

Dear Friends

September 2020

DDF newsletter no 87

Well, what an extraordinary year this has been for everyone and an extremely challenging time for all charities. I would usually be telling you about our fundraising activities during the last year. The Spring quiz, planned for April, was cancelled as it became clear that this was not going to be possible due to the Covid 19 epidemic. We did manage to fit in one event in March just before the 'lock down'. We were very kindly invited back to the Maharani Indian Restaurant in Ipswich by the owner Manik Miah. Although he could not be with us that evening we were superbly looked after and provided with a delicious meal. Thanks to Manik's generosity and a draw we made a profit of £300 while enjoying a splendid time. Now it seems hard to believe that we could all sit down so close together and feel relaxed, interesting how quickly we have become conditioned to the new norm.

Of course, what is worrying for us and other charities is that resumption of such fundraising activities, at least in the short term, seems unlikely with the demands for social distancing etc. We are very grateful to people who have made donations and are fortunate that our finances in a reasonably strong position along with incredibly low overheads.

During the lock down when the epidemic was at its peak many of our endoscopy nursing and medical staff were seconded to the acute Covid wards, including intensive care, dealing directly with this awful disease. In common with the rest of the country, from late March til the end of June the Endoscopy department activity was reduced to examining emergency cases only with all routine work including cancer screening being cancelled. This has led to a huge backlog of cases which need to be examined. At the same time the need for social distancing, cleaning and PPE has reduced the through put of the department. In part this is a direct result of the outdated physical layout of the Endoscopy department which is 'bursting at the seams' and never built for such restrictions. To catch up with this huge backlog is going to take a considerable amount of time.

This year we have assisted with funding for a specialist nursing sister to attend an advanced communication skills course. Also, we have funded two nurses to receive training to use the 'Camera Pill' system. The DDF funded this equipment some years ago and consists of a tiny camera mounted in a capsule which is swallowed and passes through the gut taking a series of pictures (50,000 images) which are recorded by a device worn around the patient's waist. The resulting images are replayed on a computer to enable a full examination of the small intestine which cannot be examined so directly by commonly available instruments.

The winners of the 2019 Autumn Grand draw were

1<sup>st</sup> prize - Dr Alan Wimhurst, (who kindly donated the money to the DDF)

2nd Prize – Dr Crawford Jamieson (who also donated the money to the DDF)

3<sup>rd</sup> Prize – W Baldry

Thanks to these and other donations we made a profit of £1277 on the draw.

We are due to hold our AGM in November and realise that some may not wish to attend in person. An online link via Zoom will be available. If you would like to join us in this way please let Marjorie Thompson know.

Annual General Meeting

Date: Tuesday November 17<sup>th</sup> 2020 at 18:30

Venue: Endoscopy Unit, Ipswich Hospital

Agenda and minutes to be posted on the DDF, Suffolk website.

If you would like to attend in person or online please contact our secretary Marjorie Thompson

I enclose tickets for the Autumn Grand draw and am most grateful for your ongoing support.

Donate to DDF when shopping on Amazon

With the lock down more and more people are using Amazon for online shopping. By using AmazonSmile at <https://smile.amazon.co.uk/ch/1070774-0>, and choosing Digestive Disorders Foundation (Suffolk) Amazon makes a small donation, at no cost to you.

Or if you would like to make a donation by BACs then our bank details are - Barclays Bank. sort code 20-98-07. DDF(Suffolk) account number 90215171

A big thank you to all the committee and members who have helped with the fund raising and the running of the DDF, without your help we would not be able to function. Also thank you to all the kind people who have made donations often from personal fundraising efforts.

My best wishes to you and your families and I do hope you remain well and that we are able to meet up in 2021

John Wyke

Chairman DDF, Suffolk