

Newsletter 11: November 2010

First of all, we are sorry to announce the temporary resignation of Harry Pearson as Secretary of the Mark Wright Project due to ill health. Harry has been a driving force behind the project since its inception and will be much missed; we wish Harry a speedy return to full health. Though maintaining an interest in how we are proceeding, we look forward to when Harry can return to play a full part in the running of the Centre.

Great Scot Award- Unsung Heroes

The Scottish Sunday Mail once again held their campaign to find the unsung heroes and community champions of Scotland as part of the 20th annual Great Scot awards. Teaming up with Morrisons, they were searching the length and breadth of the country to find out who are the people that make us all proud to be Scottish. The prestigious awards ceremony attended by over 750 guests and took place on Saturday 11th September at the Glasgow City Centre Hilton. It is with great pride that we announce that Bob and Jem Wright were winners of an award, now displayed in the Mark Wright Project Centre.

Parcels4Troops

In a successful collaboration with Parcel4troops, the Mark Wright Project with the help of Bonnyrigg Cadet Unit, on Saturday 21 August filled 127 boxes in 55 minutes, which were sent to 1 Scots (based at Dreghorn) currently on a 6 month tour of Afghanistan. The boxes are filled with small luxury items, particularly sweets, are supplied to troops on active service and are a welcome moral boost, as can be verified by the feedback given to parcel4troops from the Units in receipt of the boxes.

GOC Scotland Visits the Centre

Major General David Shaw, the general officer in command of the army's 2nd Division, based in Edinburgh, but with control of Scotland, Northern Ireland and the north of England, visited the Mark Wright Project Centre on Friday 24th September. Over a three hours period Major General Shaw talked with veterans, families and the staff, he appeared impressed with the facilities available and the achievements of the Project.

Remembrance Week

Bob and Jem Wright travelled to London week beginning 8th November. They were involved in a number of remembrance events; Victoria Cross & George Cross Association reception at the Union Jack Club; St Martin-in-the Fields, Service of Remembrance and Re-Dedication; Reception at St James's Palace; Reception at Buckingham Palace; Opening of Lord Ashcroft's Extraordinary Heroes Exhibition at The Imperial War Museum; Airbourne Forces memorial Service, St Lawrence Jewry; and The Festival of Remembrance at The Royal Albert Hall. The highlight for Bob and Jem was meeting Dame Vera Lynn.



Colonel Stuart Tootal's Talk and The Mark Wright Project Anniversary

Colonel Stuart Tootal, who opened the MWP centre, came to Napier University's Craiglockhart campus on Saturday 20th November to talk about his experiences with 3 Para and his book *Danger Close*. After the talk invited guests helped celebrate the first year of the project, and we were lucky to have Jason Issacs (the actor from Harry Potter fame) there to help



Fundraising Activities

Thanks to all the groups and individuals who had helped raised funds for the project. Your support is greatly appreciated.

Royal British Legion Dalkeith: On Friday 30th July, the Royal British Legion Dalkeith hosted a Charity Tribute Night (Neil Diamond, Tom Jones and Elvis) in support of the Mark Wright Project; on the night £2300 was raised.

Scottish Widows: On the 27th August the Edinburgh based Pensions, Insurance and Investments Company held a dress down day, with the proceeds going to the Mark Wright Project, the funds raised on the day amounted to £1200.

St David's Parish Church, Dalkeith: A coffee morning was held on Sunday 12th September, which raised the magnificent sum of £765, which they have donated to the Mark Wright Project.

Gala Concert and Dinner: On Friday 1st October saw Glasgow Kilwinning Lodge No4 host a Gala Concert Dinner celebrating their 275th Anniversary, Bob and Jem, Andrew, Jim George, Anne and Carl Fitzpatrick and Bob and Jane Lorimer travelled through to the Crowne Plaza Hotel; Glasgow to represent the Mark Wright Project to whom all funds raised will be donated. All who attended had a great night and express their thanks to Mr Graeme Campbell and Glasgow Kilwinning Lodge No4 for organising the event. An amazing £4,000 was raised for the Project.

Quiz Night: On Friday 29th October, a charity quiz night was held at Swanston Golf Club in Edinburgh, organised by Anne Fitzpatrick, more than 20 teams entered the competition and the event raised £1,300

Psychic Night: On 18th November, Yvonne Brown and Mary Campbell held a Psychic Night in Dalkeith. This event was a sell-out, as the well-known psychic Ada was the main attraction on the night. £793 was raised for the project.

Unique Beauty Event: Patricia Reynolds of Unique Beauty of Gorebridge, Midlothian held at ladies night, with a buffet, raffles, and a disco and raised £998 for the project.

Since June there have been a number of very successful fund raising events by individuals, to who the Mark Wright Project are very grateful, these include:

- Daniel Wilson raised £550 on 16th June by completing the Lisburn half marathon.
- Nicola Easson and the staff of Kaimes School raised £1300 by abseiling in Blackford quarry on 28th August.
- Maureen Thomson raised £408 by completing the West Highland way in mid-August.
- Dalkeith Fire Station, Blue Watch, on 11th September, raised £500 at their Open day Fundraiser.
- Midlothian Schools, Festival of Music, on 4th November, Midlothian schools held a concert at the Usher Hall in Edinburgh, school children had a collection at the interval in aid of the project and raised £433

- Scott Symington: Scott ran the Athens 10k on 31st October and raise a wonderful £1,700 for the project.



- Sam Larkin: Sam, 14 years of age, piped to raise funds for the project during a trip to Arnhem, and raised £400.



Karting Night: 23 ex-service personnel and their families enjoyed a night a Karting on 30th June. A knock out competition took place involving four rounds, which was a bit scary' at times, as some of the guys took the competition very seriously! A good night was had by all.



Strathyre Weekend: As part of the Mark Wright Project programme of events for ex-Servicemen and women, a group of twelve travelled to Strathyre, where they stayed from the 27th to 29th August in a chalet, hired from the Order of the Knights of St John. Whilst there they enjoyed activities such as pool, snooker, cycling, walking and generally having a stress free weekend. All those who attended commented on how much they had benefitted from their time at Strathyre and thanked Nancy and Linda for all their hard work and cooking skills which had made the weekend such a resounding success. It has been decided to build on this successful formula and a second weekend is in the planning stage for early December.

Archery & Falconry: Dalhousie Castle was the venue for another of the excursions for the veterans; on Saturday 18th September they were able to participate in Falconry and Archery. The day was broken down into two distinct parts; the first couple of hours were taken up by Falconry which was a revelation to those who took part, particularly working with the owls. The group then moved on to Archery, again very much enjoyed by all those participating, with Andrew Brash walking away with the prize hat on the day.



Paintballing: South Queensferry was the next excursions on the 19th September. Although enjoyable, it was not a particularly successful day and all agreed that this would not be an activity which they would undertake in the future.

Horseback UK: In the countryside just outside Aboyne in Aberdeenshire, Horseback UK combines equine therapy, nature therapy and adventure training, as part of a rehabilitation process for serving personnel and veterans from the UK military. 4 ex-servicemen went for the weekend from 22nd to 24th October; had a great time and said it was a wonderful experience.

