



23 April 2015

Dear Companion,

### **SPRING 2015 NEWSLETTER**

‘By their fruits ye shall know them’ Mat 7:20

#### **CHAIRMAN’S MESSAGE**

Firstly, many thanks if I may to Alice for all her brilliant and reliable work as Secretary. I personally owe her a huge debt for ensuring in so far as she could that I stayed on top of emails, agendas, minutes, meetings and reports! But I am sure I speak for all Companions in thanking her for all her hard work.

Every cloud has a silver lining though, and I am more than delighted to welcome Annie Eyre as our new Secretary, and thank her for agreeing to take on what I trust will not be too onerous a role. Annie’s official email is [secretary.companions@gmail.com](mailto:secretary.companions@gmail.com).

Thanks also to Brendan in Oxford who has worked tirelessly and very effectively to take forward our operations at the University. We wish him well in his move to London, to start his legal career, and hope to see him at our London activities. Welcome in turn to Simon Whittle of St.Benet’s Hall, we thank him for taking over and promise our full support to help the OUCoM continue on the marvellous course set by Brendan (see further below).

Thus, to highlight a few of the fantastic things that have been going on since our end of January Winter newsletter:

- East Anglia CoM, Georgie Holt-Evans and Adrian Rowley and a devoted group of CoM helpers (Tara, Tina, Cadie (in her lunch hour), Cathie) have now launched a small lunchtime soup kitchen in a local Catholic parish hall. Mark B and I were delighted to visit and see it in operation, and enjoy the toasted sandwiches. Importantly I think this shows the CoM Café is scaleable and can be repeated elsewhere...
- The Birmingham Reunion was a great success with considerable support given by and for the CoM. Thanks to James Arbuthnot particularly for involving the CoM and to Sarah for her inspiring presentation to encourage CoM/volunteers into the OSJCT Care Homes.
- In London, 10 more Monday LIF soup runs since our last newsletter means we reckon to have topped the 20,000 meals mark. This project is seeing increasing support thanks to Paddy Knollys and loyal workers such as Mr & Mrs Maurice Denman and many others.

- Meanwhile, the Thursday CoM Café, thanks to a huge group of loyal CoM/volunteers, is going strong, with some 50/60 homeless/guests each week and good numbers of volunteers; Philippa Leslie's excellent film made with the cooperation of some of our regulars (both guests and Companions) tells the story, sadly it is not yet on general release, but I can send you the link on request.
- Gloucestershire & Wiltshire recently held a very successful session organised with the help of Lee Palmer to introduce more Companions to volunteering in the OSJCT Care Homes, this is a wonderful step forward in developing our ties and will be repeated in Cheltenham in early Summer (see below for details).
- Ponchos, we have now taken delivery of 500 good quality CoM branded Ponchos. The ponchos are obviously useful for the homeless to keep dry on rainy days but also as bedding or cover at night. The £2955 plus VAT cost has been paid for by our subscriptions and a (first) bequest to the CoM of £15,000 specifically for our work with the homeless.
- I should also mention a successful Companions Day on 11 February 2015 (the Feast of Our Lady of Lourdes) with prayers/masses said around the country. Thank you.

### **CoM & OSJCT Care Homes 'Working together'**

Lee very kindly compiled for us a list of funding needs for OSJCT Homes over the Easter period, and, following council approval, I am delighted to report that we were able to action this, providing funds of up to £175 or more where a specific project required it. A copy of the list is attached, including details of the project and the precise amounts provided. I have again been inundated with thanks and photographs from the homes, and attach some that best reflect the difference your support makes.

Don Wood head of the OSJCT Trustees very kindly wrote in advance of the April BASMOM Council meeting, 'I will be highlighting – and celebrating – the wonderful contribution in terms of time and money that the Companions have recently been making to OSJCT homes. As well as the efforts you describe in your report [to the BASMOM Council], I have also heard from the Trust itself about what you are all doing. These really are splendid achievements and I hope you can convey to [Companions] how much the OSJCT trustees appreciate what you are doing for our residents.'

### **Governance Review**

As you may know from previous reports the proposed restructuring of BASMOM to form an incorporated charity means the formal constitution of the CoM must also change. However, the change for us is really a matter of form rather than substance. Hence in the same way we presently operate as part of Hospitaller Ltd, we will stay within and remain an integral part of the new BASMOM charity.

Further, the proposed Terms of Reference and allied Volunteering Policy reflect closely our existing Statutes. I am happy to provide copies of these on request and they will of course be made available at the upcoming AGM, when they will be promulgated for approval. If you cannot get to the AGM, you are welcome should you wish to let me have any comments in advance. All CoM monies, including subscriptions, will continue to be held on trust impressed with the same charitable purposes for which they are donated as at present.

### **Safeguarding**

Further work is being done to align the databases of the CoM, BASMOM and OMV, to ensure common applications and DBS checking procedures. This joint project was taken forward at a 2nd joint meeting recently. Valerie Brasse who sat on the Cumberledge Commission is helping us with an internal audit of our safeguarding procedures, with a view to optimising our process and organisation.

If you would like sight of the joint BASMOM/CoM/OMV Safeguarding Policy, it will shortly be up on our website.

In line with the above, Paola our Safeguarding Officer will soon be a counter-signatory and able to carry out our DBS checking. Her brief is principally to ensure that all regional and activity leaders are up to date with their DBS forms, to progressively increase the number of DBS'd Companion volunteers, and to ensure that all activities/events with CoM participation are properly risk assessed.

### **And some further news from Our Regions:-**

**Birmingham & West Midlands: Adrian de Redman [[blue.candle2@hotmail.com](mailto:blue.candle2@hotmail.com) – 07799 188 628]**

Other exciting news from Birmingham is that our BrumComs are expanding their operations with a non-metropolitan group lead locally by Fr Anthony and James Arbuthnot. Whilst back in the City there is plainly a desire to increase our activities, and Adrian aided by other Companions and members of the Order are looking at the possibilities.

Meanwhile meetings continue after the 11.00am Pilgrims Mass at the Birmingham Oratory on the first Saturday of each month except August, you would very be welcome, so do get along if you can and of course contact Adrian if you need help getting there.

As for diary dates, the Newman Pilgrimage will be taking place on 6 June 2015. Thanks as always to our lovely BrumCoMs, for their continuing efforts, Masses, meetings and prayers.

**East Anglia: Georgie Holt-Evans ([georgie@holtevans.plus.com](mailto:georgie@holtevans.plus.com))**

As mentioned above Georgie Holt-Evans and Adrian Rowley and a devoted group of CoM helpers (Tara, Tina, Cadie (in her lunch hour), Cathie) have now launched a Colchester, Companions Café every Wednesday lunchtime.



Adrian and guests at the Colchester Café, in full swing for Easter (note the eggs). If you are in the area please do lend a hand. The more the merrier.

**Scotland (and Dial a Ride): Liam Devlin [[liam@liamdevlin.co.uk](mailto:liam@liamdevlin.co.uk) – 07968 119 895]**

I am delighted to say that following our grant of £10,000 to our own Order of Malta Dial-a-Journey Ltd (OMDAJ), to help toward the cost of a new minibus for the door-to-door service, plus support from the Scottish Government and other donors, OMDAJ are about to take delivery of their first replacement mini bus. I will keep you informed of the launch details and endeavor to follow the story of this vehicle as it goes into service.

Meanwhile in Scotland, Liam is working on establishing a new role for the CoM Centre in addition to the Mother and Toddler group that is continuing its use. All help and support, and *ideas* gratefully received.

**The Northern Marches: Fred Wyrley-Birch [[f.wyrley-birch@andersonandgarland.com](mailto:f.wyrley-birch@andersonandgarland.com) – 07790 132 834]**

The Northumberland Tea Parties are proving a great success, thank you to Alice and all of you who are supporting and helping with these. So much so in fact, that we are looking to roll out something similar in London.



The Tea Parties take place regularly on the second Wednesday of each month from 2pm-4pm and we are very hopeful that the numbers will grow as word spreads.

**Gloucestershire & Wiltshire: Sarah Cornell [[sarahcornell@sky.com](mailto:sarahcornell@sky.com) – 07817 499 829]**

As part of our drive to develop our involvement and work with the OSJCT Care Homes, on the Feast of the Annunciation, eight Companions met with Lee Palmer, the Head of Volunteering for OSJ, at Fives Court, Mere. We started with prayers led by the Reverend Colin Fox, before discussing how the CoM could help. It was good to meet with the Friends of Fives.

We are planning another visit with Companions to one of the homes in the Cheltenham area in the early summer. If you would like to attend, please drop Sarah a line.

Meanwhile, several Companions are supporting the work of Signpost on a Monday night. Signpost is a small organization in Cirencester, helping the homeless and marginalized. It was with them that we were able to distribute 100 of the CoM Christmas boxes for the homeless in the area. To develop this partnership we have also agreed to fund the cost of a coach to take some local needy families on a summer outing, kids who wouldn't otherwise get to the seaside or have any kind of proper holiday.

**Oxford University CoM: Michael Brendan Brett [[Michael.brett@some.ox.ac.uk](mailto:Michael.brett@some.ox.ac.uk)] or John Eidinow OM [[john.eidinow@stb.ox.ac.uk](mailto:john.eidinow@stb.ox.ac.uk)]**

Oxford University CoM are doing so much they even have their own Newsletter, please see their latest which is attached, its terrific! Any children/friends/Godchildren at Oxford, please point them in the right direction...

**South East: Jamie O'Meara [[jamie.omeara@btinternet.com](mailto:jamie.omeara@btinternet.com) – 07771 566 100]**

Jamie is looking forward to the Spring and Summer seasons to develop our involvement at St. Wilfrids OSJCT Home, Arundel. It is hoped that we can put together a small team to help with their Summer Party.

Please be in touch with him, to help with this and other plans, including further care home visits over the coming weeks. It would be great if the South East were to lead the way with the Companions Car Club, building at least a small group of regulars to get the elderly to Mass of a Sunday or in the week.

**London: Alice Hinds [[aahind91@gmail.com](mailto:aahind91@gmail.com) 07528917226 & Patrick Knollys [[6atrack@knollys.co.uk](mailto:6atrack@knollys.co.uk)]**

Thank you to all the Thursday volunteers and Patrick's Monday teams for their unstinting efforts. Particular thanks to Jude and others who kept the CoM Café open over the Easter holidays.

Dropping in last Thursday, it is wonderful to see so many Companions and guests in happy and sometimes animated conversation about everything from the sell off of Housing Association homes and leaving the EU to the rare quality of Richard's soups and the cakes from Bonne Bouche.

We are now helping to feed some 200 people per week at a cost of some £150pw. It is incredible how much food is provided by EAT that would otherwise be discarded, and equally remarkable how quickly these supplies are snapped up on Monday's by the long queues of the hungry and homeless in Lincoln's Inn Fields and by our Thursday guests.

Thanks to you we also have a new supply of 5000 of our CoM carrier bags which are incredibly popular with the homeless, as well as 2 new trolleys at £25.86 to collect sandwiches etc from our suppliers on Thursdays.

Lastly for now, inspired by the achievements in Northumberland, Companions in London are planning to roll out their own tea parties for the elderly and lonely, to provide chat, cakes and tea. If you would like to help Laura and Tatty get this off the ground please do give me a call/email (0773 007 0403/[pletman@3sharecourt.com](mailto:pletman@3sharecourt.com)).

**South West: Duncan McKechnie, [[dajmck@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:dajmck@tiscali.co.uk) - 07990 594 441]**

The St. Rose School activity holiday at the Exmoor Calvert Trust is getting very near – 18 to 23 May 2015. Thanks that is to your subscriptions that provided £2,429 so that this could go ahead. I know the picture below was in the last newsletter, but I couldn't resist as it really shows what a super project this is.



If you are able to attend the opening Mass, that would be hugely appreciated. Also if you know of any younger CoM or likely candidates, who say are on their gap year or doing their Duke of Edinburgh Award and would like to assist with the camp do please be in touch with Duncan.

**Overseas**

I can do no better than send the text of Anton’s message following our £1000 donation,

***Greetings from Bethlehem ..!***

***First, by the name of all the families who received your generous support, and I would like to thank you for thinking of the Christian families in Bethlehem. Re your request. please find below all payment details :***

***The amount received from the Holy Family Hospital was US\$ 1462.21 (bank cheque), I deposited it in my bank and decided to divide this amount among 12 very needy families, paid to each family by a bank cheque, as follows [I have removed the surnames for privacy reasons] :***

<u>Name</u>	<u>Cheque #</u>
<b><i>Gabriel G</i></b>	<b><i>20952476</i></b>
<b><i>Doris M</i></b>	<b><i>20952467</i></b>
<b><i>Samir O</i></b>	<b><i>20952470</i></b>
<b><i>Elen D</i></b>	<b><i>20952466</i></b>
<b><i>Mike Z</i></b>	<b><i>20952475</i></b>
<b><i>Basil M</i></b>	<b><i>20952479</i></b>
<b><i>Elen S</i></b>	<b><i>20952477</i></b>
<b><i>Huda B</i></b>	<b><i>20952474</i></b>
<b><i>George S</i></b>	<b><i>20952473</i></b>
<b><i>Mary A</i></b>	<b><i>20952468</i></b>

*Widad N*  
*Fuad H*

*20952469*  
*20952471*

*All checks have been cleared as per the attached bank statement, also attached a copy of the check receipt from the Holy Family Hospital  
May God bless you and to all members who helped in this concern*

*Tony (Anton) Mousallam*

In the light of this successful distribution, and I hope with your support and approval, the CoM council have resolved to repeat this gift and continue our help for these deserving families.

**Key Dates**

- 01 to 07 May 2015**      **Lourdes Pilgrimage including the CoM AGM**
- 16 May 2015**              **CoM/Newman Society Garden Party (Oxford)**
- 18 to 21 May 2015**      **St.Rose Activity Camp**
- 03 June 2015**              **Golf Tournament Fundraiser, run by Christopher Cornell** in aid of OSJ Paternoster House, Signpost and Care for Casualties. Bbq after. Details from Sarah 01284642876.or [CRCKF@sky.com](mailto:CRCKF@sky.com).
- 23 June 2015**              **Walsingham Fundraiser, Bowling Evening in London**, contact [hletman@gmail.com](mailto:hletman@gmail.com) or jack
- 24 June 2015**              **St.John's Day, Service at the Brompton Oratory**
- 02 July 2015**              **Holy Mass** in Peter and Julia Barton's pretty garden nr Bisley. 11 am. Followed by garden tour. Contact [juliabarton123@gmail.com](mailto:juliabarton123@gmail.com).

**Thank you for all your support and prayers**

Yours as ever,



Paul Letman  
CHAIR CoM