



MCSC News

The Home of Community Work

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DATES FOR THE DIARY SEPTEMBER

Thursday 15th

Trustees from within the building get-together—here 8.00pm

Saturday 17th

First Saturday Filmclub

Thursday 22nd

Grove Green Christian Fellowship Lunch invite.

Friday 23rd

VAM Vol & Community Sector Focus Group— here 8.30am

OCTOBER

Friday 17th

Voluntary Sector Conference - here

MAIDSTONE COMMUNITY SUPPORT CENTRE

presents

SATURDAY MORNING FILMCLUB



MCSC are proud to announce the launch of our new Saturday Filmclub for 7-11 year old children from the immediate area around Marsham Street.

With the help of generous funding from the Barbara Saunders Trust, we have equipped our new Meeting Room with our very own hi-tech mini cinema equipped with Blu-Ray projection and 7.1 surround sound. The project will operate in conjunction with Filmclub, an educational charity that helps schools set up film clubs. Children will be able to watch films, review them online, either here at the Centre or at home, and then chose films they would like to view in the future. A nominal £1 is charged per child attending.

The whole programme will be overseen by a qualified Organiser, Deputy and volunteer team with the first show happening on Saturday 17 September. We are delighted to say that we have found the ideal organising team in Colin and Carol Galvin, both of whom have experience not only of working with children but also in running film clubs elsewhere.

We have put an enormous effort into promoting this worthwhile project and are indebted to the Working It Out team, a Tomorrow's People project under Debbie Bailey, who have delivered over 3,500 leaflets to local homes. Indeed, you may well have received details as well by email (several times!). Please do let anyone who may benefit from this Club know of its existence and/or give them a leaflet available from the foyer or at Reception.

Of course, a spin-off benefit of this project is that we can now offer a superb projection facility to show training films, make presentations via laptop or even utilise our new video conferencing facility. Just think, you will never have to miss another meeting (*that may not be such a good thing—Ed*)! Furthermore, our Filmclub membership allows us to run as many clubs as we like. We have already linked up with Topaz to provide a Learning Disabled Filmclub and welcome applications from any other group that feel it might like to set up its own Club.

The Meeting Room still costs only £10.50 per hour for Member Groups and Charities. Book early to avoid disappointment!

A LINK TO OUR PAST

Many of you may be aware that the Centre provided living accommodation for nurses during World War 2 when Maidstone Hospital was just across the road. One of these nurses is now a regular visitor to the Centre, attending the BFG Exercise Classes on Wednesdays. Margaret Shillings lived here between September 1941 and the end of the war as a trainee nurse. Each nurse had her own room and meals were taken in the Halls which was then the dining room. Margaret used to challenge the doctors to table tennis and, being a dab hand with the paddle bat, win their cheese rations.

Fierce sounding Matrons did their level best to keep the young nurses in check by imposing strict curfews. The doors were locked at ten pm and lights out at midnight. Margaret took great delight in telling me that these rules were circumvented by nurses sneaking out after hours through what is now the Reception side window to meet their paramours and male suitors shimmying up and down drainpipes. Margaret herself claims never to have used this escape route but was treated to a matronly reprimand for coming in from a late night celebration a little worse for wear. These light hearted episodes must have made welcome respite from the rigours of working in a wartime hospital.

OFF TO LONDON TO SEE THE QUEEN



Brighter Futures Group (BFG) was represented by volunteers including Judith Bruce and Betty Povins at a Royal Garden Party held to recognise the Volunteering Sector. The group were even whisked up to the Palace in fitting style by Rolls Royce.

Meeting the Queen was nothing new to Betty who has been invited to several Royal occasions in the past. BFG has also been awarded the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service, a rare and coveted award.

A certificate signed by the Queen and commemorative crystal will be presented to Brighter Futures by the Lord-Lieutenant of Kent at a special ceremony soon.

BRIGHTER FUTURES GROUP HITS JACKPOT!



This has been a big year for BFG which, not so long ago were facing closure due to chronic lack of funds.

The Group which has 700 members aged 70 plus, had their KCC funding withdrawn as part of Government spending cuts.

Thanks to the Big Lottery Fund allocating a staggering £470,510 under their Reaching Communities Programme, the group's future is indeed "Bright" and they will now be able to extend their programme to a wider area. Congratulations from all of us!

UPCOMING COURSES AT MCSC

ADVANCED EXCEL TRAINING

A course will be run in the Centre on a date to be confirmed in October/November 2011. The cost will be in the region of £35 depending on numbers. If you or anyone in your team are interested, please leave your details with Jax Avery on 01622 690703 (or Ext 103 on internal phones) or jackie@mcsc.org.uk.

LAUGHTER YOGA

Following on from her success running Laughter Yoga sessions for the Leisure Learning programme, Rachel Smith is keen to extend the classes to anyone working in the Centre. The new classes will be at lunchtime on Fridays to set you up with a happy mood ready for the weekend. The cost will be £4 for a 45 minute session with the start date to be confirmed. If you are interested, please email reception@mcsc.org.uk or leave your details with Claudia at Reception.

ZUMBA



Zumba classes are being run here every Thursday evening from 5.30-6.30pm. They make an excellent way to wind down at the end of the day. Either see Reception or come along on the day.



WELCOME to CSV



We would like to extend a warm welcome to our newest member group, CSV, who are settling into Room 211. Laura Piper has kindly put together a piece describing their project in Maidstone...

Community Service Volunteers and the Red Reading and Reminiscence Box Project

Founded in 1962, CSV is the UK's leading volunteering and training charity. CSV's vision is of a society where everyone can participate to build healthy, enterprising, inclusive communities. Every year, CSV involves over 150,000 volunteers in high quality opportunities that enrich lives and tackle real need. Between them, they help transform the lives of over 1million people across the UK.

In February of this year, CSV were awarded a grant from The Big Lottery Fund to finance the CSV Red Reading and Reminiscence Box Project. This exciting project, delivered in partnership with Kent Libraries and Archives, supports their Red Box scheme which delivers library items to day care and residential settings. However, many of these Red Boxes were being returned packed identically to how they were issued, suggesting that they were not being opened and used. The Red Reading and Reminiscence Box Project will recruit volunteers to run reading and reminiscence sessions in day and residential care settings across Kent, reducing the sense of isolation felt by some of the most vulnerable people in our society, and improving health, well being and social inclusion through new activities. The project has a strong intergenerational focus and will bring together all age groups.

I am thrilled to have been appointed to the role of Project Manager and look forward to seeing this project fulfil its amazing potential to make a real difference to the lives of all those who take part. Laura Piper.

Laura can be contacted on 01622 722 or Ext 122.

FREE LUNCH!



Grove Green Christian Fellowship invite you to attend a special lunch session on Thursday, September 22nd from 12:30 - 1:30. Without a doubt, many of us who work as volunteers encounter people whose lives are in real need of healing. They may need to be healed emotionally, physically or spiritually or they might need something like healing in the way they manage money, relationships and life's challenges. Everyone who attends will be given a free lunch. Following a nice meal, there will be a short talk entitled "Does God Heal People Today?" Following this you will have the chance to ask questions and have some dialogue about this question. Please feel free to attend! RSVP to info@maidstonechurch.com or call on MCSC Ext 116. Josh Cordray.

DON'T LEAVE TOWN TILL YOU'VE SEEN THE COUNTRY

Relate Councillor, Shirley Warrington has written a book to entice all of us to get out into the beautiful countryside around Maidstone and appreciate the views on foot. It is priced at just £5.00 and is available by calling Shirley on 01622 663468.

Short Kentish Walks



through the countryside and villages around Maidstone.

AND WE SAID GOODBYE TO.....

Hold back the tears and brace yourself for a spate of departures!

- Betty Provins volunteered for VAM Transport for five and a half years and has now gracefully retired to join her family in Grantham. Betty was part of the group photo on the facing page...
- Christine Smith has been the Carers Contact Coordinator for VAM and Maidstone Carers for a total of 11 years. I would not suggest she is retiring as she is far too young! Long haul flights to exotic locations beckon.
- Sue Towns-Okorodudu left VAM in July where she has been the CEO for over 5 years. Congratulations to Charlotte Osborn-Ford who has been appointed as the new CEO.
- Joan Curtis, Leisure Learning Manager came to the end of her year's contract at the end of July. She plans to devote more time to volunteering for CAB.
- Last but not least David Putnam his post as manager of Action for Children in August and will be switching sides from the voluntary sector to the civil service. He will be working for Ofsted based in Canterbury as a Social Care Regulatory Inspector.

Manager's Report



September's here, schools' back, summer's over, the nights are drawing in, blah blah. Actually, for MCSC the autumn means a time when we start to get busy again after the relative lull in bookings over the summer.

It's also a time of new projects and we are particularly proud of our new venture, the Saturday Filmclub. Initially, we are providing a film club for 7-11 year olds but we are already considering older age groups and a wider range of activities to offer to hard pressed local parents. We've targeted our advertising campaign in areas where we feel there would be most benefit but the club is open to all so please do feel able to promote it to anybody you feel it may help.

I'm already encouraged by the fact that Topaz, our LD group, have decided to have their own film club and had a successful first showing of Avatar on our superb cinema system. The picture quality and surround sound really are wonderful.

For those worried about the prospect of colder weather, you will be pleased to hear that we already discussing our heating arrangements which will start towards the end of this month. Groups based in the Annex will be even more delighted to know that secondary glazing should be installed within the next month as part of our rolling programme of improving heat retention. As usual, please be mindful of the cost of additional electric heaters before firing them up. Our three year energy contract is up for renewal soon and it doesn't take a genius to work out that costs will be going up.

I'm sure that we are all delighted to hear about BFG's recent wonderful lottery result and I'm so pleased that other groups seem to have, so far, weathered the current storm. Some of you will know of my personal obsession with keeping this building's offices full and I've had to grit my teeth whilst faced with a few empty offices for the last few months. I'm delighted to say that, as I write, we are once again 100% full—CSV moved in last month (see inside), Action For Children's fundraising department have taking space and Rubicon Cares are expanding. However, I don't kid myself that there aren't difficult times ahead but I'm sure we will get through them together.

Finally, a quick thank you to all the gang at VAM's " V Team" for the superb repointing job that they did on our car park walls over the last few months. It's much appreciated.

MCSC IN-HOUSE

SERVICES

These are some of the services offered by MCSC:

Photocopying:

- A4 black & white —4p per copy (A3 8p)
- A4 colour—10p (A3 20p) per side
- Brochure collation, stapling and delivery to your office—FREE

Fax service

- 5p per sheet

Laminating

- A4 30p / A3 60p

Reception Service

- Phone answering and message taking service—FREE * only available to members of MCSC Telephony service who can choose to divert calls.

Meeting room equipment:

- OHPs, Flip charts, white boards, P/A system, TV, video, CD/DVD player.
- laptop and multi media projector.
- All items can be requested when making a booking by pressing CTRL and clicking on the items you want.
- Hearing Loop

For more information about these and other services our reception team can offer please contact Jackie Avery on extension 103 or Reception on 101.

MAIDSTONE COMMUNITY SUPPORT CENTRE

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