to prove."



Along with the Beach boys, the Zombies are the only sixties band still writing and recording new material and touring the world constantly. He has a punishing schedule and we were so grateful that he drove such a long way to visit us and see the staff and children. Former MBH trustee Grant Simmonds made the initial contact so a big 'thank-you' to Grant. We are all going to see the band at Huntingdon Hall on May 11th – watch-out Worcester!".



Spreading Best-Practice

Annamaria Berger gave a presentation to the CEPEG Conference London 2013. The Conductive Education Professional Education Group (CEPEG) was established to support the development and practice of Conductive Education throughout the United Kingdom.

The CEPEG Committee consists of professionals with a strong commitment to Conductive Education and relevant professional background. The committee meets regularly and organises an annual conference which attracts around 200 delegates. The annual conference, workshops and a range of publications are important in achieving CEPEG's three main objectives:

- The promotion of best practice within CE
- The advancement of education and training in the practice of CE
- The empowerment of professionals working within CE to communicate and share knowledge with each other.

This year the conference was hosted by The London Centre for Children with Cerebral Palsy (LCCCP) and five members of the MBH team went to the event. An evening reception was held at LCCCP which gave our staff the chance to see how another centre operates. The conference itself was held at White Hart Lane, the home of Tottenham Hotspur Football Club. There were 171 delegates attending and twenty presentations. As MBH has been helping several children who have had the SDR (Selective Dorsal Rhizotomy) procedure it seemed appropriate to choose this subject for the presentation. The talk was well-received and Annamaria would like to say a huge 'thank you' to all of the parents and children who provided videos, photos and additional information to use in the presentation.

NEW FACES

Welcome conductor
Erzsebet Majorovics-Moorcroft.



Erzsebet has extensive experience of working in the UK and has joined the REACH OUT team. "I graduated as a conductor teacher in 1999 at the Peto Institute in Hungary and came to the UK after my graduation, working in different conductive education centres in England. I have three children, who are all in school now, so when not working I like to spend my time with them. I started at Megan Baker House in February 2013 as a REACH OUT conductor, where I travel around the local counties helping both children and adults. This is a similar role to the work I was doing in Devon with a wide range of age groups from very young children to the older generation, all of varying abilities. I find this type of work very challenging, but enjoyable at the same time, it is always exciting to meet and work with new participants. Seeing the improvement in their skills is always rewarding.

NEW FACES

Welcome teaching assistant
Becky Griffiths.



Teaching Assistant Becky Griffiths started at MBH centre just a few weeks ago in April. "I have been looking forward to joining the team at Megan Baker House. I have worked as a teaching assistant in Hereford for the past three years and excited to have a new experience working with different children. My hobbies are dancing, singing and going to the theatre. I love music but don't like fish or mushrooms! I wanted to join MBH because I have witnessed the love and support provided to the children by the staff and everybody seems so positive – I want to be a part of that. Also, I want to get involved in the fundraising!"

Running down a dream

Our own Zoe White completed the London Marathon last month in just over four hours – what an achievement! The culmination of a long-held dream to take part in 'the big one' and dedicated training for the past year, Zoe was determined to do her best for MBH. Although delighted with her performance



she was also thinking of events on the other side of the Atlantic "Thankfully the event passed peacefully although we were thinking of those who suffered from the bombing at the Boston Marathon. Their lives will never be the same". So far Zoe has raised almost £2,000 but you can still support her and us, by making a donation in-person at the centre or on Zoe's JustGiving page www.justgiving.com/zoembh



"Zoe was determined to do her best for MBH"

Standardisation...

was the theme for the annual Professional Conductors Association (PCA) workshop, held in November at the National Institute of Conductive Education in Birmingham.



Annamaria, Chloe and Eloise attended from MBH to discuss the results from a trial of differing formats of documentation, used in various CE centres in the UK. It was agreed that these should be more uniform, not only in the UK, but worldwide. MBH is currently piloting a new way of documenting 'General Long-Term Aims' which sets the targets for individual children in terms of gross and fine motor-skills, speech, communication and cognitive skills and self-care skills. The girls will take the results to the next workshop and hopefully help to create a more uniform approach to the paperwork needed to assess and monitor those that we help.

On the 8th November Chloe and Eloise travelled down to Bournemouth to attend the Dyspraxia Foundation conference. Held over two-days and coinciding with the foundations 25th anniversary, the conference featured guest speakers such as Dr Madelaine Portwoodan, an educational psychologist, whose presentation 'Identification and Intervention' discussed the many different aspects of dyspraxia and its link with Dyslexia, ADD, ADHD and Autism. She also highlighted the effects on children with dyspraxia that their diet can have on the brain and also Motor Skill Screening. Barbara Hunter's 'Gadgets and Gizmos', demonstrated a variety of different types of equipment that can be used both in the classroom and at home.

In the afternoon, Gill Dixon, a parent of a dyspraxic adolescent, talked about some of the difficulties a dyspraxic child can face and she delved deeper into visual perception. She gave a second talk explaining the support strategies that can be put in place to help raise self-esteem.

The Midlands Parkinson UK...

asked MBH to attend a workshop on their upcoming Health Promotion Day in Shrewsbury and provide one of the three keynote speakers.

An audience of eighty people were shown the benefits of conductive education tailored specifically for those with Parkinson's disease and the talk included practical demonstrations of the techniques employed. Since then we have received many applications to join sessions at the new, soon to be announced, REACH OUT venue in Shrewsbury.

MBH Chief Executive Lee Gough is in no doubt as to the value of staff attending national conferences and working groups.

"Although our conductors have attended CEPEG before, this was a first-time experience for classroom assistants Lauren, Kay and Zoe and is an important part of their professional development. All events attended by our staff allow us to show others how we stay on the leading-edge of conductive education"

"All events attended by our staff allow us to show others how we stay on the leading-edge of conductive education issues and encourage our front-line professionals to spread best-practice around the CE community and beyond. Cross-fertilisation is a key benefit in any sector so we also gain from these interactions. Annamaria, in particular, gives many talks throughout the year to various professional groups, schools and parents – it's vital that our expertise is shared with others for the benefit of those we help".

FUNDRAISING HEROES

We say a special thank you to those people and organisations who have helped raise money for MBH.

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MBH
acorns
New Hope

Father Christmas visits MBH

The Xmas party was a huge success thanks to the hard work of staff, volunteers, children and parents. Father Christmas had managed to include the children of MBH in his busy schedule and they were thrilled to see him. This year he had called at the centre before doing his annual shopping for the local Herefordshire beverage so there was no need for Local Community Support Officer Adam Harris to ‘have a quiet word’ about his sleigh driving. Instead, Adam took time-off from chasing villains to ensure that the children got time to play in the police car and the parents behaved themselves at the craft stall!



Famous children’s author and MBH patron Ian Whybrow asked if the MBH children could record a lullaby. Singer and trustee Linda Tolchard arranged the music and conducted the MBH choir for the recording. It will be posted on YouTube and Ian’s blog.

Pudsey Bear, Maurice the clown and Stella the donkey ensured that the party went with a swing and vital funds were raised for the charity – a magnificent **£600**.



FUNDRAISING HEROES

"Everyone had such an enjoyable night"

The BIG WINE Quiz

Held in October 2012 at Moor Park School, the event was an outstanding success and a credit to organiser James Duffield, a trustee of MBH and everyone who helped and attended. Eight teams battled it out for the title of '2013 Champions' and a magnum of Champagne. The event was hosted by Nick James, managing director of Pol Roger, who expertly guided everyone through the evening. The quiz consisted of four red and four white wines. Competitors were poured a glass of wine and then they had to answer a series of multiple-choice questions about the wine such as country of origin, grape, year etc. By the eighth glass the answers seemed much more difficult to find! Despite some very good scores (and some not so good!) the eventual winners were the Lanyon Bowdler team from Hereford. The evening concluded with a well earned meal of local bread, cheese and ham all washed down with, of course, plenty of wine. A well-supported auction of promises, including a mole hunting lesson and 8kg of chocolate buttons, ensured that substantial funds were raised on the evening. The feedback was so good that James is keen to repeat the event. "Everyone had such an enjoyable night that I do hope, for the next one, we will have some new teams joining us." **The grand total raised for the charity was an incredible £1,987.**

Things that go bump in the night!

It was certainly an evening with a difference when Parson's Hall Farm hosted spiritualist Bridget Carter and her group. MBH is extremely grateful to everyone who attended and raised a magnificent **£117** – we certainly didn't see that coming!

Bang on target

The Lizard Shoot near Weston Park, Shropshire, recently produced a 14-month calendar with photos from scenes during their typical shoot days. The father of MBH conductor Eloise Palmer is a member of the shoot and encouraged others to buy the calendars, not just for the splendid photography, but as a way of donating to Megan Baker House. Shoot Captain John Alsop and Secretary Lynn Lawrence raised **£160** for the charity.



Shooters Bar supports MBH

Owner Wayne Harris started donating to the charity after his mother died and we were the chosen charity for funeral donations. Since then they have held a number of fundraisers such as charity poker evenings. "We at Shooters Bar like to support local charities and MBH is a really worthwhile cause for the local community and those further afield. It has a unique approach to make a real difference to children, young adults and their families. We will always continue to support MBH as we understand how difficult it is to obtain funding". MBH is very grateful for the further **£60** donated.

Luctonians Rugby Club continues to support the charity in various ways and in November they allowed us to have a stand at their event. Zoe and Julia from MBH collected **£95** on the day.

Malvern-based **UTC Aerospace Systems** have become valued friends of the charity. Staff have been donating unwanted clothes and books as well as entering a team for the golf day. The company has also made a significant donation of **£3,000 to 'Sponsor a Child'**.

Henry's Happy hens
Selling eggs from home and at MBH, the Amos family have donated over **£250** so far. Henry is obviously keeping his hens very happy.



The worthy participants

Swinging for MBH

Forty keen golfers in ten teams battled it out at the prestigious Worcestershire Golf Club and raised funds for MBH. Although the entire day was one of fun there was also a competitive air developing as the day progressed.

Congratulations to Thorne Widgery in winning the Megan Baker House Golf Day, followed by the UTC Aerospace Systems team only one point behind. Good sport Liam Quinn of UTC received a loud cheer when he was awarded the 'Could Do Better' trophy. Nearest the pin was won by Rob McNab and the longest drive was Dave Marshall. MBH Chief Executive Lee Gough presented the prizes and thanked both Amros Golf Event Management for organising the day and the sponsors – Lloyds TSB Commercial & Barclays Bank (principal sponsors of the day), Hills Ford (who sponsored the hole-in-one prize, which no one managed to win), Tulip cleaning & Whites Roofing (on-course sponsors for the day).

Lee also gave a special thanks to Melanie Baker and Jayne Foster who helped enormously throughout the entire day. The charity is also grateful for the auction lots and prizes donated by Worcestershire C.C.C., Worcester Warriors, West Midland Safari Park, Stratstone Land Rover Stourbridge, The Worcestershire Golf Club, The Mews Interior Design and David Knight. Last, but certainly not least, a HUGE 'thanks' to the golfers who took part – Thorne Widgery, Market Link, Lloyds TSB, English Mutual, Bradley Stuart, Firmingers, Griffiths and Charles, Lanyon Bowdler, Nicklin Business and UTC Aerospace Systems. **An amazing £2,500 was raised for the charity.**



Helpers (L-R) MBH Lee Gough, Melanie Baker, MBH Zoe White & Jayne Foster

FUNDRAISING HEROES

Sure to make a difference

Megan Baker House has become OpenSure's charity of the year having secured 56% of an on-line poll. OpenSure will be making corporate donations, providing publicity and giving any IT help and advice that might be needed. OpenSure's Heather Dontenville is pleased to support the charity "We were guided entirely by the poll results, but it was clear from the off that Megan Baker House inspires tremendous passion in the families it helps and was always going to be a strong contender. It was heart-warming to read all the comments in support of MBH. We would gladly have

supported any of the organisations, but it's lovely to be able to promote a local charity. We were inspired by our visit to MBH and seeing for ourselves the work to which our corporate donations will make a modest contribution".

The company sponsored Zoe for the London Marathon and also sent tweets and Facebook statuses encouraging others to donate. They have also used the same channels to promote other aspects of MBH's work and fundraising strands, such as donating clothes for recycling.

ABE (LEDBURY) LTD

donated **£214** in February and will be taking the 'Big Walk for Kids' in June, organised by FreeRadio

BADS (BRIMFIELD'S AMATEUR DRAMATICS SOCIETY) Christmas pantomime raised **£500** which they kindly donated to MBH. MBH's Zoe and Julia were talking to Brimfield's WI meeting about MBH when they received the cheque and the WI who also gave them another for **£40!**

Christopher Blenkarn helped as a volunteer at MBH on Wednesday afternoons during his first year at Hereford Sixth Form College. Although he was unable to proceed with a planned trek up Mt. Kilimanjaro he still raised **£215** from fellow students as a donation to MBH. Christopher is hoping to read medicine at university and everyone at MBH wishes him well with his studies.

ISIS Bellydance Show

Held in November 2012 at The Rose Garden Ledbury Hereford, the Isis Bellydancers raised the temperature on a cold and frosty night and all for MBH! As well as the traditional Middle Eastern choreography, the girls brought dances from North Africa with truly stunning costumes. Local people and businesses donated prizes for a raffle and the event raised an impressive **£724**.



Loretta from ISIS presenting the donation to Lee and Julia of MBH.



Blooming marvellous

Beautiful weather on the May Bank Holiday brought the crowds to the Hergest Croft Gardens Flower Fair. This special event was held in aid of MBH by the kind invitation of Mr and Mrs Lawrence Banks. MBH staff and supporters made and sold cakes on the day which together with the tombola raised **£200**. Craft and plant stall holders also donated prizes for the Chinese Auction which raised an amazing **£350**, bringing the total to **£550**. Thank you to everyone who made this such an enjoyable and worthwhile day for the charity.

Cadbury team make a difference

Trustee David Hunt and his team of volunteers from Cadbury Marlbrook undertook some major alterations at MBH centre including decorating and creating a much-needed storage area in one of the bathrooms. The baths were removed by Charlie Gumbridge of PSI Ltd and Dave Gossage of ADI Electrical Ltd. The staff send a big 'thank you' to the whole team.



Stuart Poole, Mark Smith & David Hunt

Individual efforts

Many individuals have helped the charity with their fundraising efforts and donations or given their time and expertise for free – Philip and Sue Baldwin, everyone who made a donation to the charity instead of sending Christmas cards – Helen Pryce, Mr and Mrs J Clayton, Liz Eyre and Market Link, the members of St Mary the Virgin Church at Middleton on the Hill and Eszter Fullop's father and brother for repainting the corridor at the centre.

Also on the role of honour is The North Herefordshire Archive Film Group who made a donation raised from the sale of DVDs based on archived history on film of old Herefordshire, particularly featuring our local celebrity the late Bill Benrgy. It was a very generous donation and shows a high level of sales of the DVDs. Jill and Richard Darroll had a wedding anniversary and instead of presents asked for money which they then split between us and Acorns.

Just these few people mentioned in 'Individual Efforts' have raised over £1,000 which shows how every penny really does count.

Artic Monkeys – based at the Conningsby Street Snooker Centre in Hereford, were winners of the Herefordshire Charity Pool League and nominated MBH to benefit from a donation of **£200**. We wish the team every success this season – more power to your cues!

Give us a kiss – Trustees David Hunt and Len Vidlar picked mistletoe from the surrounding fields (with permission!) and sold it at the Hop Pocket Bishops Frome. They made **£113** for MBH

EXECUTIVE chat

Tempus fugit and nowhere more so than at MBH. This is my opportunity to look back over the last six months and see what we have been up to and more importantly where we are going.



As always there are two main strands to our continued success – providing the life-changing conductive education services and raising enough funds to allow us to do that. Without statutory funding it is a constant challenge to find around £10,000 every week just to maintain our present levels of service and this does mean that we must ‘run lean’ in terms of staff numbers which puts an increased workload on everyone.

Unlike some other ‘businesses’ we cannot pass increased costs onto our customers so the choices are simple – less staff and services, greater workload per member of staff or increase our income. In fact we constantly juggle all three but it always results in a higher workload for staff and this obviously has a limit.

I am indebted to the MBH staff who work so hard, to not only deliver services, but maintain our professional excellence. Many companies and individuals, including the MBH Trustees, raise significant sums for the charity and along with hard-won grants from major trusts, MBH flourishes. I do not take any

of this for granted and am truly grateful to everyone who finds the time to raise funds for us or the confidence to award us grants. I was particularly pleased with the response from parents to the letter sent from Parent Trustee Lorraine Gannon. Sadly, Lorraine has now resigned due to work commitments and I thank her for her support over the last year.

There have been a few staff changes as Eloise left us to begin a PGCE course and as we go to press I am sad to report that conductor Annamaria Berger will be leaving us at the end of August. Annamaria has been with MBH for six years and in that time made an enormous contribution to the success of the charity and latterly to project REACH OUT in particular. We all wish her well for the future.

But we welcome teaching assistant Becky Griffiths who has started at the centre as well as Erzsebet Majorovics-Moorcroft, who has joined us from Hungary. She has made her home here with her family and joins the team as the REACH OUT conductor working with Annamaria, Kay and Lauren. Erzsebet has thirteen years experience as a conductor, working here



in the UK and Hungary. We will also be welcoming newly-qualified Cassie Screen in September.

Zoe now works with me as my assistant for two days a week and is making a huge impact on our administration commitments as well as our marketing functions. In addition to these extra duties Zoe has been training extremely hard for the London Marathon – you can still show your support by sponsoring her.

I am particularly indebted to James Duffield, trustee, who organised a very successful BIG WINE quiz. I certainly learnt a lot about wine and its provenance. With fantastic auction prizes, including £100 for the privilege of coming to MBH to clean the cars and carry out other helpful tasks!

There is another chance this year to test your knowledge and have a fantastic evening, as David Hunt, another trustee, is arranging a similar evening at Bishops Frome village hall. David and his team from Cadbury have done a fantastic number of jobs for us at the centre and I am indebted to the team. With a packed year for fundraising, some of the highlights will be

the Hergest Croft gardens open day on May 6th, the MBH Express at Kyre Railway May 18th which is a fabulous day out for children of all ages! And of course, don't forget, the BIG WALK organised by Free Radio. Please sign-up and join us for the walk or come along to the starting line at Malvern showground or the finish at Worcester Racecourse – this could raise a substantial amount for us.

We are now into our third year of project reach out. This has been an amazing success and opened up many new ideas for us for the future. With support from BIG lottery we have been able to achieve great results and I just hope we can find new funding to maintain it for the future, as with all our services it is much-needed.

Thank you all for your ongoing support and if you have any ideas for your own for fundraising events, please talk to me and we will provide any support necessary. We need fresh ideas constantly!

Lee Gough
Chief Executive



Judit Ziman
Lead Conductor



Annamaria Berger
Conductor



Kay Buffton
Teaching Assistant



Zoe White
Teaching Assistant



Lee Gough
Chief Executive



Erzsebet Majorovics-Moorcroft
Conductor

THE STAFF WHO MAKE IT WORK



Lauren Healy
Teaching Assistant



Becky Griffiths
Teaching Assistant



Julia Higgs
Volunteer Co-ordinator



Chloe Hicks
Conductor