

Chairman`s Annual Report for 2023

Your Worshipful the Mayor, distinguished guests, Ladies and Gentlemen. This is the 8th year that I have given my annual report on the activities of the Friends of Eastbourne Hospital. As many of you know the Friends financial year runs from September 1st until 31st August but I will, as I have done in previous years, talk about our fundraising events up until this AGM. All financial details from our Treasurer, however, will relate to our Financial Year, September 2022 to August 2023.

As has been customary I will mention some of the formalities before talking about the specific events of the year.

The aims and objectives of the Friends of Eastbourne Hospital have remained much the same over the 75 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 our 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. It is sad for me to announce that two of our trustees have decided to step down from the committee.

The first of these is Margaret Lonsdale, a fellow anaesthetist when we were both still working. She has been deputy chair of the Friends but is moving away from Eastbourne to be closer to her family. Her contribution to the Friends has been huge, always willing to help out at our events, and standing in for me as needed. I wish her well in her new ventures. But I am delighted to say that Hugh Parker has taken over as deputy chair. Hugh has been a trustee for many years and has worked tirelessly at so many of our events, not least the Art Exhibition. I am thrilled he has agreed to this extra role.

The second departure is Gill Woolley. Wow. What can I say about Gill. She has been a trustee for longer than I am sure she cares to remember. She joined as a trustee initially to run the Open Gardens and turned them into a massive fundraiser for the Friends. Even though she stepped down from running the garden team 2 years ago Gill has

carried on being involved with the organisation of them. Even though she is leaving as a trustee I know, and she has told me so, she will continue to help out at various of our fundraising events in the future. We wish Gill all the best in her Friends `retirement` .

We did have someone else who has been attending our trustee meetings through the year who would have been elected as a trustee at this AGM. But sadly Mike Harris has decided he is too overcommitted to give the Friends the support he would wish to but will still give us all the help he can. Mike and I will be meeting soon to discuss the possibility of running a Ball again which we are aiming to do in 2025. Mike has huge experience in organising such events, has a team to help, and many contacts in the entertainment business. So I hope we will get that off the ground.

However with every bit of good news there is always some extremely sad news. Recently we have lost two great supporters of the Friends.

Geoff Duffell died last month. Geoff is probably best known for his role in volunteering on the trolley rounds in the hospital. He was a breath of fresh air to the staff on the wards always making them smile. And he was always at the heart of the volunteer team, helping out wherever and whenever needed, not least as a good humoured parking attendant at our events but also as an extremely good photographer. Geoff leaves a legacy of joy, care, compassion, dedication, humour and kindness. He will be greatly missed by all of us involved with the Friends.

Andrew Forrest sadly died recently after a tragic accident. He had been a huge supporter of the Friends of Eastbourne Hospital for many years but was particularly involved with the annual Art Exhibition. For eleven years he has lent the Friends the stands from the Society of Eastbourne Artists and helped erect them and hang the paintings for our exhibition. And of course he submitted his own paintings for sale. Both Geoff and Andrew will be greatly missed.

So let us now look at the activities that have brought income for the Friends, and then how that money has been spent. So firstly income.

INCOME:- Where do the Friends get their income from? I know most of you will have heard this before but I do think it is worth repeating to put things into context. 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 by the Eastbourne Population**
- 4) The Friends own Fundraising Activities**

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

1) Shops

The shops have had an incredible year with turnover topping £500K for the first time ever. This is down to the incredible hard work of Rai Hitchen, the shop manager, and her wonderful volunteers. Rai has finally been persuaded that she needs a second part time deputy manager to avoid her having to continue to work hugely excessive hours. Typically Rai was initially reluctant for this as the salary for the second post would reduce the shop profits but she has realised that it is necessary. The post will be advertised soon. Rai is determined that next year will be an even better year than this one.

- a) **Two shops** – these are a main shop in the entrance to the Hospital, and a small outlet by the staff side entrance at the back of the hospital Hospital. With building work at the hospital, the main entrance has been closed on several occasions which has reduced footfall past the main shop. The recent closure of the rear entrance to the hospital for the coming year for the build of the new surgical unit may well reduce sales at the staff shop too. However it would appear that a lot of the workmen are using it so the impact on sales is yet to be seen.
- b) **Flower Shop** – It is with great sadness that the decision has been made not to re-open the Flower Shop. The decision was not made lightly. The supermarkets seem to have the main share of the flower market these days, and there were very few hospital wards where visitors could take flowers in for patients. So it was apparent that it was not viable to keep it open. With the relocation of the shop from the hospital foyer to the cabin in the car park in 2017, sales never reached their previous levels despite the incredible work of the Flower Shop volunteers. I thank them for all their hard work over the years.
- c) **The cafe outside the Radiotherapy Unit** – A lack of volunteers had stopped the café being open 5 days a week but recently 5 day opening has been possible on many occasions. Again sales have been affected by the card machines not working well due to the poor wifi signal but this has improved, even if the volunteers have to sometimes take the card reader to the entrance of the hospital to get a signal. Some hospital staff are very loyal to the café for which we are very grateful. If they turn up on a day the café is not open it can be very frustrating for them, but the limited number of volunteers cannot be available all the time. So as usual can I make a plea for anyone who might be interested in volunteering to please contact the Friends office.
- d) **The Trolley Services** around the wards are for the convenience of hard working staff, and for patients who are unable to visit the other shops. There are continual problems with the hospital wifi on many wards which prevents some

credit card sales. And most people do not carry cash these days. We have repeatedly asked the Trust to try and fix the signal but so far with no success. More volunteers are still needed to make sure the service can continue on a daily basis.

Again I cannot thank Rai Hitchen enough, and all her volunteers, for all the hard work they have put in to all these ventures. And a bumper year financially as I mentioned earlier. Without Rai and her team none of this success would be possible.

1) Legacies:-

These remain an unpredictable but very important source of income. This financial year there has been £118,308 left to the Friends for which as always we are incredibly grateful. This is less than in previous years but none the less a sizeable amount which allows us to do so much for the hospital. Some of this has been left to specific departments and we are working with these departments to purchase the equipment they need.

Many donations have also been 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 to the Friends over the last year. I am overwhelmed by the many and varied ways people fundraise on our behalf. I will mention some of them here as there are far too many to list them all.

a) Eastbourne Historic Vehicle Club	£1000
b) Chamber of Commerce Christmas lunch raffle	£1282
c) Heath`s Butchers	£1730
d) Langney Sports quiz + 3 other quizzes	£995
e) Hailsham Artists Network – refreshments at craft event	£154
f) Anderida Lodge for toys for Friston Ward	£600
g) Helen Davey from afternoon tea in her garden	£250
h) East Dean and Friston lunch club	£100
i) Christine Lynn – concert at Wannock and sale of poetry books	£350
j) South Downs singers summer concert	£200
k) Janet Sinden	£250
l) Martin Rumary	£200
m) Caroline Smith	£139
n) House Clearance Shop from customer donations	£295

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| o) Tuesday Craft Club | £250 |
| p) Clive Hancock from 8 day walk | £450 |

Can I also thank Sylvia White who donated her stock of nightwear and underwear from her closed business to be sold in the Friends Shop. And there is a lot to sell so if you are short of either underwear or nightwear please take a visit to the shop.

Sadly the Cuckmere Valley Lunch Club has folded, like so many other small clubs, but they have very kindly donated £700 to the Friends as a result.

There have been so many other donations, many given anonymously. Many people gave donations in lieu of sending Christmas Cards and presents and in recognition of care received by family members. There are far too many to mention once again. 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. Can I also thank those who have used Gift Aid for their donations as once they are registered, the Friends get an additional 25% back from HMRC.

I must at this stage of my report mention Jeanette Evans, one of our volunteers, who has raised well over £1000 this year from donated jewellery sales at our Open Gardens as well as at other local fetes. Some of the higher value jewellery donated to the Friends gets sold at Eastbourne Auctions. Thank you Jeanette for your enthusiastic and tireless work for the Friends.

Simon and Carolyn Farrar have continued to do great things raising money in online sales of stamps, this last twelve months raising over £1200.

A big thank you also to those who have made generous donations of wool, for the army of volunteer knitters to make goods to sell in the shop. These make a lot of money over the year. We even have a knitted pumpkin in our house that my wife bought in the shop. This has now been put away until Halloween next year. Please continue to donate stamps, jewellery, silver, bags, and milk bottle tops. They all bring in valuable funds for the Friends. Unwanted gifts, unopened bathroom products, bottles of wines and spirits, and chocolates are also all gratefully received either to sell or use as raffle prizes at our events.

Small but regular sums from Recycle4Charity have been received from used printer cartridges, £219 this year, and over £2,500 since we started collecting them.

The Friends have so many generous benefactors. If you have not been mentioned my apologies but be assured your donation is equally as important as those mentioned.

2) Friends Fundraising Activities –

Many of these have been running for several years but there have been a few new fundraising events I will talk about in a minute. But first, the regular events.

- A) **Open Gardens** – Once again we can look back on a very successful open garden season which has raised over £20,000, a total up on last year. Overall we were blessed with very good weather. One or two days were actually too hot but that didn't put people off from attending. All the gardens had their own unique charms and I, on behalf of the Friends, thank the owners for allowing us to use their gardens. I would also like to thank Robert and Liz Johnson for their help with planning the season, and the incredibly hard working and brilliant volunteer team. The team are already planning for 2024 so if you, or anyone you know, would like to open their garden or be a volunteer in helping the team then please let us know.

- B) **Art Exhibition** – the 18th annual Art Exhibition last month was once again a great success. There was also the largest number of paintings, over 300 from 66 local artists, ever entered to the exhibition. Ann Caffyn seems to have never ending enthusiasm and energy in organising this event with her great team behind her in support. Once again the exhibition was a great success raising £4,500 through picture sales, the raffle of a painting by Jackie Hurwood, the silent auction of a painting by Alan Everard, and donations over the two day exhibition.

- C) **Dine around the World** – there have so far been 2 dinners this year with a third next week at the Thai Marina. The first of these was held at the Dem Shish in March with a very lively and noisy atmosphere. We had a record attendance for one of these dinners with 130 present and a record £1600 raised. The second dinner was at the Spice Garden, again a sell out with £1100 raised. These dinners are so popular now that we have waiting lists for each one. Our thanks as usual to the owners who always look after us so well and often donate a raffle prize each time. Our thanks also to the various raffle contributions from restaurants, hotels, and individuals. Plans are already underway for another trip to Dem Shish next February.

- D) **Fashion Show** – The Fashion Show returned in September after a successful relaunch last year after Covid. Once again a sell out with a waiting list for cancellations. Some described them as the hottest tickets in town! The event was a lively, laughter-filled afternoon. The clothes were modelled by guest models – Rosemary's friends, family and a trustee. Our thanks go to Rosemary Cameron and her terrific team of helpers for organising this great event and it is hoped it can be repeated next year. The pressure to do so is on! Over £1200 was raised this year.

- E) **Christmas Fare** – After the return of the Christmas Fare/coffee morning last year, this year's one is taking place this coming Saturday at a new venue, All

Saints Church Hall in Grange Road from 10am. With many stalls as before I know it will be a great success. Our thanks go to Bo Phillips and her team for organising what I hope will continue to be an annual event. There is still time for any unwanted gifts, toiletries, etc to be donated.

- F) **Quizzes** – It was nice once again for Sue Hitchen to run three quizzes this year at the Fishermens` Club. The last of these three is in 2 days time. The first two have made £1265, and with the one in November last year after the last AGM, a total of exactly £2000 has been raised . I am not sure why I go along as it makes me realise how little I know about so many things. Having written quizzes myself I know how much work goes in to writing them. Thank you Sue.

After a gap of a few years the **Sugar Ray Golf tournament** came back as a fundraiser for the Friends and was held at the Royal Golf Club in September. A staggering total of £9000 was raised of which half came to the Friends and the other half to the Rotary Club of Eastbourne. My huge personal thanks to Mark Lambird at Eastbourne Motoring Centre and to Ian Huke of the Rotary for organising the event. The Friends were able to send two volunteers to help on the day. So thank you to Sue Hitchen and Gill Conlon for helping.

Apart from all the above, The Friends have had two new events this year.

- G) Firstly we ran a **Race Night** at Langney Sports Club which was huge fun and a great success. Races and horses were named and sponsored by individuals and companies to raise money and bets were placed on the night. There were some interesting names! There was a great deal of excitement generated as horses raised neck and neck to the finishing line! As none of us had ever run an event like this before we were hugely grateful to Angie, the manager of the Conquest Hospital Friends, and Angie`s parents, for helping out on the night, running the betting and payouts. We are very grateful for their help. Along with the raffle the night made £1200. There has been such a clamour for another race night that one has been booked for 1st March next year, this time at the Fishermen`s Club. Book early.
- H) **Eastbourne Borough Football Club** – as you may remember from last year`s report that I mentioned that we had gone into a sponsorship partnership with the football club on the background of the club`s “One club, One Community” ethos. The Friends agreed to sponsor the junior team shirts with large Friends logo on the shirts and in return we would have matches where we would be the sponsor and would do bucket collections and have lots of advertising around the ground and over the loudspeakers. On the first of these days on 4th February the juniors, wearing our sponsored shirts, collected £200. Members of our hospital football team had the excitement of taking penalties against a Borough keeper at half time. They loved it and was a great morale booster for the staff.

The second of the sponsored matches was at Easter and we combined it with a Family Fun Day organised by Amy and Sue from the Friends office. There was a Wheel of Fortune, a temporary tattoo station and other entertainments. All together it made £350 for the Friends. Again there was a penalty shootout at half time.

And we finished off the season with the annual DGH v Conquest Hospital football match played on the main pitch at the Borough. What a thrill that was for the players, and an exciting match which was decided on penalties as the match had ended in a draw. And the Eastbourne team won on the last penalty. That was the first time in recent history that Eastbourne DGH had beaten the Conquest Hospital. This raised over £400 from ticket sales and donations.

Sadly with the change of owner of Eastbourne Borough, and the massive change of staffing, the club has decided not to extend our sponsorship deal into its second year. However it was a worthwhile venture with the money from our two match days, the quiz at Borough, and the use of the facilities for the Race Night, making significantly more than we paid to have our logo on the junior shirts. In the last week, the new general manager at the club has been in touch and is keen to re-establish communication to see what might be arranged going forward.

As a last bit of fun I did offer a further idea for fundraising. I had volunteered to be put in a cage and have people pay to throw wet sponges at me. I could think of several of my recent medical colleagues who would have loved that pleasure, as I am sure others would have as well. I put the idea to the Trust who thought it was a fun idea but, quite rightly, thought as I did too, that the front of the hospital was not the right place for such frivolity. Maybe another time, another place!

So what did the Friends spend the funds raised on?

EXPENDITURE:-

It is very difficult for me to reconcile equipment we have agreed to buy and arrived in year, equipment that has arrived and been paid for in year but was agreed the previous year, and equipment we have agreed this year but has not arrived yet. Therefore I won't try and say exactly the amount we have spent this year. I will leave that to our treasurer. I will hopefully give you a good idea of purchases though.

So how did the Friends spend the funds received? At the last AGM I announced that the Friends' major project for the year just finished was to raise £400,000 towards intravascular cardiac imaging with integrated video transmission allowing images to be beamed for teaching purposes. This means that cardiologists can look inside the coronary arteries, the blood vessels to the heart muscle. This makes Eastbourne one of the first hospitals to have this equipment. This £400K target has been achieved and will help make Eastbourne a state of the art cardiac centre. An amazing achievement and our thanks go to all who helped in this fundraising.

The Friends have been able to provide, or agreed to provide, equipment to other departments as well.

Here is some of the equipment the Friends have paid for, or agreed to pay for, within the financial year:-

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| • Restaurant – furniture to make a modern vibrant relaxing area | £10,000 |
| • Ophthalmology – Cirrus machine | £47,000 |
| • Occupational Therapy kitchen equipment | £4,500 |
| • Respiratory medicine – 2 bronchoscopes | £100,000 |
| • Friston Ward – ceiling light panels | £13,000 |
| • Discharge Lounge – newspapers and magazines for 2 years | £712 |

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. All these Christmas donations amount to about £6,500.

The Friends have continued this year to make available **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" who cannot get funding from the usual sources. Yet again the trustees have sadly not had any applications this year. We hope that we have some applications to choose from in the coming year and we will push hard to get staff to apply. I am sure it has been the pressure of work that has stopped people applying.

I am delighted to say that the Friends were able to hold an Educational talk for the public in October. This was the first one since 2019 because of Covid. The talk was given by Karl Spiteri, consultant Urologist, about the Urology Robot and was well attended. It was a fascinating talk and coincided with the robot being used on the 2000th patient. Quite an achievement and reinforces Eastbourne as a regional centre of excellence. The Urology Department is so inundated with work that I would not be surprised if a bid for a second robot comes our way in the not too distant future. I'm keeping my heads down!

Although not a fundraiser Amy and Sue in the Friends office launched a competition earlier in the year. It was a childrens` art competition with 3 age categories. Bourne School was the only one that entered with a total of 300 paintings! The topic was "Doctors and Nurses" and there were some very imaginative pictures. I think I could say that most had blood in the picture and one had a patient without a head! To find winners

in each age group was extremely difficult but our trustees Ann Caffyn and Terry Henson, accompanied by the late Andrew Forrest, finally agreed the winners. And the overall winner was Caitlin Lynch whose picture appeared on the front cover of the autumn edition of our Hospitality magazine. Ann and Terry went to the school to present prizes to the winners. A selection of the art work is currently hung up in the foyer of the hospital and available to browse in a display book we have brought here today. The aim is to repeat the competition next year and we hope other schools will join in too.

The Future:-

So what is the major project the Friends of Eastbourne Hospital are supporting this coming year? Well the Friends have agreed to purchase a gamma camera for nuclear medicine and will be fundraising for £500K. I know a lot of you will be asking what is a gamma camera? It looks like a CT and MRI scanner but works differently. Radioactive dye is injected and travels to the targeted bit of the body that the team are interested in studying. The camera picks up this small amount of radiation which is converted into an electrical signal. A 3D picture map of what is going on inside the patient is made and enables quicker identification of cancer markers in patients, how invasive the cancer cells are, and gives full digital imaging in less time, thus reducing the time patients spend in uncomfortable positions on the bed during the procedure. Because it is quicker than the old obsolete machine it means more patients can be investigated per session thus reducing cancer waits. I hope you will all support us in the fundraising for this vital machine.

It was really good to finally get the lead lined screens and cupboards into the Resuscitation area of the Emergency Department. I am sure you remember that the fundraising of £80K for these was our major project for 2021. They had been in store for a while awaiting some building work to be done but they are now in place improving patient care and staff safety from x-rays.

It is nice to see members of the Trust Board here at our AGM as it shows their appreciation of our work. I am hoping there will be more attendance at some of our fundraising functions in the future. Seeing members of the Board face to face is great for our trustees and volunteers and shows that their efforts are appreciated.

I would like to thank all the trustees for their hard work and the support they have given me as Chair throughout the year. What can I say about Amy and Sue in the office that has not been said before. They are quite unbelievable. They work way beyond their hours and are the cogs that holds the Friends together. Without them I know the Friends would not be anywhere near as successful as it is. So without this support none of this could have been achieved. On top of that there have been a trio of firsts this year – firstly a record shop turnover, the first time it has topped £500K, the second being the biggest turnout and money raised at a Dine around the World, and thirdly a record

number of paintings submitted to the Art Exhibition. Let us see what records we can break this coming year.

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 as I do every year for more volunteers to join us. Without volunteers we cannot do what we do. You can volunteer for the shops or the trolley rounds, or to help as part of a team at some of our events. Speak to your friends and relatives. However little time you and they can spare is very much appreciated. Some volunteers do their training just to be available on an ad hoc basis so Rai has a list of those she can call on if she finds herself short at any time. I am aware that many clubs and charities are struggling to survive, some due to lack of volunteers. None of us would want the Friends to be one of them. In January Sue Duffell and Gill Conlon, one of our long standing and hardworking volunteers, were interviewed by Seahaven FM about the Friends of the Hospital and the value of volunteering. I think there is still an archived copy if you want to listen to it. It was an excellent interview.

It is impossible to pick out all individuals in this report or else I would be here forever, but I have already mentioned many. 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.

Madam 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.