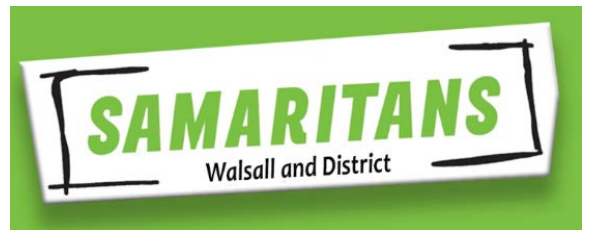


LISTEN HEAR



Walsall and District Samaritans Newsletter . Autumn 2018 . Issue 1

TOWN PRIDE: SEVENTH YEAR FOR BRANCH

VOLUNTEERS turned out once again to support Walsall Pride, the seventh annual event celebrating our local LGBT community. The carnival atmosphere of Gallery Square attracted hundreds of visitors who joined in with the day-long musical entertainment and cabaret acts, fairground rides and market stalls.

The Samaritans' stall in the New Art Gallery entrance, provided information about the listening service as well as promoting the Walsall branch.

Among visitors to the stall was the glamorous cabaret artiste 'Miss Lips' (pictured), who dropped by to say hello.

Other visitors included Gill Ogilvie, Labour's prospective parliamentary candidate for Walsall North.



IN BRIEF:

Making a splash!

One volunteer takes the plunge to raise money for branch funds.

Euro fun

Volunteers and supporters didn't let Brexit get in the way of their Eurovision fund-raising fun...

Collectors' Corner

The local businesses who make sure that spare change counts!

Fashion Fundraiser

Your favourite brands including Dorothy Perkins, Next, New Look and more, up to 75% off, at our Fashion Show and Shopping event on **Sunday 7th October** at 2pm at Aldridge Social Club. Tickets are £5 in advance, £6 on the door.

Bag pack

Got a couple of hours to spare on Saturday 17th November? We're going to be busy packing bags for customers at Walsall's Morrisons supermarket and are looking for volunteers to lend a hand. Simply turn up on either day or email walsall@samaritans.org.

Thinking of volunteering?

Samaritans is always looking for listening volunteers to help keep our phonelines open. If you're interested in becoming a volunteer please email: walsallsams.recruitment@gmail.com

Going for Gold in 2019

NEXT year sees the fiftieth anniversary of the Walsall and District Branch of Samaritans - and we need YOU to help us commemorate our golden year.

It's hard to believe that it was in 1969 that the branch opened its phonelines for the very first time at premises in Glebe Street. Since then, the branch has moved to Bott Lane and receives an average of 900 calls every month, and in its half-century has dealt with some half a million calls!

Since its inception in 1953 by Chad Varah, Samaritans has expanded its service throughout the UK, and now has 201 branches with 21,000 volunteers providing a listening service 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

Walsall and District Director, Adrienne Carter, says she is proud and privileged to be leading the branch in its fiftieth year.

"It's a great achievement to have kept the Walsall branch going over the course of fifty years," said Adrienne.

"We continue to go from strength to strength and are always looking at new forms of communication technology so that all demographics can contact us."

Next March will see the introduction of instant messaging as a new means on communication for callers, in addition to the existing text messaging, email and telephone call services.

The branch has set up a 50th anniversary working group who are keen to hear from former Samaritans who have memories of volunteering in the past, as well as anyone who may have been helped by the branch over its years of service to the town and who may want to share their experiences.

If you feel you could contribute to the anniversary year, please contact the Bott Lane branch, or email walsall@samaritans.org.

Sharon's super swim!

AS MOST of the UK settled down to watch Meghan Markle and Prince Harry tie the knot in Windsor, volunteer Sharon Dicken was donning a wetsuit and goggles and diving into Manchester Quay for a gruelling 5K open water swim.

Sharon, who has previously taken part in one-mile swims on Lake Windermere, Loch Lomond, Alton Water and in Salford Quays, only began training for the Manchester swim five months beforehand, but finished in a respectable one hour and 45 minutes. She also raised a staggering £400 for the Walsall and District branch.

So, what next for Sharon? Well, she says she's back in training with 6am swims at her local pool in preparation for an end to end swim of Coniston Water, followed by a 10k swim next June!

If you, or someone you know, would like to raise money for the Walsall and District Branch, please contact our fundraising team who can help to provide publicity and promotional materials such as t-shirts and collecting tins. Good luck!



"The water was a balmy 19c, so a number of swimmers were choosing to go without a wet suit...but not me!" Sharon Dicken after completing her open water swim.

Euro fun in Great Wyrley

PORTUGUESE cuisine and sangria were on offer at the annual Eurovision evening, hosted by volunteers Steve and Carolyn in Great Wyrley.

Guests were able to watch the sparkling song contest on a huge screen, while sampling food from the host country, and taking part in a fun quiz and sweepstake. And despite UK entry *SuRie* coming a disappointing 24th, partygoers still dug deep and raised £227 for the branch.

Quiz and chips in Aldridge

IF YOU know who Montmorency was, or which country produces the most cheese, then you could be a match for *Culture Club*, a team from the Microbiology Department at Walsall Healthcare Trust, who won a fund-raising quiz held at Aldridge Social Club.

More than 100 quiz enthusiasts took part in the evening, which also included a fish and chip supper and a raffle. A total of £700 Was raised for the Walsall and District branch.

Dates for the diary

Charity Fashion Show: Sunday 7th October at 2pm. Aldridge Social Club. Tickets £5 in advance, £6 on the door.

Bag Pack: Saturday 17th November. Morrisons in Walsall. Please let us know if you can help out!

Collectors' Corner

Thank you!

Customers at **Waitrose** in Four Oaks, for raising **£260** from the customer token collection.

Thank you!

Staff and customers at **Andys' Ale House** in Great Wyrley for **£20** in change in the collecting tin.

Thank you!

Staff and clients at **Fairmile Cattery** near Exeter, for raising **£13.70** in their collecting tin.

If you would like a collecting tin for your business or event, please contact walsall@samaritans.org