

*Dear Friends of the Barbara Bus Fund,
Seasons' greetings and a warm welcome to our 2018 and
very special 50th anniversary Christmas newsletter.*

2018 Christmas newsletter



Celebrating 50 years

50th Anniversary celebration

On a beautiful, sunny afternoon in June we held the Barbara Bus Fund 50th anniversary celebration. It was held in the grounds of the RNOH and was attended by Barbara's family, staff and volunteers of the BBF and many users and friends.

We had afternoon tea with entertainment by One Voice Watford community choir and New Strathspey Highland Dancers. The day would not have been possible without the support of the RNOH who provided the venue, and award winning Radio Brockley who provided the sound and were great company.



1968 - 2018



Greetings from the Chairman – Richard Holland MBE



It has been a milestone year for the BBF celebrating 50 years.

Looking back it is amazing to see that the Charity which my aunt started here at the RNOH, back in 1968, has developed in the way it has. The BBF has held fast to Barbara's original ethos of providing a service with adapted vehicles to those who need them, without any financial restrictions imposed.

It is such a shame that Barbara is no longer with us to see that her original idea which resulted in the first vehicle being purchased largely from money raised at a fete at the RNOH, has now become a Charity that currently has 17 vehicles in 5 locations spread across the country.

The reason for what has been achieved over the years is quite simple: it was then, and still is now due to the on-going support of so many people. This includes the board of volunteer trustees, coordinators, volunteer drivers, supporters and support functions required which enable us to provide the service that we do, and for which I am deeply grateful. This is also true of the generosity of those who assist us financially with donations because as you can imagine it is costly to run a Charity such as ours.

Looking ahead to the next 50 years, I'm sure they will be interesting and exciting times. Not least due to the developments at the RNOH where we have our head office and 10 of our vehicles since the beginning. However I'm sure that the successful partnership the Charity has always had with the RNOH will remain long into the future and I thank them for their continued support. We will also continue to see how we can extend our reach across the country to enable as many people with disabilities as possible to benefit from what we offer.



Greetings from the Coordinator and BBF office team

We have had another fabulous year with the added excitement of being part of the 50th year of the Barbara Bus Fund. Again we would like to thank everyone who has helped support us to do what we do which would just not be possible without you all. You support us, you make us smile and you bring us inspirational stories of strength in the face of adversity.

This year we have supported long-term passengers and drivers, and welcomed new ones who have gone off on holiday, attended family events and visited attractions throughout the UK and into Europe and the Republic of Ireland. We have provided vehicles for passengers who have travelled from America and Australia, making their trip possible by having access to suitable vehicles.

This year from November 2017 to October 2018 we saw 1096 volunteer drives carried out by our fabulous volunteer drivers and 2019 self-drives. We also carried out 105 vehicle demonstrations.

We saw vastly different patterns of user requirements due to the prolonged winter snow and the very hot summer weather which provided interesting and different challenges for us to get our teeth into. We very much look forward to what the next year will continue to bring.



Maxine, Irene and Melanie



Dear Team, thank you once again for allowing us to use your vehicle for our grandson whilst his parents have a well deserved break.

Volunteer Drivers

The Barbara Bus Fund is able to provide this invaluable service because of the dedication and unwavering support of its volunteer drivers. The drivers carry out drives for passengers who do not have anyone else to drive them. This can be for many reasons but without the volunteer drivers these passengers would not be able to get to where they need to go. Volunteer drivers freely give of their time to help others.

We would like to take this opportunity to show our appreciation for everything they do, our current drivers and all those who have helped along the way to support the Barbara Bus Fund and its passengers.

As well as driving passengers to various destinations, there are promotional and social events throughout the year that drivers are very welcome to attend including the annual driver meal in January.



If you or someone you know would like to join the team of drivers, please contact the office for further information.

Thank you so very much for allowing us to borrow one of your buses to enable us to take some of our residents out and about. Over 20 of our residents have been treated to days out to Odds Farm, Cliveden House the RAF Museum and the river at Boulton Lock. Everyone who went on the trips had a fantastic time and this is only possible with the support of your organisation.

Trustees

The Board of Trustees is currently made up of 8 members headed by the Chairman Richard Holland MBE. The Board meets every 6-8 weeks at the RNOH and works tirelessly behind the scenes to support the office staff with the running of the BBF. Trustees are also volunteers and freely give of their time with a wealth of knowledge and experience, humour and humility. The Board of Trustees works to ensure the correct and ethical operation of the Fund, upholding Barbara's ethos to secure the future of the BBF.

Trustees also attend various events including the annual driver meal.

The Trustees are Barbara's nephew, Occupational Therapists who worked with Barbara when she was an inpatient at the RNOH, users and drivers of the BBF.

If you or someone you know feel you could offer time and experience and would be interested in joining the Board, please contact the office.

We are very grateful to the Trustees for their dedication, support and wisdom.

We also want to say thank you from the bottom of our hearts for making this trip a reality! When I am stuck in bed because of health issues I dream about our adventures and look at pictures. Without the van this would not happen. Thank you so VERY much!

Office staff

The office is run by three part-time staff. Maxine the Coordinator and Irene and Melanie the assistant coordinators. Maxine joined in March 2015 following the retirement of Julia. Julia had been with the Fund for 20 years and was the first coordinator who was recruited following the death of Barbara's friend Frankie. Frankie had taken over the coordinator role after Barbara's death in 1995.

Irene has been with the Fund for 14 years and Melanie for almost 9 years.

The staff manage the fleet of vehicles for Stanmore and Stoke Mandeville and organise the day-to-day bookings.

The office is open Monday to Friday 1000 – 1600.

We wish to thank you for all the help you continue to give us on Christmas Day when we provide a Christmas lunch for the elderly, disabled and lonely residents in the community. We arrange transport for all our guests provided by our team of volunteer drivers and really appreciate using the 'Barbara Bus'.

Vehicles

The Barbara Bus Fund is fortunate to operate modern vehicles which have all been converted to a very high standard. BBF has a fleet management policy where vehicles are kept on the fleet for 7 years. If you would be interested in purchasing an ex-BBF vehicle please contact the office. There have been no new vehicles purchased this year. The office staff and drivers ensure that vehicles are regularly inspected, maintained and cleaned with the help of long-standing support from Kendell Cars and Zoomm.

All vehicles are named after Barbara's family and people special to her:

Gwynedd, North Wales

DANNY is named after
JOHN is named after Richard's father
RON is named after a previous treasurer from the early days

**Rose and
George**

National Spinal Injuries Centre, Stoke Mandeville Hospital

BARBARA

Pinderfields Hospital, Wakefield

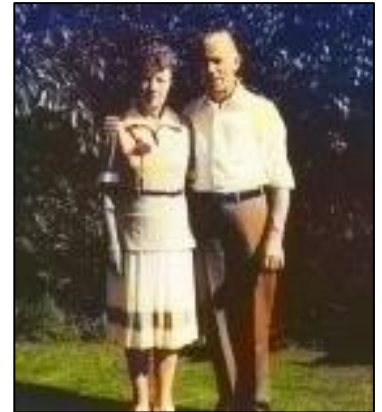
ALEX is named after Alex whose family donated the bus to the SURF at Pinderfields

Princess Royal Spinal Cord Injuries Centre, Northern General Hospital, Sheffield

BILL is named after Bill Seaton who was Barbara's friend and first volunteer driver of the Barbara Bus Fund

Royal National Orthopaedic Hospital, Stanmore

SUE is named after Richard's wife
FRANKIE is named after Barbara's friend who became the coordinator following Barbara's death and held the board meetings in her home providing delicious snacks
RICHARD is named after the Chairman Richard Holland MBE. Richard has been the Chairman for over 20 years and was deservedly awarded his MBE in June 2016 by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II
BETH is named after Richard and Sue's daughter
LES is named after Barbara's Uncle and brother of GEORGE
MARGARET is named after BBF's Treasurer and sadly died in 2014
PAM is named after Barbara's sister, Richard's mother
CHARLOTTE is named after Richard and Sue's daughter
ROSE after Barbara's mum
GEORGE is named after Barbara's dad



Barbara and the history of the Barbara Bus Fund

Barbara Werndly was a young woman with ideas beyond her time. Her vision and tenacity, along with help from staff at the RNOH is the reason for the Barbara Bus Fund and its long-term success.

Following Barbara's admission to the RNOH at the age of 13 due to paralysis caused by polio, Barbara wanted to provide a way for her fellow inpatients to get out and about. With this idea firmly in mind, Barbara set up the 'Barbara Bus Fund' and fundraised to purchase the first bus in 1969.

Whilst battling multiple health issues and discomfort, and facing the restrictions these brought, Barbara not only wrote many letters asking for financial support, she ran the fund from her hospital bed and also wrote thank you letters to everyone who made a donation and supported the Fund.

This was all done without modern advertising platforms, social media, computers and mobile phones.

Always with a smile on her face, Barbara touched so many people and it is a testament to her strength of character that she achieved so much.



Barbara at her first fundraising fete

Barbara working on the switchboard at the RNOH



We think Barbara would be delighted with success of her 'Barbara Bus Fund'



Barbara spent a long time having to lay on her stomach. Here she is enjoying a visit from Princess Diana

Barbara shopping in Brent Cross



Barbara "girl of courage" is available from the office. Written by Penny White who as a young nurse cared for Barbara at the RNOH, the book details Barbara's amazing life. The book will be available as a talking book and in electronic form sometime during early 2019, keep an eye on the website for updates.

Barbara
"girl of courage"



Penny White

We would like to take this opportunity to thank you for the support you have given the Barbara Bus Fund over the year and wish you and your family a very happy festive season with all best wishes for 2019

Contact

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<https://www.facebook.com/Barbara-Bus-Fund-1248706611874500/>



@barbarabusfund

You can donate by:

Sending a cheque to the BBF Head Office at RNOH

Making a donation via www.justgiving.com/bbf

Signing up to <https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/barbarabusfund/>

