



**The Friendship Project
For Children**

**Newsletter Issue 6
November 2007**

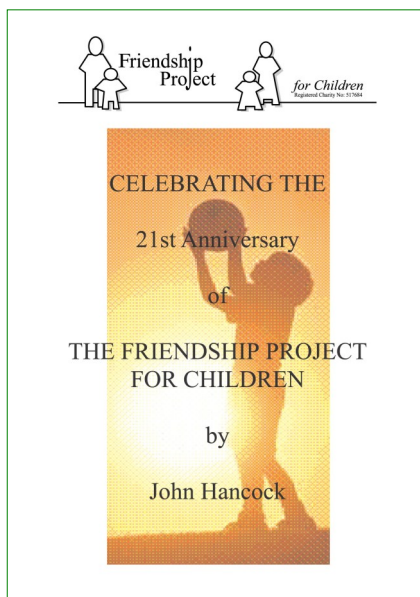
FROM THE CHAIRMAN

Since the last edition of the Newsletter, we have staged a successful Funday as part of our 21st celebrations (reported in this edition). A booklet, celebrating the achievements of the Project over the years containing articles written by members, past and present, recalling their experiences, will be available shortly.

In spite of its age, the Project is still expanding, with a new branch having opened at Southam and links established with Coventry University. A debate has begun on the future structure and organisation of the Project. Our mission, aims and objectives will remain the same but, hopefully, the management of our service will be streamlined.

Thank you for your work and support of the Friendship Project.

John Hancock, Chairman



21 years of the Friendship Project

John Hancock, has produced a booklet to mark the twenty-first anniversary of the Project. Charting its history and plans for the future, he also pays tribute to the many people who have contributed to its success by giving of their time, talents and money. The booklet contains many personal accounts from Older Friends and moving poems written by Younger Friends.

Copies of the booklet are available from John Hancock, e-mail: john@friendshipproject.co.uk tel: 01926 513065, or Sue Bourne, tel: 024

7636 8257, e-mail: sue@friendshipproject.co.uk, at £4.00 each including postage and packing, please make cheques payable to 'The Friendship Project for Children'. Proceeds from the booklet will go to the continuing work of the Project.



Funders

This year, the following organisations and individuals have generously donated funds to the Friendship Project.

Lloyds TSB
Coventry Building Society
Noel Buxton Trust
Local Network Fund
Heart of England Coop
3i Solihull
Stratford Town Trust
Henry Smith Charity
Godfrey Payton Trust
Bewley Charitable Trust

King Henry VIII Endowed Trust
Joanies Trust
Leamington Spa Rotary Club
Warwick Rotary Club
Holly Ball Committee
Kenilworth Lions Club
Warwick Lions Club
John Vallis
John Hancock
David Wright

Ed's Word

As Christmas and New Year approaches, most of us get a little reflective and I am no exception. This is a time when we spend so much time wondering about what gifts to buy for family and friends.

One of the most precious gifts anyone can give is time. How often do we hear folks say 'If only I had the time...'? It is a sad reflection on the world that so very many charities, like ours, have to exist, but the Friendship Project is made up of some of the most generous people in the world, simply because they can spare a few precious hours for kids who just need a bit of time with an older person.

So to all the Older Friends, if the aches and pains twinge a bit, think of the youngsters out there in whose lives you have made and are making a difference. And as you are wondering about what to give for Christmas, remember, the best gifts don't have to cost a fortune!

A very happy Christmas and New Year.

Sue Bourne, Editor
Sue@friendshipproject.co.uk



Julie Ramezani

Julie was our longest serving Coordinator having been responsible for our Rugby operation for 5 years. During this time she demonstrated great commitment to the Project and, whilst studying at Warwick University, built the number of friendships in Rugby to the highest level.



Following graduation in 2006, Julie has been employed as a Teaching Assistant at Guilsborough School in Northamptonshire. She has found it difficult to devote sufficient time to the Project in recent months and has decided to step down as Coordinator. We hope that her experience will not be lost and that she will be able to contribute, in some capacity, to the work of the Project.

We are most grateful for her contribution.

John Hancock

Funday, June 9th 2007

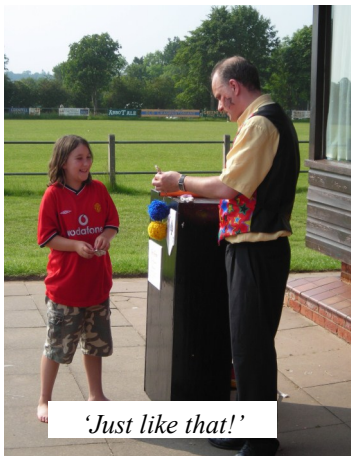


Face painting outside the Club House with its excellent facilities

Older and Younger Friends had a great time at the Old Leamingtonians Rugby Club on one of the few very hot and sunny days of the year, for a day full of fun and laughter.

The Funday was a good opportunity for the Younger Friends to enjoy each other's company and make new friends. A wonderful mixture of Trustees, Coordinators, Older and Younger Friends came from all over Warwickshire to enjoy a fun packed day.

The day gave the children a great opportunity to enjoy themselves and be able to play and run around outdoors in safety. An excellent young face painting artist was kept busy for most of the day 'disguising' many of the Younger Friends.



'Just like that!'

Drinks were available throughout the day from the Club House.

Other entertainments on the day were a Disco, delicious Bar-B-Q and a bouncy castle - always a great favourite with youngsters.



Magician and his assistant

Perhaps the highlight of the day was the Magician, 'maestro' Matt Redmond, an Older Friend from the Atherstone Branch. He had great rapport with the children, and gave a thoroughly entertaining performance which captivated his audience.



Phew! Time to relax for a while

At 5 p.m. it was time to go home, everyone happy and tired, having had a lovely day.

A big thank you to everyone who helped to make the day such a success, to the Rugby Club, to Cheryl for the photographs and to all who came along. Ed.

TWENTY ONE YEARS AND STILL GROWING

This has been a very active year for the Project. After all this was the year that we celebrated our 21st year of helping children in need and in that time who knows exactly how many children between the ages of 6 and 16 we have helped - but it must run into thousands! This year we had two important events celebrating those 21 years. First there was our March Cantabile concert at St Giles Church, Bedworth and then in June we had a Funday at Leamington.

But behind the scenes other major things have been happening.

We completed our first ever audit of what parents/carers feel about the effect that our Project is having on their child's lives and I'm pleased to say that we were praised on all fronts. The quality of our volunteers was considered exceptional and the activities that they were involving their Younger Friends in was described as extremely varied. The Younger Friends were asked for their comments and they without exception said that they always looked forward to the time spent with their Older Friend.

Earlier this year we opened our sixth branch at Southam with Kelly Woodward acting as our Branch Coordinator there. Unfortunately Julie Ramazani has found it necessary to resign from the Project for personal reasons and we take this opportunity of thanking her for the excellent work over the years. We have taken the opportunity to restructure the north of the county and now Lois Hamson is Branch Coordinator for the whole of North Warwickshire covering the Atherstone, Nuneaton and Rugby areas. In the south Helen James and Kelly Woodward will continue as the Branch Coordinators covering Warwick, Stratford and Southam.

However we are reintroducing the post of Group Supporter to both the North and South of the county to lighten the load on the Branch Coordinators so if any of you Older Friends would be interested in being a Group Supporter please talk to you Branch Coordinator about what it involves.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who works for the Project whether as Branch Coordinators, Group Supporters or Older Friends and also a Merry Christmas and a Happy 2008.

Pete Aldersley, Operations Manager
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