

CHAIRMAN'S ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2020

Distinguished guests, Ladies and Gentlemen; it is with great pleasure that I give my annual report on the activities of the Friends of Eastbourne Hospital. Although our financial year runs from September 1st 2019 until 31st August 2020 I will, as I have done in previous years, talk about events up until the AGM. But as this year the AGM has been delayed due to the Covid-19 pandemic I will talk about activities up until Christmas 2020 four months after the official end of the Friends financial year.

As I announced at the last AGM the Bishop of Lewes, the Right Reverend Richard Jackson, left Sussex in January 2020 to become the 106th Bishop of Hereford. However I am delighted to say that the new Bishop of Lewes, the Right Reverend Will Hazlewood has agreed to take on the role as our patron and I am sure you will join me in wishing him well in his role as Bishop.

As has been customary I will mention some of the formalities before talking about the specific events of the year which have been overshadowed by the Covid-19 pandemic. The aims and objectives of the Friends of Eastbourne Hospital have remained much the same in the 72 years since it was formed. I realise that these have been mentioned in previous Chair's reports but I think they are worth repeating. They can be summarised as follows:

- 1) To provide funds for extra services, equipment and amenities for patients and staff at Eastbourne DGH and the related community services and to make donations where the expenditure has been recommended by the NHS Trust, and has been approved by the Committee.
- 2) To encourage voluntary work in the hospital.
- 3) To provide a link between the hospital and community.

The Charity is managed by a Board of Trustees who are elected and, thereafter, re-elected at three year intervals at the Annual General Meeting. This year we have said goodbye to one of our trustees. Gilda Perry has, after many years of great work for the Friends, felt it was time to say goodbye. Gilda first started with the Friends many years ago, and was a trustee of the Friends for five years. Time for a rest for Gilda although she has said she will continue to support and help at various Friends events. Our thanks go to Gilda for her years of support to the charity.

It is with great sadness that I also have to announce that John Surtees, who has been vice president for the Friends for many years, died this month. John was a great stalwart of the Eastbourne DGH during his clinical career and was a highly respected lecturer. His contributions to the Friends over many years will be greatly missed.

I don't think it will be a surprise to any of you that this past year has been like no other since World War 2. The Covid-19 pandemic has touched many of our lives and the lives of our friends and relatives. The loss of loved ones, the fear of catching the virus, isolation either voluntary or forced, and the inability to

cuddle our loved ones have all been factors in our lives. This year has also had a big impact on the Friends and the fundraising we do. However it was not all doom and gloom and I will discuss this later in my report.

INCOME: Where do the Friends get their income from? Funds are raised for the Friends in a number of ways:

- 1) **Shops and Trolley Services**
- 2) **Legacies and in Lieu Donations for Flowers**
- 3) **Donations and Fundraising from the Eastbourne Population**
- 4) **Friends own Fundraising Activities**

I will go through each of these one by one, starting with the shops.

1) **SHOPS**

Until March 2020 the shops were once again doing a grand job with income projected to be better than ever. Then the first lockdown came. Visitors were not allowed in the hospital so the customer base fell dramatically and with many of our volunteers being of a certain age and having to stay away from the hospital our shop incomes fell and some had to close, temporarily we hope.

a) **Two shops** - a main shop in the entrance to the Hospital, and a small outlet by the staff side entrance to the Hospital. With the first lockdown the main shop stayed open but with reduced hours but provided an unbelievable service throughout the year which I will talk about shortly. My thanks must go to Sue Hitchen, the shop manager, and all her team of staff and volunteers who worked tirelessly through the pandemic. Although the profits obviously have fallen this year Sue and her team continue to make a good profit.

b) **A Flower Shop** – the Flower Shop was doing well but sadly in March had to close and remains closed at the time of writing this. Prior to lockdown plans were being made with the Trust to open a small outlet in the foyer of the hospital outside the main shop to sell flowers. For obvious reasons this is currently on hold but we are hopefully this will progress in the future and will I am sure improve flower sales.

c) **A cafe outside the Radiotherapy Unit** – again the café was going well making between £600 and £800 a month but again sadly has been closed since March.

d) The Trolley Services around the wards for the convenience of staff and patients who are unable to visit the other shops were also stopped in March but were able to restart in a reduced capacity in the autumn in “green” areas, places where Covid-19 patients are not present. However at the time of writing I do not know whether these will be able to continue as the number of Covid-19 patients in the hospital reaches new high levels.

Again I cannot thank Sue Hitchen enough for all the hard work she puts in to all these ventures, much of it in her own time. Without her and her other staff members and the volunteers none of this success would be possible.

2) **LEGACIES** remain an unpredictable but very important source of income particularly this year with our own fundraising so reduced. This year there has been over £200,000 left to the Friends for which as always we are incredibly grateful. Some of this has been left to specific departments such as ophthalmology and we are working with these departments in purchasing equipment they need. Many donations are also received **in lieu of flowers**, contributing £1000s throughout the year. We are very grateful to relatives who, in their time of bereavement, still think of us and we can assure them that all donations are gratefully received and make a significant contribution to our activities.

3) **DONATIONS**

Can I take this opportunity to thank all the individuals and organisations who have donated money for the general funds of the Friends over the last year. I will mention some of them here. Other specific donations I will talk about when I talk about our Covid-19 fund raising appeal and the role of the main shop later in my report.

General Fund Donations:

a) Seaford Golf Club Captain's Charity	£5461
b) Sale of the late John Powley's artwork	£6300.
Our thanks go to both Kris Powley and Barry Southon for organising this.	
c) Two nurses from cardiology raised from running the Beachy Head marathon	£2,154
d) Lisa Harrison organised meal	£1000
e) Waitrose Community Matters	£333
f) Eastbourne Historic Vehicle Club	£350

There have been many other donations, many given anonymously. But all, however big or small, have been gratefully received and are hugely important to the work the Friends are able to do for the Hospital. I thank you all on behalf of the Friends for your donations whether you are mentioned in this report or not.

There are also other people who raise money in the community for the Friends. Collecting pots in the Community, especially Heaths Butchers in Old Town, raised about £ 2,140 in the financial year.

Regular sums from Recycle4Charity have been received from used cartridges, Paypal Giving fund, Amazon Smile, and the Eastbourne Borough Council lottery.

Simon and Carolyn Farrar have taken over the stamps from June Tickner who, after many years, had raised over £46,000 during her tenure. A hard act to follow but Simon and Carolyn have already had some very successful online sales.

FRIENDS FUNDRAISING ACTIVITIES

Sadly almost all our fundraising events since March have been cancelled. Before the lockdown there were only two events since the last AGM in November 2019. A quiz organised by Sue Hitchen and a dinner at the Raipur in February that raised £1,500.

Everything else was cancelled – Open Gardens, Battle of the Bottles, Tennis tournament, Cream Tea and Summer Fair, Summer raffle, Sugar Ray Charity Golf Day, Christmas Fair and coffee morning, Spring coffee morning, Dine around the World, and the remaining quizzes.

However, due to the determination of Ann Caffyn and her committee the **Art Exhibition** took place in October but this time virtually. I, along with others, wondered if it would work. But Ann was adamant it would and she was right. Although it did not make the Friends as much money as last year it still did very well raising over £3,000.

COVID-19 FUNDRAISING FOR STAFF

Once lockdown started in March last year it wasn't long before the hospital started to be overrun with Covid-19 patients. Some staff were working in areas they hadn't worked in before and living in the hospital at night doing extra shifts, putting their health, and sometimes their lives, at risk. It was quite apparent that the staff needed support with food, drinks, PPE, and electrical goods to store and cook food. The Friends already had the Bevan fund given to the Friends several years ago as a generous legacy to support staff. £10,000 from that fund was used to start a Covid-19 staff support fund and then the Friends went out to the community to raise money for this fund. The response was phenomenal. I will list some of these incredible donations but this is far from all of them. My sincerest apologies to those I don't mention:

- Sussex Masonic Charities Foundation £5,000
- Michael and Chris Owen distributed 10,000 appeal leaflets in Eastbourne and raised at least £4,600
- Peter Valentine walked 96 miles to celebrate his age £750
- Heart of South Racing – share of auction sale of horse £2,500
- On line quizzes:
 - Don McPhee £2,840
 - Paul Richards quiz £500
 - Jim Keeley £200
- Inner wheel of Sovereign Harbour £400
- Barry Southon digitalising old photos for community - ongoing
- Children:
 - Aston Downey's cake and book stall at home £842
 - Ellis Shehu sponsored 5 Km run £265
 - Katy and Louisa Connor cake and handcrafting items £281
- Hastings Direct £1,000

- £1000s more from people who wished to remain anonymous.

As well as this we put out an appeal for I-pads so that patients could talk to their relatives at home as visiting to the hospital was not allowed for obvious reasons. This appeal was initially for ICU but the response was so overwhelming from local businesses and individuals that the Trust was able to use them on many other wards. The extra ones were, with the permission of the donors, given to Care Homes for similar use. I cannot thank all these donors, both financial and those who gave I-Pads, enough both personally and on behalf of the Friends. And I give my apologies to anyone I haven't mentioned by name. Rest assured every donation made a huge difference to what we could do for the wonderful staff of our great hospital. In total the Covid-19 fundraising made just over £55,000 - An astonishing amount.

How was this spent in supporting the staff?

- Fridges, microwaves, kettles, toasters, foldaway beds for various departments - £3,000
- Food, drinks of various sorts (some donated) - £1000s
- Hand creams, Vaseline, lip balms, sudocrem, toothpaste, and various other personal items. When staff are wearing full PPE for hours on end their faces get sore, lips and hands crack so these small gestures make such a difference - £1000s
- PPE – Face visors - £7350. These were procured by the Medi Tech Trust who the Friends have worked with before and who purchased a similar number. If you remember Medi Tech donated £250K towards our Radiotherapy fundraising a few years ago.

There is still just over £30,000 in the Covid-19 Fund and with the current second peak the Friends have volunteered £10,000 towards making more rest areas for staff both within the hospital and in the outside courtyards. This will include furnishings, white goods, and sheltered igloos in the courtyards for staff. I am still awaiting the final details from the Trust. Again the Friends have restarted the provision of some personal items to staff as well.

I said earlier that I would mention the role of the Friends shop in all this. Sue and her staff have been superb and ordered the personal goods, food and drinks through the Friends Shop. A phenomenal task but with Sue's contacts in the industries she was able to get orders in almost as soon as she asked for them and at very competitive prices.

Once again can I thank all involved in this Covid-19 Fundraising appeal. It once again shows the huge generosity of the people of Eastbourne towards the hospital and its staff.

What have the general funds been spent on?

As I mentioned earlier the Friends fundraising has been much reduced since March so the funds available to spend on the usual equipment in the financial

year ending 31st August 2020 has been reduced. The figure is approximately £400K.

So how did the Friends spend these funds received? At the last AGM I said that the Friends had agreed to raise £500K for new state of the art patient monitors. However shortly after the AGM the government announced extra funding for equipment which meant the Trust would buy them. So as a result the Friends needed another major project. In discussion with the Trust it was agreed that the Friends would fundraise £430K to modernise radiology facilities by making it digital with all the advantages that has. Despite Covid-19 the Friends have almost reached that target but sadly several months later than planned.

However the Friends have been able to provide, or agreed to provide, equipment to other departments as well as fundraising had been good for the first 6 months of the financial year and from generous legacies.

Here is some of the equipment the friends have bought:

• Facilities (chairs and tables)	£3,000
• Orthopaedics (passive motion machines)	£7,257
• Community Stroke Rehab (iPads and apps)	£1,307
• Psychiatry (yoga classes)	£1,802
• Stroke Unit – (recliner chair, FES machines)	£5,455
• Children`s ward (Vein viewer, iPads and games, ECG)	£11,300
• Physiotherapy (microstim, tilt chairs)	£5,800
• Community Dental (wheelchair platform)	£31,150
• Intensive Care Unit (Omnicell drug cupboard)	£23,634
• Moving and Handling (one legged stools) Balance due	£4,100
• Nutrition & Dietetics (Bioelectric Impedance scales)	£7,395
• Frailty (ECG machine)	£1,224
• Firlie Unit (2 ECG machines)	£5,487
• Coronary Care (warming cabinet)	£2,560
• Podiatry (wheelchair platform)	£29,700

Welcome packs for patients who come into hospital urgently are still being provided and contain a toothbrush, toothpaste, and a few other essential items for care. These are purchased by the Friends and are very much appreciated by patients and often result in donations to the Friends as a thank you.

And at Christmas the Friends were still able to give donations to wards and departments that are working on Christmas day and these are used for gifts for patients or Christmas food for the ward. The library also gets a donation for books, and the Hospital Radio to help it keep running.

The Friends have continued this year to provide **Educational Bursaries** for up to £2000 per year from a legacy left a few years ago to the Friends, not for equipment, but "for the benefit of staff at Eastbourne DGH". This year the

trustees have given out two bursaries prior to the pandemic. We hope that we have more applications to choose from in the coming year.

Sadly the Friends were unable to hold its usual 3 educational talks for the public due to Covid-19 but we hope to resume them in the months ahead.

THE FUTURE

So what is the major project the Friends of Eastbourne Hospital are supporting this year? As I have already said the fundraising for last year's project has not quite finished yet so no plans have been made. A lot will depend on when we can get back to normal after Covid-19. No discussions have been had about this with the Trust as yet but I do know that the Urology robot will need updating soon. So wait and see.

I am pleased to say that the Trust Chairman and CEO have continued to support the Friends. For this we are grateful as the efforts of the Friends are very much appreciated. The CEO, Adrian Bull, retired last September and I am sure you will join me in thanking him for all the support he gave the Friends and wish him a happy retirement. Also we wish Joe Chadwick-Bell, the new CEO, every success and I am sure she will continue the support for the Friends.

I would like to thank all the trustees, Debbie and Sue in the office (they do the work of at least 3 people between them), and the shop management for all the support and hard work that they continue to give me as Chair of the Friends which has made my role so much easier. It has been a tough year that no one could have predicted but without their support, none of this could have been achieved. However my biggest thanks must go to you, the members of the Friends, volunteers and helpers, and the population of Eastbourne who so generously support us in all our endeavours. You make all this possible and without you none of this is achievable. It is an honour to be chair of this great organisation.

However, please can I make a plea for more volunteers to join us when this pandemic ends. We do not know how many of our current ones may decide not to return and without volunteers we cannot do what we do. Speak to your friends and relatives. However little time you and they can spare is very much appreciated.

It is impossible to pick out all individuals or else I would be here forever, but I have already mentioned a few. But can I apologise to anyone who has donated or raised money for the Friends, or given up their time to volunteer, who I have not personally mentioned. Please be assured your efforts are as much appreciated as those I have mentioned.

Mister President, that concludes my review of the year. I am happy to answer any questions members may have. But if there are no questions I would like to propose that the meeting adopts this report.