

# Season's Greetings



Christmas Newsletter 2015

## Message from the new Co-ordinator - Maxine Raphael

Dear Friends of the Barbara Bus Fund, welcome to my first Christmas Newsletter.

I was delighted to start as Co-ordinator in March succeeding Julia following her retirement after 20 interesting years of service. The office is now staffed by myself (Thursday, Friday), Irene (Monday, Tuesday) and Melanie (Wednesday). We are very lucky to have the occasional cover from Julia and also Debbie who has supported us in the office for a number of years.

My background is in the transport industry covering international operations in road haulage, passenger transport as well as some time working in the care sector. I feel extremely lucky to have found this role with Barbara Bus Fund and will endeavour to honour Barbara's memory to the best of my ability.

*"We have found the Bus invaluable, many, many thanks"*

### **Vehicles**

We currently operate 11 vehicles from Royal National Orthopaedic Hospital, Stanmore, 1 from Stoke Mandeville Hospital, 3 from Barbara Bus Fund Gwynedd, Wales and 1 from Pinderfields Hospital, Wakefield.

*"Thank you for the many occasions we were able to take my mother out"*



### **New vehicle**

In June we took delivery of GEORGE (new) which is a 3-wheelchair X-LWB Renault Master and is proving to be a very popular, comfortable ride.

*"As always I am very grateful to you all for all you have done on my behalf"*

### **Vehicles for sale**

We have two vehicles for sale – PAM – 05-Citroen Dispatch, 1 wheelchair space and 4 seats including the driver, and GEORGE which is a MWB Renault Master with 3 wheelchair spaces and 5 seats including the driver. Please contact the office for information about these vehicles.

*"Thank you so much for lending us your car. My husband had a lovely birthday out with his girls and friends. So grateful."*

### **Very Sad News**

Sadly I have to bring you the news of the death in January of a highly-respected and greatly missed driver John Jones. He had been a volunteer driver for many years from the early days of The Barbara Bus Fund and was a highly-regarded and valuable volunteer driver. Julia spoke at John's funeral, not only as a colleague but as a friend too.

*"We are very grateful to you and the volunteer drivers who have helped my son get to his activities."*

### **Volunteer Drivers**

We no longer have the services of Eric Sanger who skipped off to paid employment leaving lots of gaps as he undertook many drives on a regular basis. Peter Rich has also hung up his driving gloves to spend more time with his family. We would like to thank them both for their loyal support over many years.

Unfortunately due to high demand, we are not always able to provide the volunteer driver service but I would like to take this opportunity to sincerely thank our volunteer drivers who enable us to provide the reliable and friendly service we do. We have to think in quality not quantity. However, if you know of anyone who would be interested in giving a little time to drive passengers who otherwise would not be able to get out, even for the routine journeys like the dentist or medical appointments, please do contact the office, details overleaf. There is a particular need for drivers who are happy to drive the larger vehicles and also weekend drivers.

Volunteer drivers are enormously valued and are an essential part of the service that the Barbara Bus Fund offers.

*"I would like to thank Barbara Bus and your wonderful driver for making our annual trip to Kew such an enjoyable one"*

### Passengers

We are very pleased to have been able to provide the service to many passengers this year including some travelling from America and Australia to visit the UK. They told us that without the Barbara Bus Fund they wouldn't have been able to make their trips.

*"Many thanks for the good work your charity provides."*

### Donations

We would like to thank everyone for their kind and generous donations including the organisations who chose us to be their recipient at coffee mornings, garden parties and other events. It would be difficult to list everybody who has so thoughtfully donated but we must mention one:

Pinner and Harrow Lions chose Barbara Bus Fund as one of the recipients at their "Meet the Lions" evening in April. Irene's husband was very involved with the Lions for many years and Irene and Dave were able to go along to accept the donation and enjoy the evening. Donations have also been made in memory of passengers who have used Barbara Bus Fund vehicles. The donations we receive are vital for the continuing operation of the Barbara Bus Fund and if you would like to make a contribution you can send us a cheque to the address below; you can pop into the office with cash; you can obtain our bank details and set up a direct debit; make a one off payment or you can go to [www.justgiving.com/bbf](http://www.justgiving.com/bbf) and follow the simple instructions. Please don't forget that if you are a UK taxpayer you can increase the value of your donation at no extra cost to you by completing a Gift Aid declaration when donating.

*"Thank you for the brilliant service you have given me and my nan"*

### Lost property

We seem to have accumulated rather a lot of interesting lost property recovered from the vehicles. If you have mislaid an item: cufflinks, hoodie, wheelchair foot plates and other things, please contact the office and we hope to be able to reunite you with your possessions.

*"Thank you for the fantastic facility of the BBs"*

### News

We always love to hear news from our users and have received some wonderful photographs and stories about how having use of a Barbara Bus vehicle has enabled people to do things they otherwise would struggle to or not be able to do at all. Please do let us know your stories and we may use them in the news section of our website.

*"I would very much like to thank you and all concerned who work so diligently to provide this wonderful and uplifting service"*

### Book

Penny White who was a nurse and friend of Barbara's wrote a book which tells Barbara's story and how her vision for a Barbara Bus Fund came to be a reality. 'Barbara – Girl of Courage' by Penny White has recently been re-printed and updated. It is available to purchase through the office.

*"Lovely trip down by the river in Windsor, many thanks"*

### Greeting from the Chairman – Richard Holland

Another very busy year for us all and one that has seen a number of changes. We were sad to see Julia retire after many years of dedicated service, but have been really fortunate to find Maxine who has settled in very well and we are already benefitting from her many years in the transportation industry.

We are always keen to hear of any suggestions for improvements, so if you have any please let the office know – especially in areas such as how to address the increasing problem we are seeing with vehicle damage.

Thanks to all who have and continue to support the Barbara Bus Fund in everything that it does to enable us to provide the unique and much needed service.



*Wishing you all a peaceful and happy  
Christmas and the very best for 2016*