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Salisbury District Hospital B.U.G.S. Autumn 2006 NEWSLETTER

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A new look at Camp

During the May school holiday B.U.G.S. visited the burned children's camp organised by the 'FAB' club at Frenchay Hospital. The camp was held at the Brenscome Outdoor Centre near Corfe Castle and ran from Thursday evening to Sunday afternoon.

We met the 13 children and the volunteers looking after them on Friday morning. When we arrived half of them were in one of the small fields behind the old farmhouse taking turns at the air rifle range. There was lots of happy chatter as some of the children did better than the grownups!

Later with Caroline, the group leader, we joined the other group to make a 'bivvie' and do other woodcraft activities in a little dell, in the woods. The wild garlic was in flower, the new leaves on the trees shone in the dappled light. We all enjoyed that session, after which the groups changed places.



After a drink break the children had the challenge of 'crossing the ravine' in two teams – one team opposite the other on the low rope apparatus. In effect the teams had to change places without touching the

ground. The activity involved helping each other to cross the space after working out how that might be done. It was a challenge, but the teams did get to the other side!

Unfortunately we had to leave as everyone settled down to a delicious looking lunch sitting on the benches in the sun outside the barn, which is now the dining room. The view over Poole harbour was great and it just seemed such a lovely place to be!

The plans for the rest of the camp included a climbing session on the nearby cliffs, a trip in a speed boat and canoeing in Poole Harbour. A busy time was ahead, but lots of fun.

The accommodation in the 'chicken house' is in rooms of 4 bunk beds. There is a cosy sitting room in the original cottage and very well appointed showers and washrooms in the 'pig sties'! The camp holds 80 people, but FAB book the Centre for their use only. The Organisers of the Centre provide the instructors for the various activities, and there were at least two for each group.

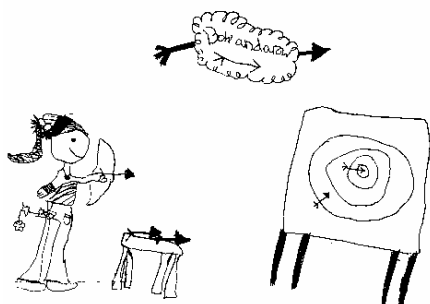
Amongst other things, the money that B.U.G.S. raises funds children to attend camp, where they can have fun while mixing with other children who understand their injury. These camps have proved to be very beneficial. As few children ask to go to the week long camp in Cambridgeshire in August. The committee will be offering places at the May time camp next year. It is shorter and in a location nearer to our region.

This year B.U.G.S. were pleased to sponsor two children and a volunteer at the National Burned Children's Camp in Cambridgeshire.

A letter from Saffron

Saffron sent us this letter about her first experience of the camp.

"When my Mum and Dad dropped me off at burn camp I cried but at the end of the week I did not want to go. You don't have to be shy to show your burns or tell anyone. No one will pick on you because we have all got them. You will meet new people that have worse burns than you. It is much fun at burns camp meeting new people that have the same as you. The best bits for me were doing the high ropes and learning how to do bows and arrows. I had so much fun I can't wait until next year."



Saffie

Note from the Chair

Just before Easter I had the opportunity to tell the rest of the people in Britain who treat burns about the work of B.U.G.S. I spoke at the British Burns Association annual meeting held in Dublin. There was a great deal of interest in the talk. In preparation for the talk I found that there are only 5 adult support groups in Britain, although there are several children's clubs, and various charities which sponsor individuals and activities.

There are other things that the B.U.G.S. committee have been doing, thanks largely to our very kind sponsors, without whom we could do so little. This includes having the Newsletter printed professionally!

I must highlight in particular the lovely quiet room that we have been able to provide for patient in the new Burns Unit, which not only has a nice view from the window, but has a beautiful mural to extend that view. We will tell you more about that in the next Newsletter

I would like to mention the wonderful volunteers who 'staff' B.U.G.S. There are very few of them, but they seem to be ever present when needed, and without them we could not befriend as we do. Having someone visit when you are in hospital and your family are far away can be a welcome

break, and it can also be helpful to make, or keep up the contact after discharge.

It is good to see so much in this Newsletter has been contributed by people other than the B.U.G.S. committee. We will produce another newsletter in the spring so.....What about an entry from you?!! Maybe the winter is an ideal time for you to tell us all about what **you** are doing.

Jenny Collings, Chairman

Heather & Geoff's Walk

Heather did a Sponsored Walk for us last Autumn and very kindly offered to do another one for us in May this year. Sadly, on the day she was taken ill but her husband, Geoff, stepped in at the last minute and did the walk instead! Many thanks indeed to you both for your support and for the great donation of £106.10 you managed to raise on our behalf.

Move to the new unit

After a few false starts we finally moved into the new unit on the 15th May. We had a busy few weeks beforehand with all the last minute organisation and the week before was taken up with packing. This was quite difficult as the unit was full and very busy and whatever we packed we then discovered we needed for a patient.

We had a very early start on the day of the move with the patients having breakfast at 7am to be ready for an 8am move. We had ten inpatients including one child on the day of the move. It was then all hands on deck with the staff divided into three teams, one to stay on the old unit, discharge the patients and supervise the removal men, one team to transfer the patients from one side of the hospital to the other and the other team on the new unit to receive the patients and tell the removal men where to put everything. While all this was happening we were being filmed by the BBC! After that the unpacking and settling in seemed to go on for weeks.

I would like to say a big thank you to the B.U.G.S. volunteers who were absolutely fantastic, helping out with the packing up the week before, on the day of the move and for the week after with the unpacking. It wouldn't have gone as smoothly without their help. The patients really appreciated having a friendly face to settle them in and help them

unpack and the staff were also extremely grateful to have all their help.

The move went very well, due to the excellent organisation by Gwyn Blenkinsop and Emma Gulliver the project managers and the hard work of the staff and the B.U.G.S. volunteers. We have a fantastic new unit with wonderful facilities, which we are enjoying working in making a hospital stay more pleasant for the patients. The unit was officially opened by the Princess Royal on the 18th September
Sr Janet Tromans

B.U.G.S. Meets the Princess Royal

The Princess Royal came to open the new wing of the hospital in September and B.U.G.S. was invited to meet her. I had the honour to represent B.U.G.S. and to tell HRH something about what we do.



I had to present myself at least 20 minutes ahead of 11.45a.m, when I was told I would be introduced to the Princess. Five people representing voluntary care of one kind or another assembled on the glass bridge beyond Plastic Out Patients. We waited while the Princess landed by helicopter and toured the Wards on Level 4, including the Burns Unit. Then a member of the very low key security came to warn us she was on her way. We waited, and then another member of the security team came to warn us she was on her way. We waited, and then two members of the security team came to warn us! The next warning was the real one and the Princess appeared with several other important people.

We were introduced in turn and the Princess had a few moments with each of us in a very relaxed manner. I purposely wore my B.U.G.S. wristband on my right wrist, so she saw it when we shook hands. She was genuinely interested in hearing about our activities. I made the comment that there were only 5 other adult burns support groups in the country and (with a smile) thought that we were the best. As quick as a flash she replied with the smile 'I can think of at least one other hospital that would contest that!'

Her comment had everyone laughing – She is most probably correct!

After meeting us she toured the downstairs wards and we all met up again in the glass corridor on Level 2 where she unveiled a plaque and was presented with a little posy by a little girl who had been a patient.

The Princess left through a set of French windows which enabled more people to see her as she walked across the courtyard to her waiting Helicopter. She was flying back to the palace for a meeting and then returning to the Isle of Wight for another function! A busy lady! Meanwhile we had a celebratory buffet lunch (with apple juice!).

The event was well organised and relaxed, and did not interfere too much with the working of the hospital in general. I felt that B.U.G.S. had been particularly honoured by being included in the proceedings. The volunteers and donors all hope that patients appreciate their efforts, but the invitation shows how much those efforts and involvement are appreciated not only by the Director of the Burns Unit, Mr. Eunan Tiernan, but also the Hospital management. Jenny Collings

A Very Special Week

After several years of visiting a number of distant places on holiday, 2006 was pencilled in to re-visit Salisbury and, not least, the District Hospital.

A strange choice? No, not at all because over the past couple of years the place has become my second 'spiritual' home.

I have led a very lucky life over the past fifty-odd years. Whilst not from a wealthy family I was always fed, clothed and housed and not least, always very healthy. Visits to hospital have been restricted to two minor visits of no real significance. All this was to change in 2004 when following an aircraft accident at Bournemouth I was whisked to SDH by helicopter in a critical condition. Luck plays strange games, whilst being unlucky to be involved in the accident it was lucky it happened where it did as I was soon to receive first class attention. After a time in Intensive Care I was transferred to the Burns Unit (I had 60%+), and following a further complication was returned to Intensive Care where I was to stay for a further nine months, before another seven months in Britford (a surgical ward). In the early days at least, things were pretty grim but there was a realisation early on as to how hard the staff were working for me.

Doctors and specialists came and went but nurses were in constant attention, and I was amazed at how they coped with not only the nursing demands we all think of but the amount of computerised equipment they now have to be familiar with. Whilst during this time I was heavily sedated my wife who had joined me by my bedside after the accident was probably suffering more trauma than me seeing the condition I was in and has since commented on the high level of friendly support she received from all. I must also add that despite all she was an incredible support to me as well, never letting her fears come out in front of me. Family, friends and colleagues also pulled out all the stops.

The complications caused many scratching of heads by a myriad of surgeons and doctors but their skills and professionalism made the real difference between life and death and slowly things were to come together. It's amazing how many people I was to come into contact with from the ward staff, to porters, theatre staff, physios, chaplaincy group and other specialists and my 'fame' reached as far as B.U.G.S. These smiling ladies became regular visitors with offers of help and support which were most constructive and very helpful.

So, returning home in January 2006 it was a major step in recuperation and as the months passed and strength improved I was able to restart work, initially on a part time basis then full time. I realised how much I owed to so many, but how to repay them for all their kindness? There was only one way I could think of and that was to return, walk in and say "Wow, look what you have done for me, all that hard work was not in vain" So we planned our weeks holiday in September and I confess to an unreal level of excitement at the prospect of seeing so many people who had become 'friends' during my stay. There was a last minute worry that perhaps it would be an anti-climax but the dream was fulfilled as smiling after smiling familiar face was encountered and it seemed like yesterday when I last said goodbye. As the memories of the pain and discomfort fade those of the people at SDH never will, and it won't be too long before I return socially again.

David Bougourd

Fawley Fire-fighters

Two members of the Fire Response Group, Business Team Leader Jim Rowsell and Electrical Control/Fire Technician Russell Savage, visited B.U.G.S. at the hospital on Wednesday, 14 June to present yet another generous cheque to us



for £420. This was raised via the Refinery Safety Incentive Scheme. Jim and his team have kindly been supporting us for about four years now and B.U.G.S. always enjoys their visits. We were able to give them a tour of the new Burns Unit and they also had the opportunity of meeting some patients on the Unit and ex-patients returning for their follow-up appointments. A couple of photos of the presentation were taken but, very sadly, the camera was stolen.

Recognition for Rob and Diane

Whether you have suffered from minor or major burns, very often the way forward can be clouded. Don't give up, be positive, have a sense of humour and be thankful for what you have got and make the best of what you have. Get out and about, help others and make the most of life as it is too precious to waste. Rob, who was in Salisbury with 70% burns following an accident in August 2004, has done just that. Since returning to home in Guernsey, end March 2005, he has been helping others at the Guernsey Aero Club, even with his restrictions. Recently at their Annual Air Rally, Rob was presented with the 'Andy Wallbridge Trophy' in recognition of all that he has done since his return from Salisbury. He is pictured here with his wife Diane who has helped enormously through out his recovery.



You will need 140,000 ladybirds to fill a gallon pot! (8 pints/3¾ litres in present day conversions)



Can you help us?

Yet again we are keen to encourage you to join us as a volunteer. It is a rewarding role. If you think you may be able to contribute, please get in touch with us.