

# DERBYSHIRE ASBESTOS SUPPORT TEAM (DAST)



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March/April 2017

Newsletter - Edited by Joanne Gordon

## Supporting DAST

Thank you to everyone for your wonderful response to our 100 Club article in the last newsletter. Lots of you purchased numbers for 6 months or a year and this really boosted the fund.

If you didn't get around to entering – don't despair. There are still a few numbers available. Just contact Sarah for more information.

December's draw was won by James Eaden.

January's draw was a rollover after unsold number 94 was drawn.

February's draw was a rollover after unsold number 58 was drawn.

The March prize fund now stands at approximately £90.

From our game of chance we move on to something requiring a bit more skill! We are now running a poetry competition to help raise funds for Action Mesothelioma Day. The poem has to be your original work and cover the subject of asbestos. Apart from that there are no restrictions on format or length and it does not have to rhyme.

You need to send your poem in with an entry form and a donation of £3. The winning poem will be read out at The Roundhouse on Action Mesothelioma Day and will also be published in our annual report. The winning poet will also receive a £10 book token. The closing date is 24<sup>th</sup> April. For a copy of the rules and entry form, please contact Sarah.



Here is some information we found about the benefits of reading and writing poetry to inspire you to get writing.

## Poetry to calm and relax

According to Vern Kousky (poet), poetry helps us find our inner voice. We all have many ideas milling around in our heads, and a poem is the perfect place to let them run wild.

Many of us feel angry, frustrated, sad, or fearful from time to time. However, because these feelings are unpleasant, we often keep them locked up inside of us. Writing and reading poetry help us let these feelings out and also better understand them.

## Poetry 'can help cut depression rates' [Report from The Daily Mail October 2016]

Using poems to help people with depression could save the NHS nearly £200,000 a year, according to research published (in October 2016) for National Poetry Day.

A new report based on 196 people with psychological problems found that 75% found writing poems was an emotional release. Two thirds found reading or listening to poetry helped them to relax and feel calm and 7% weaned themselves off anti-depressants or tranquillisers using poetry and with the help of their GP.

The research is featured in a new report "Arts, Health and Well-being."

Author Dr Robin Philipp, a consultant in occupational and public health at Bristol Royal Infirmary, said anti-depressants cost around £530 per person for a year.

Based on his findings, if poetry helped 7% of people with depression or anxiety to come off medication that could amount to a potential saving of £190,000 annually for the NHS.

He said there were several reasons why poetry could be beneficial and it is linked in with therapies in which people were encouraged to talk about their problems.

Dr Philipp is a founding member of the organisation LAPIDUS (the Association for the Literary Arts in Personal Development) which is supported by the Arts Council.

National Poetry Day is held annually in October and each year it has a theme.

### **Dates for your diary**

**Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> April 2017**  
**Coffee Morning for all patients and their families and carers**  
**10.30am – 12.30pm**  
**Sir Richard Morris Lounge,**  
**Derby Cathedral Centre, 18-19 Iron Gate, Derby DE1 3GP**

Tea/coffee and scones will be served. One of the Lung Cancer Clinical Nurse Specialists from Royal Derby Hospital along with a representative from our panel firm Graysons will be available to answer any questions you may have. The room is below ground level, but there is a lift and other disability access available.

**Monday 24<sup>th</sup> April 2017**  
**Mesothelioma in the Midlands**  
**11am – 4.00pm at BVSC: The Centre for Voluntary Action, 138 Digbeth, Birmingham B5 6DR**

Speakers will include Liz Darlison from Mesothelioma UK and Simon Procter, Director of Music Services of Nordoff Robbins. Nordoff Robbins is the leading independent music therapy charity in the UK.

**Monday 8<sup>th</sup> May – Coffee Morning for patients and their families and carers 10.30am – 12.30pm at the ‘Royal’, Doncaster Road, Scunthorpe, DN15 7DE**

Macmillan Lung Cancer Nurses from Scunthorpe General Hospital will be available to answer questions. Details of speakers to be confirmed.

### **Save Barrow – DWP Office**

The Department for Work and Pensions is proposing to close Phoenix House in Barrow-in-Furness by March 2018 in order to save money. This is the office that will have administered your claims for Industrial Injuries Disablement Benefit and the Workers' Compensation Scheme or 2008 Scheme (Government lump sum).



Over the last few years we have had a good working relationship with the Barrow Office. Hopefully, for most of you the benefits have been dealt with quickly and efficiently with a positive outcome. We are aware that we cannot expect 100% positive outcome and we are dealing with any errors we believe should not be occurring. However, to close the office could lead to delays and the service to all could be adversely affected.

If you or your family have a computer and access to the internet please sign the petition.

<https://www.change.org/p/department-for-work-and-pensions-save-phoenix-house-keep-jobs-in-barrow-retain-asbestos-disease-knowledge-experience>

## OTHER FUNDRAISING NEWS

We recently received a donation of £215 from a Derbyshire Freemasons' Lodge.

Thank you to Dr Bromley Kniveton for telling members about DAST.

If you have links to local philanthropic groups such as Freemasons or Rotary Clubs, please do ask if they could consider making a charitable donation towards our work.



Don't forget, we still need hand crafted items to sell on our stall at our events. If you enjoy knitting, sewing, card making or crocheting, please think about donating some of your makes to DAST.

For all fundraising enquiries please contact Sarah Walters – [sarah.walters@asbestosupport.co.uk](mailto:sarah.walters@asbestosupport.co.uk) or leave a message on 01246 380415

## Move it or Lose it

Some of you may remember Julie Robinson coming along to give a demonstration of chair-based exercises at our meeting in December. Thanks to a funding bid we were able to purchase a number of DVDs from Julie. These

are free of charge and if you would like one please contact the office.

## Julie's background

Julie first began her career as a PE Teacher but 10 years ago decided to re-train to teach exercise to people who



find it difficult to exercise including those who are elderly or have respiratory problems.

## Move it or Lose it – the brand

The idea for the company and the DVD's came about because Julie encouraged those attending her classes to carry on with the exercises at home, but they couldn't remember what to do and writing them down didn't work. Finally the video was born and now there are 5 different DVDs covering a range of exercises from chair based exercises to ones that help with strengthening muscles and help improve balance.

## Why exercise?

We are all told that we should exercise but suffering from breathing difficulties makes exercise difficult. However, Julie explained that if you are feeling breathless, walking even short distances makes you feel out of breath. However, you may be able to do chair based exercises for much longer and this can benefit you greatly.

Julie said "If people don't exercise, their muscles decline and they lose the ability to undertake every-day activities such as getting up out of a chair, bath or shower. Exercises strengthen muscles which mean that they maintain their independence for longer."

Recently Julie has been undertaking 12 week programmes with Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease patients funded by GP surgeries in Birmingham. These patients were fearful because they believed that exercise would exacerbate their breathing difficulties.

Julie said "Our job is to change attitudes towards exercise". The programme worked with the patients to gently and progressively encourage them to undertake more exercise. Julie stated that the improvements have been massive and all have reported benefits of joining the programme.

The exercises are also fun, as anyone who attended our December meeting will know. Most people joined in and everyone was smiling.

Julie would encourage you to join a class as you can benefit from meeting others and having a laugh together. If you would like to join a class please go to the Move it or Lose it website [www.moveitorlose.co.uk](http://www.moveitorlose.co.uk)

Click on classes and enter your postcode to find a class in your area. If you don't have internet access we can do this for you.

If you can't find a class, don't forget you can join in at home playing the DVD.

### **Margaret Bailey – Obituary**

We are shocked and saddened to inform you that our long-time supporter, friend and treasurer, Margaret Bailey, has died in hospital after a short illness.

Many of you who attended our Vintage Teas or Annual meetings will know Margaret, who, along with her husband, George, ran our raffle, raising hundreds of pounds for DAST.

Margaret became involved with DAST soon after the organisation established as her father had died of mesothelioma.

Margaret and George supported us financially and regularly attended meetings.



(The photograph shows Margaret at one of our DAST meetings in Derby).

As a dedicated supporter we invited Margaret onto our Steering Group for the Macmillan Cancer Support Project in 2008. Her valuable

input helped to shape DAST's future. When the steering group was remodelled this year and became the Supporters Group, Margaret and George became members of this new body. For the last few years Margaret has also been acting as Hon Treasurer.

Margaret has been a spokesperson for DAST, frequently commenting in the Derby Telegraph. At one point she appeared regularly in the local paper as the reporters would ring her for a comment when writing about asbestos related disease issues.

We are all in shock and we will all miss Margaret terribly. She was a true friend to staff, volunteers and victims and had been a champion for the organisation for such a long time.

We extend our very sincere sympathies to George at this very sad time.