



NORTHUMBRIA BLOOD BIKES

November
2015
Newsletter

A big “Thank You” to everyone who helped us with our green token campaign at John Lewis, Eldon Square!

For the last three months we've been competing with two other charities in the John Lewis Community Matters “green token scheme”, from which we could get a share of £3,000. The more tokens we have, the larger a percentage of the fund would be awarded to us. The results were incredibly close, but thanks to everyone's participation, we've just heard that a cheque for **£1,020.00** is on its way to us... meaning that just over a third of all the votes were for Northumbria Blood Bikes!

Many thanks to all who took part and helped us to win this funding!



**Community
Matters**

Please place your token into the
box of your chosen good cause.
Thank you.



John Lewis

“Just a few Bikes riding around at night time?”

On the pages this month (and listed below) you'll get an idea of just how much work our volunteers undertake each and every month to make sure there's petrol in the fuel tanks, insurance, uniforms etc.

Please consider joining us at one of our events to keep this fantastic momentum going... We really do rely on these fundraisers for the very survival of our charity.

This Months Newsletter:

Events:

<i>St.Bedes Ladies Fellowship, Blyth</i>	3
<i>Forthcoming Event: Azure Garden Centre</i>	3
<i>Tynemouth Rotary Club</i>	3
<i>Derwent Manor Hotel Charity Dinner</i>	5,6
<i>Morrisons, Morpeth</i>	8
<i>Sedgefield Celebration of Superheroes</i>	10
<i>Hexham Christmas Market Fayre</i>	10
<i>Peter Johnson Funeral Services event</i>	11

News:

<i>Members Offer: Airvest safety apparel</i>	4
<i>Jordy Armstrongs' fundraising story</i>	7
<i>Zombies for Zumba</i>	8
<i>Feedback: Sample delivery</i>	8
<i>Simmi Performance</i>	11
<i>North East Bikers patches</i>	12
<i>Red-Dog increase NBB product range</i>	12
<i>Future events for your diary</i>	13

We're currently looking for anyone with an editorial flair to assist in creating the newsletters... and it's not too complicated: Stories are created in Microsoft Word, and the information is gathered from Facebook, Twitter, our website and our events calendar. What we lack is a good wordsmith to convert reports into a "good read". If you fancy seeing your creativity in our newsletters, please see the advert on page 17 of this newsletter and get in touch! We'd start you off with a couple of stories to report on, and increase to a few pages if you're enjoying it...

If you're involved in any events, or instrumental in arranging any donations, presentations, sponsorship, talks or publicity, please remember to make us aware to ensure that it is included in the Newsletter, and shared with the companies or organisations involved. You can do this by contacting Alan Ross (alan.ross@northumbriabloodbikes.org.uk). If including any photos, please identify the people photographed so that we can include the image in a news feature!

St Bedes ladies Fellowship, Blyth

On Monday 19th October, Volunteer Steve Rawlings presented a talk for the Ladies of St.Bedes, and brought along one of the Madathlon Triumph Trophy blood bikes for them to see (left). During the event he was given a donation from the ladies, and was informed that we would be their nominated charity for the coming year! They normally raise around £500 to £700 over the year and in the past they have supported GNAS and Daft as a Brush. They asked if we would be able to take a bike along to a couple of their fundraising events over the coming year, so we may well see them again in future newsletters too...



Azure Christmas Market, Cramlington:

With Christmas literally just around the corner, Northumbria Blood Bikes are pleased to be part of the Christmas Craft Market at the Azure Garden Centre in Cramlington, throughout Friday 20th to Sunday 22nd November.

There will be a 'roving Santa Claus', a carousel, hog roast, mulled wine and all those delicious smells and magical things we associate with the advent of the season of goodwill. The market will have around 40 stalls selling an array of crafts, gifts, food and drink including special gifts and treats that you can't get anywhere else. Northumbria Blood Bikes will have a bike there each day, and a volunteer on hand to explain our work to the shopping public and answer any questions they have. The garden centre will already be ready dressed to the nines and will be providing some festive entertainment to enhance the shopping experience. Entry is free and there is also lots of free parking around the centre. Come along and join us, and perhaps get a few Christmas presents sorted at the same time!



Tynemouth Rotary Club - presentation 29th October

Vice-Chairman Alan Ross attended this monthly meeting at the Village Hotel, Wallsend. He did a detailed presentation to explain all about Blood Bikes, and parked the Madathlon bike "Bella" (Left) outside to show them what we ride! Their treasurer was on vacation, but had heard of what we do, and pledged a £100.00 donation to us, which will help us to keep our bikes fuelled in the coming weeks. Thank you all for your kind donation, and for a lovely evening!



Last month it was free coffee...

AIRVEST

In last months' newsletter, we featured an offer from the Roadhouse Grill, giving any blood biker on duty the opportunity to grab a free coffee. We also featured the "Be Supported" assistance programme which is being offered by O2 to all blood bike members over the coming year. This month, we have another offer for our members, thanks to Peter Riley, Managing Director at Airvest Ltd, who specialise in airbag protection for equestrians and motorcyclists.



"We love and respect all the work that your members put in around the UK, and confirm the offer that any of your members are entitled to a £100.00 discount", says Peter.

The offer applies to any active member of a NABB - affiliated group, which of course includes Northumbria Blood Bikes. Identification will be required at the time of purchase to verify membership.

The jackets normally retail from £399 - £525, so the discount on offer is exceptional, more than 20%.

Some of our members have already expressed an interest in buying, and the inevitable question "Can we wear one under our Hi-Viz uniforms?" has already been asked at both local and national level.

Peters response was: "*Our product WILL work under this jacketBUT your jacket looks well made....it is possible that where the jacket is quite tight over their Airvest, in an accident they could be squeezed tighter than it's designed to, and if the Blood Bike jacket was very tight on top of an Airvest it could slightly impair the Airbag performance.*

If you are happy to give out the advice that buyers thinking of putting an Airvest under their Blood Bike Jacket MUST upsize their Blood Bike jacket by a minimum of one size, I feel the potential 'relative' inconvenience of the very occasional (if ever) problem of being 'over squeezed' would be more than compensated by the safety performance of the Airvest. I hope this is a reasonable answer to your question.....which does not carry a yes/no answer."



Our suggestion is... take your Hi-Viz uniform vest with you if you go to try an AirVest for size, which is exactly what Northumbria Blood Bikes Secretary, Chris Mitchell, did when he visited their offices in October.

"They have sizing to fit everyone..... and it's a well-made piece of kit" said Chris, " I will need to get an NBB HV likely two sizes bigger to go over the vest, mine is 3xl so will need 4 or 5 XL".

During his visit he was shown how difficult it was to activate the vest by accident. It's a 30kg activation trigger, so you won't set it off if you forget to disconnect yourself from the bike. They also activated a vest while he was wearing it.... And he was so impressed that he purchased one then & there.

Thank you, Peter, for such a generous offer to help our volunteers to ride safely.

Airvest are based in Leeds, and can be contacted on 0113 2843497 or via email at info@airvest.co.uk.... or ask our Chris for his first hand opinion & feedback!



Kirsty & Clair's Charity Gala for Northumbria Blood Bikes:



After months and months of planning, Northumbria Blood Bike volunteers Kirsty Lawrence and Clair Gray managed (once again!) to pull off an extremely successful charity gala evening at the Derwent Manor Hotel at Allensford, near Consett. They managed to raise a magnificent **£995.50** for Blood Bikes! There was also a cheque presented during the evening, from Ian & June Peverley of Derwentside Rotary Club, for **£225.00** from fundraising after a recent talk there.



The evening also included a tombola which Kirsty & Clair organised, after spending many weeks seeking out prizes from local businesses and supporters. Entertainment for the evening was provided by a DJ, and local musician Ellie-Rae (right), who was caught trying out our Madathlon bike 'Bella' during the evening. A future blood biker, perhaps?





» Charity gala in Northumberland

Raising money for:
Northumbria Blood Bikes
& Bright Red's Lee Robson
Patient Grants
Northumbria Blood Bike Fundraiser Kirsty Lawrence of Stanley said: 'Charity Gala on Friday, October 23 from 7pm-1am, at The Derwent Manor Hotel. The evening will have a three-course meal, live music from Ellie-Rae, raffle and an auction. Tickets are £20 each or a table of 10 for £180. To book please contact 07849830467.'



Whereas I recognise the volunteers, I struggle with the names of their partners, so will keep everyone on this page anonymous rather than make assumptions about the people they're photographed with !!! Clearly a good time had by all, and undoubtedly one or two sore heads next morning!



Words can hardly begin to express our gratitude to everyone who contributed, or attended.... It was a fantastic evening. Thank you, Kirsty and Clair, for all your hard work!

Boy diagnosed with arthritis at age 3 continues to raise funds to help children with the same condition:



Jordy Armstrong (left) refuses to let things get him down - and is now focused on helping other children who have been diagnosed with Juvenile Idiopathic Arthritis. He was diagnosed with severe arthritis at just three years old - leaving him struggling to move. Today, aged nine, every joint of his body is affected by the condition, often leaving him in agony. But, refusing to let things get him down, he is fighting back and focused on helping other children who have been diagnosed with Juvenile Idiopathic Arthritis (JIA).

Mum Carly Armstrong said her son was determined something good would come from the difficulties he had suffered throughout his childhood. "For six months before he was diagnosed, Jordy had been very poorly. We went for a lot of scans and tests and getting him diagnosed turned out to be quite a long, drawn out process."

Jordy first started getting pains in his neck. Carly, of Chester-le-Street, said: "It was having an affect on his jaw and he was struggling to talk properly, he sounded a bit like a dalek. It was strange because one minute he was running around like any other three year old, but the next he was struggling to move at all." Baffled by his problems, medics sent Jordy to hospitals across the area including the University Hospital of North Durham and Sunderland Royal Hospital. Eventually doctors at Newcastle's Royal Victoria Infirmary diagnosed JIA and Jordy was put on special medication, leaving his immune system more vulnerable than most children his age. "He catches colds and things quite easily," said Carly. "And most of his joints are now affected by the arthritis although his knees seem to be the worst."

Now Jordy himself has launched a support group called Arthritis Kids Unite to raise awareness of JIA and raise money for Arthritis Research UK. He says: "I wanted to make a group run by us kids with arthritis so we can talk to each other about our condition. I would like to raise money with the group to help other people with arthritis and to have lots of fun on the way and make friends so we can all help each other." Jordy is hoping the children can meet informally every six weeks, get to know each other and together decide what they want to do and also what fundraising events to organise.

YOUNG ARTHRITIS SUFFERER SETS UP SUPPORT GROUP TO HELP OTHER YOUNGSTERS WITH CONDITION

Brave Jordy's help for children

A newspaper clipping with the headline "Brave Jordy's help for children". It features a photograph of a young boy holding up a certificate that reads "ARTHRITIS KIDS UNITE". The article discusses Jordy's diagnosis of Juvenile Idiopathic Arthritis and his efforts to help other children with the condition by launching the Arthritis Kids Unite support group.

His next event will be on Saturday, 28th November at the Garden Farm Pub, Carlingford Rd, Chester-le St DH2 3EH. There will be a bouncy castle, family quiz, disco, organised party dancing, Singer Terry J Mc, singer Janie McKenzie and singer/compere Dan James. Tickets are £5.00/adult & £2.50/child.

Northumbria Blood Bikes wish Jordy every success with his event, and will be attending with a blood bike throughout the day for the kids to see & clamber on. Keep up the good work, Jordy!



ZOMBIES FOR ZUMBA!

We were approached this month by a young lady called Christine Wray, who had heard about us through one of her friends who volunteers for us. "I'd love to set up a Zumba class to help raise some money for your charity. I'm a special effects artist so it will be a Zumba class with a twist. All Zumba participants will be dressed as zombies while doing the class so I have named the event Zomba, all proceeds made will go to your charity." - Sounds like a plan!

Interested? If you're on Facebook, search for "Zomba", or look for the link on our facebook site. - And "No".... if they need any fake blood, we won't be delivering it by motorbike!



Feedback:

It's not every day that you get to hear what we transport or who uses it. But on the 18th October our volunteer Debbie Paton, on her first night coordinating, played a vital role in getting a blood sample from a seven week old baby with suspected meningitis moved very quickly. Timings were perfect: just 17 minutes from the original call to delivery. Well done Debbie!



Morrisons, Morpeth

Saturday, 31st October (Halloween!)

While most people were in preparation for a night of trick-or treating, our volunteers were at Morrisons in Morpeth, collecting to ensure we have enough funds to provide our service right through the winter.

Many thanks for a sterling effort from our volunteers, including Peter Robertson (our Chairman), Ian Young, Beth O'Hare, Malcolm Cramman, Tegan Rawlinson, Wayne Rand and Derek Henderson.

In the local papers:

Northumbria Blood Bikes were in the local media again this month, this time with a substantial editorial. On Sunday 18th October we featured in the Sunday Sun, and then the Chronicle (right) on the following day. The feature also appeared on the Chronicle's social media pages under the headline "An army of hidden heroes". This attracted comments from several of the readers:

Trish Liddell - "Gud on u guys"

Amy Murray - "Life savers"

Jean Wilson - "Well done stay safe"

Wendy Bell "They do a fantastic job well done to u all xxx"



The text in the article was as follows:

"Northumbria Blood Bikes saves lives across the North East, despite having never received a Government grant. An army of hidden heroes in the North East save hundreds of lives a year. Despite receiving no funding and being run entirely by volunteers, the Northumbria Blood Bikes provide a free, out-of-hours blood courier service for the NHS.

The North East group went live at the beginning of last year and has blossomed into hundreds of volunteers who give up their evenings to answer calls on a daily basis. Gary Annan, of Birtley, Gateshead, has volunteered with the charity from the start. "We transport blood, plasma, platelets, samples, vaccines and other urgently required medical items to hospitals every night, weekend and public holiday, completely free of charge," he said. The volunteers often deal with life or death situations, and although the team are unaware of who they help, and the 54-year-old emphasised the difference that Northumbria Blood Bikes make. He said: "We don't ever get to meet the people who we help, although there was one time when I was told by a colleague that I had provided blood for a transfusion which helped save the life of a newborn baby. "Every time I tell that story I get a shiver down the back of my spine because I know that I've made a difference and done something good." The Northumbria Blood Bikes urgently transport blood and other medical supplies between hospitals across the region, sometimes in critical incidents where life or death is determined by minutes.

Charities like this have been on the go across the country since 1969, but in recent years the number of volunteers has increased significantly. This vital service costs £65,000 a year, yet despite dealing with more than 300 incidents a month, the charity has never received a Government grant. Northumbria Blood Bikes rely heavily on fundraising, but this has proved difficult at times, as not many people are aware of the role that the charity plays or that the service is run by people who give up their free time.

All volunteers are required to have held a full motorcycle licence for at least two years as well as being put through recognised advanced riding qualification. Riders must also be 25 years old and for Stephen Hodgson of Albatross Way, Blyth, it was a service he was desperate to be a part of. He said: "As soon as I turned 25, I was out on the road that night volunteering my services. You do have to go through an advanced driving test, but it benefits you because you become a better driver and save lives at the same time." The charity has nearly a hundred bikers, yet many more who work behind the scenes answering calls and arranging pickups between hospitals every night."

Sedgefield Superheroes day! Saturday 31st October

Durham Police and Crime Commissioner Ron Hogg organised a "Celebration of Superheroes" at the Sedgefield Racecourse, and Northumbria Blood Bikes were proud to have some superheroes of their own in attendance: Len Potts, Stephanie Brain and Torben Stockmarr are all pictured (right) at the start of the day before the public arrived. Also attending was Alan Johnston, who evaded being photographed because he was the chap taking this picture! Each of them heroically volunteering their time to help support our charity.



All emergency services, including the police, fire service, ambulance, mountain rescue and coast guard were attending, so that families can get involved in exciting activities and see demonstrations from real life local superheroes. Other community safety organisations who make a difference to people's everyday lives were also on hand to provide information and advice, giving families and individuals a better understanding of what they do and how they can help.



Activities and demonstrations included police vehicles, dog displays, fire engine aerial platform rides, traffic collision rescue displays, a children's Crime Scene Investigation treasure hunt, Halloween and superhero fancy dress competition, bouncy castle, police dogs Jet & Ben, soft play, and of course, our lovely Madathlon blood bike! Thank you to everyone who supported us on this busy, busy event!



Hexham Market Craft Fayre:

Saturday 31st October

Many thanks to Ronnie and Debbie Paton for representing us at the Winter Craft and Gift Market in the Auction Mart at Hexham. The event was mainly indoors, but we were pitched outside so that we could have a motorbike take pride of place under our Gazebo.

You may have seen on page 3 that we'll be doing a very similar event on 20th-22nd November at the Azure Garden Centre, Station Road, Cramlington. Please let us know if you can spare an hour or two to support us; you can find our contact details on the last page of this newsletter.



PETER
JOHNSON
FUNERALS

Peter Johnson Funerals service:

South Shields, Wednesday 11th November

Northumbria Blood bikes were approached by Peter Johnson funeral service to see if we could arrange a bike at a memorial service they were holding for all their clients who have had bereavements over the past year.

Volunteers Gary Loader and Alan Ross attended the event, bringing the liveried Skoda car, and the brand new Honda Pan bike "Scott".

The service, at St.Michael and All Angels Church in South Shields, included the reading of the names of each person who had passed during the last twelve months, and an opportunity for quiet reflection. There were also performances from local singers Kathryn Atack and Melissa Cavanagh, and the children of the Harton Primary School Choir.

We were honoured to be invited to attend such a lovely event, which was filled to capacity with nearly five hundred people attending the service. An on-going collection has been organised by Peter Johnson Funerals to raise funds for both Northumbria Blood Bikes and the Great North Air Ambulance. Many thanks to all involved in making this amazing event happen.



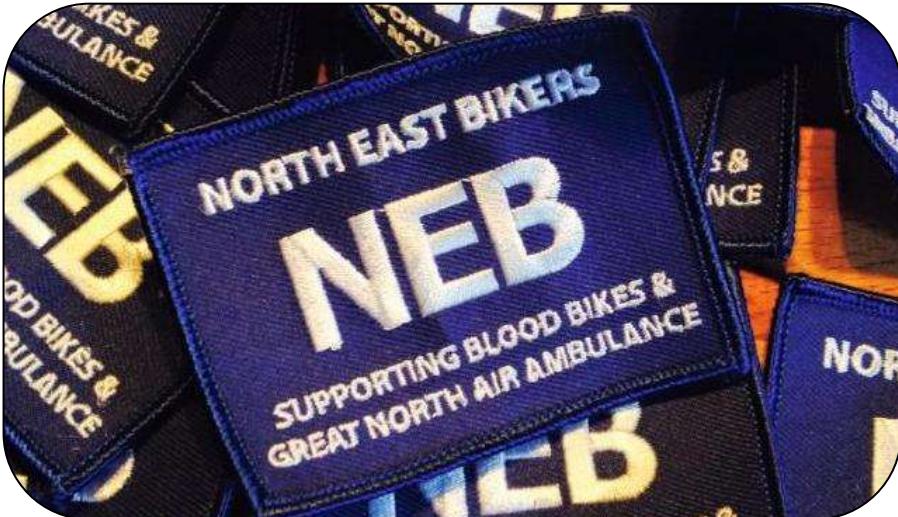
SIMMI PERFORMANCE

On a lighter note, our exploits attempting to get our bike into the church resulted in us buying a motorcycle ramp... from a company near Consett which we popped in to see on 12th November. Right there on the counter in front of us was... the Lady Bikers calendars! "We're trying to do our bit to support you" they said, so it's only right that we reciprocate!

Simmi Performance is primarily an eBay seller, although they do have a small showroom. I'd love to say that they specialise in motorcycle exhausts, but they do a whole lot more, with over 20,000 items currently for sale on eBay. Check them out if you get the chance... and buy one of the lady biker calendars while you're there! They are at 19A Medomsley Road Workshops, No1 Industrial Est, Consett DH8 6SY. Tel: 01207 438 489. - Thanks for sorting a ramp for us so quickly!



North East Bikers: new sew-on patches for sale:



For any of our followers who are also members of North East Bikers.....

A new sew-on patch is available, proceeds of which go to Northumbria Blood Bikes and the Great North Air Ambulance Service. They're £2.50 each (collect in person, or add £1 p&p)....and they're selling fast!

To join North East Bikers group,
search for them on Facebook.



Red-Dog increase their product range:

Red-Dog Print & Embroidery have been stocking our baseball caps and Lady Biker calendars for a few weeks now, but have increased their range to include hooded sweatshirts, Beanie hats, neck/chest warmers and Embroidered over-locked badges (right), with more to follow shortly.



Contact them at red-dog.org or call 07588037485...

More mousemats for the hospitals:

We've just taken a delivery of 200 new mousemats for the hospital reception desks and pathology labs, with our operating hours and the hospital hotline telephone number (obscured in these images). The design shows our silver Yamaha FJR in front of the new Pathology laboratories at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, Gateshead.



This should help to ensure that the appropriate staff have our phone number right next to them whenever they need to request a delivery of blood, specimens or urgent medical documents.

We first released these a year ago, but have seen many new hospitals, including NSECH (Northumbria Specialist Emergency Care Hospital) in Cramlington, starting to use our services since then... so we figured it was time for a fresh batch! Of course we've also seen big changes here at Northumbria Blood Bikes, too: Our fleet has increased to nine bikes, two cars and a van! We're already working on getting a new photoshoot involving all the members, and the entire fleet, for some promotional items in 2016, so watch this space! Also, by popular demand, we will be looking at mousemats etc. for the public i.e. without the hospital hotline number. Lots to organise.....

FUTURE EVENTS FOR YOUR DIARY:

Lots of things happening, and we need your help to support them! If you can help, even if only for a couple of hours, please contact us....information is at the bottom of this page. NBB members can register their attendance for most of these events on our website (login required).



ASDA, Cramlington 09:00-17:00

As the winter months creep in, the Christmas shoppers come out!



Please help us to get some petrol in our fuel tanks to get us through the winter!



ASDA, Wansbeck Road, Gosforth 9:00-17:00(sat), 10:00-16:00(Sun)

A fundraising and awareness stand with either a bike or a car
(or both!) attending.



Please spare an hour or two if you can to show your support!



Azure Christmas Market, Cramlington 10:00-18:00

A fundraising & awareness stand at the Azure Garden Centre, Station Road, Cramlington NE23 8BJ.
Combined with their 3-day Christmas craft market!



ASDA, Ryhope, Sunderland 9:00-17:00(sat), 10:00-16:00(Sun)

A fundraising and awareness stand with a blood bike.



A busy, busy weekend filled with (hopefully charitable!) shoppers!



"Kids Unite" Arthritis Charity Event 12:00-17:00

The Garden Farm pub, Chester Le Street. Tickets: £5:00/adult & £2:50/child includes, bouncy castle, face painting, disco, organised party dancing, Singer Terry J Mc, singer Janie McKenzie, and of course Northumbria Blood Bikes!



ASDA, Gosforth 09:00-17:00

One of the firm favourites in our fundraising calendar! - Always guaranteed good banter and lovely hospitality from the staff - come and join us for a day of fundraising and awareness at the Gosforth store!



Sainsburys, Washington BAG PACKING! 09:00 - 17:00

Bag Packing three days before Santa comes.....means only one thing:
We need lots and lots of volunteers - there are dozens of tills to cover!
This could be our busiest ever bag-pack...please help us to make it a success!



That's it for this months' newsletter, thanks for reading, and ride safe.....



www.northumbriabloodbikes.org.uk



facebook.com/northumbriabloodbikes

twitter.com/northumbriabb

linkedin.com/company/2866951

FUNDRAISING HOTLINE:

07766 479 770

- for any opportunities to increase our funding through sponsorship, locations for collecting tins, supermarket events etc...