

CLAN up close



ISSUE 06 | Spring 2014

As spring and its wonderful colours arrive we can see how the wet and windy winter weather has certainly left an indelible stain on many homes in southern England and we can count ourselves fortunate that we have had a relatively easy time this winter in the north-east.

2014 for CLAN will continue to bring challenges and we must continue to build on all the good work that has been achieved in the past few years and maximise what we have in abundance – goodwill, brand and the reach of our services – partnership and collaboration will be the key words to help us as we continue to adapt to meet the needs of those turning to us for help and support.

Certainly, for CLAN, we are continuing to mark our 30th birthday and we celebrate the work of those who been with us for many years with the introduction of the Long Service Awards. Already this month we have seen the departure of long serving volunteer Vera McAllan and at her retirement tea party many happy memories were shared from her 25 years volunteering in our charity shops.

Partnerships and collaborations, of course, come in many forms – our successful Moray Centre with the support of the former Elgin & District Cancer Support Group – Support Groups using our premises such as UCAN and also fundraising partnerships. One such fundraising partnership is I&K Motors who chose CLAN as their nominated charity last year and after a year-long programme of events to help us mark our special 30th milestone, raised a tremendous £60,000. A truly inspiring partnership that has benefited both organisations.

Other such partnerships are those developed with our Board members and Patrons and at the March Board meeting Sylvia Halkerston officially stepped down. Sylvia joined as a Patron in 2009 while working with Macphies of Glenbervie as HR director and then on her retirement joined as a Board member in 2011. Fellow Board members recognised the impact her contribution, input, hard work and commitment have made over the previous five years. (See photo on back page).

Two other patrons also stepped down at the beginning of the year – Steve and Pauline Cook – both had worked tirelessly over the past seven years as ambassadors and very successful fundraisers who through their involvement in CLAN's events raised in excess of a half a million pounds for CLAN. Again a truly inspiring partnership that has directly benefited so many of our clients.



Debbie

Debbie Thomson,
Chief Executive

10th Anniversary of CLAN's Children & Family Service



Children & Family Service Team (l to r): Dawn Carnegie, Iona Mitchell, Leigh Ryrrie and Lisa Maxwell

This year CLAN's Children & Family Service marks its 10th Anniversary. A cancer diagnosis affects everyone in the family and ten years ago CLAN recognised that there was a need for specialist support for children, young people and their families.

In 2004 a small committee, which then included volunteer Susan Crighton, organised a Masked Ball to raise funds to specifically establish this service. Following the event which raised just over £18,000, CLAN's first Children & Family Support Worker, Eileen Wheeler, was appointed.

Ten years on CLAN now has a dedicated team of four support workers. The service offers support to children, young people and their families throughout Aberdeen City, Aberdeenshire, Moray, Orkney and Shetland. The team are experienced in working with children to allow them space to safely explore and share any feelings, ask questions and be listened to and supported throughout their individual cancer journey. The team are also qualified to undertake bereavement work with children and their families. Support can be delivered to an individual or to the family as a whole, whatever is needed. At CLAN centres there are rooms where children and young people can be seen, however support can also be delivered within the community, at school/nursery settings or in the home environment. The team are currently supporting more than 70 families.

CLAN also recognises the importance of group support and children and young people can also benefit from accessing the established children's or teens' groups. These groups meet on a monthly basis and offer children who are impacted by cancer an opportunity to access a wide range of activities within a peer group who may be experiencing a similar journey or have had related experiences. These activities vary from chocolate making to music workshops. Groups also meet in the school holidays when the team also take the opportunity to organise activities throughout Aberdeenshire, Moray, Orkney and Shetland.

Unique in Scotland, this service continues to grow to meet increasing need. Already this year the team has established a fortnightly presence in Elgin and Inverurie – clients can make appointments in advance or can just drop-in to speak with a member of the team. And look out for a new newsletter specifically for young people later this year.

To find out more, please contact the Children & Family Service Manager, Iona Mitchell at iona.mitchell@clanhouse.org on 01224 647000.

www.clanhouse.org

“Volunteer now – Join our CLAN”

CLAN has a tremendous team of volunteers but we were still looking for more people to join our CLAN – particularly to support our community bases, our fundraising events and our Aberdeen shops.

With the aim of tapping into people’s New Year resolutions to find a new challenge or to give something back to the community, CLAN launched a recruitment campaign at the start of the year.

A huge thank you to Karolina, Jim, George and Liz who agreed to be the face of our campaign – helping to bring the volunteer drive to life on our website, on Facebook and in the local press. To find out what they said about volunteering with CLAN, visit our website at www.clanhouse.org

The campaign has been a success with around 50 people signing up to register their interest in volunteering with us. To find out more about volunteering opportunities at CLAN contact our Volunteer Coordinator, Jane Adams on 01224 647000 or jane.adams@clanhouse.org



Volunteer Recruitment Campaign
Photo (l to r) Jim, Karolina, Liz and George



Valerie Cameron, Volunteer Centre Aberdeenshire presenting award to CLAN Volunteer Coordinator, Jane Adams

What our Volunteers told us

We cannot say too often how much we value our Volunteers – all 407 of them. Without Volunteers we quite simply could not do what we do in our centres, in our shops and at our events. As part of our commitment to provide a meaningful and rewarding experience, we invited our Volunteers to give us some feedback.

Some 157 volunteers from across north-east Scotland, Moray, Orkney and Shetland took part. They told us that they understood CLAN’s services/aims; they had excellent training; they were treated with respect and felt valued; and they were happy with recognition received.

Our Volunteers also made suggestions for improvements and we will be working with them to implement these over the next few months.

In January CLAN was presented with the Volunteer Friendly Award. Jane Adams, Volunteer Coordinator said “This is fantastic recognition of volunteering across CLAN – in our centres, in our shops, at our events and the many other ways in which people help us”.

“Very friendly atmosphere – everyone is helpful and supportive of each other”



CLAN in Stonehaven

The Mearns Cancer Support Group had been offering support in the area for over ten years prior to the amalgamation with CLAN in 2006. CLAN then developed support services in Stonehaven subsequently moving to premises in the town’s Robert Street in 2010.

CLAN’s Chief Executive, Debbie Thomson, said, “Being right in the heart of communities is very important to us as it means that people can access our support and services close to home. In Stonehaven we offer a range of complementary therapies and counselling as well as regular relaxation classes and access to our dedicated children and family support services. Our listening ear and group support service is also invaluable. Many of us just want to protect our families from what we feel within – we don’t want to upset or frighten them – the simple act of sharing can make an enormous difference to the way you feel. I’d encourage anyone to drop in to our centre in Stonehaven to find out more about what’s available locally.”

The Robert Street premises are open Monday (6pm–8.30pm), Wednesday (10am–1.30pm), Tuesday and Thursday (10am–4pm).

Stonehaven also has a very active Friends of CLAN group that helps to raise vital funds and awareness locally.

For more information visit www.clanhouse.org or contact CLAN’s Stonehaven Coordinator Helen Sheen, on 07754 329323.

Up Close with Joan Cowie



Joan first came to CLAN as a volunteer around ten years ago – helping out in reception, in the Centre and at summer shows. In 2009 she joined CLAN as Information Coordinator and looks after CLAN’s library and information service.

CLAN House in Aberdeen has an information centre with an extensive lending library of cancer related and lifestyle books, booklets, leaflets and DVDs. Booklets and information about specific cancers and more general information on, for example, hair loss and diet, are freely available. Each of CLAN’s community bases also has a small information space and lending library with access to all the books and publications in CLAN House. We also provide a signposting service to other sources of help such as support groups and organisations providing specific services, for example benefits advice or travel insurance.

Joan says, “When people have been affected by a cancer diagnosis they often have many questions. Searching through the plethora of information available online and in print can be exhausting and sometimes confusing. Our aim is to help clients find the right information for them. We don’t claim to have all the answers, but what we don’t know we’ll certainly try and find out for you.”

She continues, “Since coming to CLAN I have met so many very special people – clients, volunteers and colleagues. It really is a privilege to sit alongside people at what can be a difficult time and perhaps be able to help a little.”

If you are unable to visit the Centre in person we will be happy to send items in the post. Please just contact our Information Coordinator on library@clanhouse.org or call us on 01224 647000.

As the person who looks after the library it is perhaps no surprise that Joan enjoys reading, going to the theatre and cinema. Having just completed a two-year counselling skills course she has now turned her attention to learning Italian. Joan has also been a volunteer with the Scout Association for more years than she’s prepared to admit to!



CLAN30 and beyond

As CLAN continues to mark thirty years of providing local cancer support and comfort for all, we intend to build on the success of some of the innovative 2013 events.

CLAN's first Landmark Walk last September was beyond any of our expectations and in 2014 we hope the sun will again shine brightly on the event taking place on Sunday 21st September.

It's a huge challenge and one of the biggest is recruiting volunteers to be marshalls. September will again see the Go Purple for CLAN campaign. They certainly did last year – from lighting up Marischal College in Aberdeen to CLAN's purple themed charity shop windows – from changing your hair colour to making purple cakes. Over 30 organisations and many schools got involved last year and we are hoping to encourage more purple themed events this September.

We continue to encourage local companies to nominate CLAN as their chosen charity for one, two or three years. Last year I&K Motors, who were also celebrating their 30th Anniversary, not only ran a year-long programme of events (handing over £60k) but also presented a special registration plate as a lasting memento of this partnership. 'CC11 AAN' adorns the charity's mini-bus which is used to transport clients who are staying at its Haven accommodation to and from Aberdeen hospitals for appointments and treatment.

In 2014 our partnership continues with TAQA who have agreed to sponsor another fabulous Mini for our annual car raffle.



These are, of course, just a few of the many, many ways in which we will continue to raise awareness, funds and mark our 30th anniversary.

CLAN says Thank You to Vera for 25 Years of Volunteering

Vera McAllan initially started volunteering for CLAN in 1989 at the charity's first centre and shop on Justice Mill Lane. After a stint at the charity's shop on Summer Street, Vera moved to CLAN's busy Chapel Street shop and will now retire this month after clocking up 25 years of service for the charity.

This incredible commitment has seen Vera become CLAN's longest serving volunteer and the charity has said thank you for her support with a presentation and tea party at CLAN House in Aberdeen.

Debbie Thomson, CLAN's chief executive, has thanked Vera for her exceptional support of the charity. She said: "Vera's help and passion for volunteering over the last 25 years is incredible and I'm delighted to be able to mark this with a presentation and tea party to say thank you for all her hard work.

"Vera will be dearly missed by all the staff and those who visit our Chapel Street Shop on a regular basis as she was such a well known and friendly face

"Our volunteers are very much at the heart of CLAN and the work they carry out is invaluable to what we do. Vera is a shining example of how people can give up their spare time for CLAN and the benefits that this can bring to those all across the north-east."

Vera McAllan added: "When I first started volunteering for CLAN back in 1989, I never envisaged continuing to do it for so long but I'm really



(l to r) Vera McAllan and CLAN's chief executive, Debbie Thomson, with Vera's friends and colleagues

happy I have as it's a very worthwhile charity that helps so many people across Aberdeen and beyond.

"I've made some really good friends during my very enjoyable time with CLAN and I will miss everyone dearly. CLAN has been an incredibly important part of my life and I will look back on my time volunteering with many fond memories; it's been lovely."

Did you know

..... that some of our Centres offer evening/weekend opening?

Ensuring that our free support services are available and accessible to as many people as possible is very important to us. We understand that it is not possible for everyone to attend during the day which is why some of our Centres are open evenings/weekends – CLAN House in Aberdeen is open Thursday evening and Saturday morning; Stonehaven is open on a Monday evening; Elgin is open on a Tuesday evening; and Orkney is open until 6.00pm on a Wednesday. For details of our opening times for all our bases, please call us on 01224 647000 or visit our website www.clanhouse.org

Social Media

CLAN's new Twitter account and refreshed Facebook pages are already proving popular and are helping us to tell more people who we are, what we do and how they can get involved. Our bi-monthly e-newsletter CLANnow is another way of keeping up to date – to sign up, visit our website.

Join our conversation CLANnow @CLANnow

New year new groups

From Stonehaven to Shetland and all our bases in-between, our groups and activities offer an opportunity for people to come together in a welcoming and supportive environment. CLAN started 2014 by introducing new activities in some of its bases.

At CLAN House in **Aberdeen**, an Eating Well Group, led by nutritional therapist Cathy Clark is running workshops featuring demonstrations and tasting opportunities. The aim is to provide tips and information on foods that help support the body whilst living with cancer.

In a collaboration between CLAN and Aberdeen Royal Infirmary's Burns and Reconstruction Group, a Breast Reconstruction Support Group meets monthly, offering support to women who have had or are considering having breast reconstruction related to breast cancer.

Also monthly a Pre/Post Surgery Breast Cancer Support Group is led by Chris McKay and Yvonne Everton who can share their own experiences and offer support and help regarding the practicalities of wearing breast prosthesis.

In **Elgin**, CLAN has just introduced a weekly relaxation class and a fortnightly craft group. A creative writing group has just started a six-week block and CLAN plans to run further six-week blocks later in the year. These sessions offer an opportunity for clients to express their feelings in writing – something which many people find a very positive and uplifting experience.

Debbie Thomson, CEO of CLAN Cancer Support, said: "Whilst our list of services continues to grow, CLAN has never lost sight of the ultimate aim – to comfort always, helping people to live with and beyond a cancer diagnosis. These groups and activities fit perfectly with that ethos and we are pleased to be able to host them."

To check what's available in your area, please visit our website at www.clanhouse.org or call us on 01224 647000.

Sign Up

To receive regular updates from CLAN, including the quarterly newsletter, CLAN Up Close, visit our website www.clanhouse.org

Events ... Events ... Events

A huge thank you to everyone who has organised, attended or helped at our fundraising events over the last year – we really couldn't do it without you.

Across North East Scotland, Moray, Orkney and Shetland we have so much planned for this year. There really will be something for everyone. We can only list a few here, but do please keep checking our website for all the latest updates www.clanhouse.org or sign up to our regular 'What's On' by contacting steph.dowling@clanhouse.org

Wednesday 23 April

CLAN Lunch, Marcliffe Hotel & Spa, Aberdeen

Friday 25 April

Quiz Night, Buchanhaven Hearties Football Club, Peterhead

Saturday 3 May

The Big Reunion, Orkney

Wednesday 7 May

CLAN Aberdeen Charity Shop Auction

Saturday 10 May

Tartan Trek, Ballater

Saturday 17 May

Plant Sale, CLAN Garden, Orkney

Sunday 18 May

Baker Hughes 10K, Aberdeen Beach

Saturday 22 November

Christmas Cracker, AECC



TREND Magazine 'Life with Style' Awards

CLAN was the Community Award winner last year. Trend Magazine is again running these successful local awards and this year have a "Readers' Award". We all know that CLAN has had a positive impact on the lives of so many here in the north-east and it would be great if you and your friends and family could vote for us. To register your vote visit <http://trendmagazine.co.uk/trend-readers-award/>. Closing date is Friday 23 May 2014. Thank you for your support.



Sylvia Halkerston retires from CLAN's Board. (l to r) Gregory Poon (Vice-Chair), Jackie Allen, Alan Leitch, Sylvia Halkerston, Andrew Spence, Robbie Duncan (Chair) and Bruce Webster. Missing from the photo are Lorraine Smith and Harry Wight.

In our next issue

May 2014

Spotlight on Shetland

Newsletter team – Jane Adams, Ruth Cantrill, Steph Dowling, Gemma Powell, Karen Scott, Tracy Sellar and Maggi Stannard

Contact any member of the team if you have any comments on this edition or ideas for future articles. **Editor:** Joan Cowie, **t:** 01224 651037, **e:** joan.cowie@clanhouse.org



CLAN Cancer Support
CLAN House

120 Westburn Road Aberdeen AB25 2QA

T: 01224 647000 Freephone 0330 440 2526

www.clanhouse.org

A company Limited by Guarantee in Scotland No. 140582
Scottish Charity Ref No SC022606



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Summer