

NORTHUMBRIA BLOOD BIKES

February 2016 Newsletter



Introducing a new addition to our fleet; an Exhibition trailer!

Those who have experienced the joys of attempting to put up a gazebo in high winds or have shivered in the biting cold weather on a fire station forecourt will be well aware that a sturdy, weather-resistant base at events is a long overdue necessity. The trailer you see here was donated to us many months ago, but required months of work to bring it back into a safe and useable condition. Find out more on page 6...

"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.

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Thank You to the Sponsors of our new exhibition trailer!



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 get in touch! alan.ross@northumbriabloodbikes.org.uk We can start you off with a couple of stories to report on, and increase to a few pages if you're enjoying it...



Northumbria Blood Bikes dominate ASDA for fundraising throughout January:

After we all took a well-deserved break over Christmas, it was time to rebuild our funds for the months ahead, and our colleagues at ASDA opened their doors for us!

... It's a funny old month, January. The weather is unpredictable, motivation is low, and the public are reluctant to spend as they're recovering from the frantic overspending at Christmas and New Year. It makes a difficult month for charities like ours to raise funds and keep ourselves going, and we have to rely on supermarket collections more than ever as outdoor events are rare when it's freezing outside!

Fortunately, we have a secret weapon, called a "Graham". Graham Moor is in charge of all the fundraising initiatives throughout the year, and had an arsenal of supermarket collections prepped and ready for the quiet weeks of January/February. He'd contacted many of the ASDA stores where we've collected before, and his charm offensive certainly seemed to reap rewards.... With no less than SEVEN ASDA events organised and more at other locations, too!

Many thanks, Graham, for ensuring that our diaries are filled during these bleak winter weeks, which of course ensures that our fuel tanks are filled, too. Not many charities have a "Graham" like we do, and his continued efforts to keep us in the black are very much appreciated by us all.

ASDA

Wansbeck road, Gosforth

16th & 17th January.



Pictured left are our volunteers Tegan Rawlinson and George Jobson, who brought our Honda Pan-European bike "Scott" to the foyer for Saturday.

Below is duty rider Steve Tulloch (left), who was able to drop in between calls during his Sunday shift. Alongside are Gary Loader (centre) and Kirsty Downham (right).

also Thanks the to many volunteers who managed to avoid cameras, including Peter Robertson, Philippa Bromley, and Adam Morris who brought a bike on the Sunday. Also to Alan Johnston and Simon Lindsay for their part in ensuring that the fundraising kit was delivered to the store. Saturdays collection £225.44, followed raised £240.45 on Sunday. Excellent!







The new exhibition trailer visited briefly so that those on duty could catch an early glimpse of it. We still need to fit lights inside, and arrange a rolling presentation on screen & interchangeable banners inside the doors come before it starts to make regular appearances at events... but it is nearly ready, and makes for great publicity!

Volunteers Derek Henderson, David Pitkethly, John Watts and our Chairman Peter Robertson attended one of our favourite stores at Gosforth, opposite the Regent Centre Metro station. Together, they raised an impressive £605.88 in donations from the shoppers; an excellent result. At one stage (left) we had three bikes in front of the store!



ASDA

Metro Centre, Gateshead

28th January



Volunteer Gary Annan brought one of our Honda Pan European bikes to the Metro Centre branch of ASDA on Thursday 28th January for a day of fundraising and awareness. Of course, the big news is that it didn't rain! Rightly or wrongly, Gary has a reputation for attracting bad weather whenever he's on shift, but this was clearly an exception!

- Good job, too, as the bike was positioned outside the stores' foyer where we risked getting a soaking!

Thanks to volunteers Simon Lindsay, George Smith, Kirsty Downham and Alan Johnston who helped to staff the stand. Between them, they managed to collect £427.24 "and a Singapore 10 cent coin!" We will be back at this store in February... Saturday 20th to be exact: The store was aware we were only able to

to be exact: The store was aware we were only able to get a comparatively quiet midweek date in January, so have kindly allowed us back on a busier weekend in February. Please come along and show your support for an hour or two if you can; details of this and all other upcoming events are at the back of this newsletter.







We managed to round off the month January with two days of fundraising at yet another ASDA store, this time Ryhope, Sunderland. Wayne Rand and Sean Jameson (left) kindly stood guard over one of our Honda Pan-European bikes, and managed to raise an impressive £222.00 on the Saturday, followed by an equally impressive £235.00 on the Sunday.... Vital to keep us on the road! Thank you fellas, and also to Alan Johnston for delivery of the promotional kit.

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"The Renegade Rock Show"

...in association with Northumbria Blood Bikes!

Koast Radio is a radio station based in Ashington who broadcast across Northumberland on 106.6FM and online. As well as producing locally focused content and speaking about the issues that affect our region, they also provide a platform for people to inform the community of local news and events, (you see where we're going here?) aiming to make radio accessible to all. Every Monday they have "The Renegade Rock Show",

which brings you 3 hours of the best rock and metal tunes from the last 5 decades, with the occasional "oddity" thrown into the mix plus a lot of banter and fun via the show's Facebook page. The show is now presented "In association with Northumbria Blood Bikes", thanks primarily to the efforts of this fella, Graeme Jenkins, who Koast radio themselves describe as "A hirsute 'n'



Your Station, Your Music, Your Choice

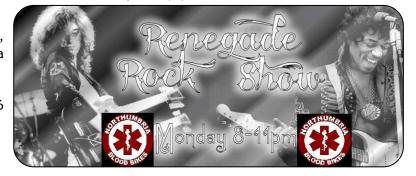
DJ Graeme "I didn't pose for this shot and just happened to be caught while talking on my mobile" Jenkins, presenter of the Renegade Rock Show.

cuddlesome host, a dyed-in-the-double-denim rocker who'll aurally stimulate you every Monday night with 3 hours of choice rock tracks from the 1970's to the present day." (We double checked the spelling of the word "aurally" before agreeing to the deal!) -Does he look familiar? He was pictured in last month's newsletter presenting a cheque to us! In real terms, our "Association" with the show means NBB getting mentioned every time the show gets plugged, plus our logo on the banner of the show's Facebook page. Also we could come along to some of their outside Broadcasts etc... an opportunity to raise awareness a bit more. We're hoping to get a representative across to their studio for an interview shortly, to broadcast on the show. -Hopefully you'll hear us on there soon!

You can listen to the show online: www.koastradio.co.uk, Monday nights, 8pm-11pm or if you live within their area (Northumberland), you can tune in to them on 106.6FM.

You can text a request prior to the show on: 07708 132256 or via "tunein.com":

http://tunein.com/radio/Koast-Radio-s131020/



It's been a long time coming....

It seems to have taken an awfully long time to get the exhibition trailer that was donated to us ready for use, but to be fair there was a lot of work needed to restore it to roadworthiness...



The roof had a large hole in it, the electrics needed a refurb, and it had been parked in a field for months, so the running gear needed a thorough servicing. Unlike domestic utility trailers, this was to be used for business purposes, so stringent tests and certification processes had to be followed to endorse its' safety & roadworthiness. After several months, we are finally at the stage where the blood bike artwork is on all sides. The rear of the trailer has the most text on it to promote the group to anyone following it on a road, including a credit to Realrider, who sponsored the project.

The graphics were supplied and fitted courtesy of our good friends at Carstyling Signs, Washington, who were kind enough to supplu and fit them for a substantial discount. We now have the task of assessing each of the drivers who might be towing it: Everyone needs an assessment on their competence to tow in exactly the same way that out riders and drivers are assessed before taking charge of any of our fleet. If you're an advanced driver and see yourself attending some of the big outdoor events we have this summer, please contact our Training Officer, Geoff Spencer, to arrange an assessment. Email him at: training@northumbriabloodbikes.org.uk



Gary and Malcolm "are all talk...."

On Tuesday 19th January, volunteers Gary Saunders and Malcolm Farley hosted a presentation to the Washington Station W.I. The audience were suitably impressed and commented on how interesting the talk was!





The ladies were amazed that we do it all voluntarily, and at the end of the night there were several donations from both the group as a whole, and from individuals who were taken aback by the amount of effort we put into our work without asking for anything in return.

These presentations can sometimes lead to sponsorship, donations, and greater awareness / publicity. We're looking for more volunteers who can stand before a group and talk about our charity. If that sounds like something you'd like to try, please get in touch! You can always come along to a talk that

someone else is presenting to get a flavour of how it's done. - Maybe chip in a little yourself if you wish, and build your confidence until you're comfortable to go it alone.

It's also worth mentioning that these talks are free of charge; we're happy to spread the word about our charity and perhaps recruit some new volunteers. So, if you're aware of a school, club, business or social group who you think would benefit from a Blood Bikes presentation, please get in touch with our talks co-ordinator, Nigel Barlow. You can email him at talks@northumbriabloodbikes.org.uk

Remember this from last months' newsletter?



Northumbria Blood Bikes 360 Challenge on 23rd April 2016.

We said we'd let you know as soon as our website was ready to take registrations for the 360 Challenge... and it is!

All the information you need is on our webpage at http://www.northumbriabloodbikes.org.uk/events/360challenge together with a link to the Virgin Money "Just Giving" page.

We expect this to be quite popular, so get your place before they all get snapped up!



Renolit Cramlington Ltd

The RENOLIT Group is an international leader in the manufacture of high-quality plastic films and related products for technical applications.

One of our volunteers, Peter Kelly, works for Renolit and has organised a donation of £650.00 to assist us in our operational costs. He's pictured here (left) accepting the cheque from Dave Hall, the CEO of Renolit Cramlington. We're very grateful to Peter, Dave, and Renolit Cramlington Ltd for arranging this wonderful donation. We promise to use it wisely!





Luke McKenna's last ride...

Luke McKenna, aged 24, was a local lad involved in a fatal collision on his way to work on Christmas Eve. North East Biker Escorts were asked to escort the cortège to Mountsett Crematorium at Dipton from the Chapel of Rest, Whickham. At the wake there was a collection box put on the bar and it raised £90.00, which was donated to Northumbria Blood Bikes.

We thank Lukes' family for thinking of us at this sad time, and will use the donation to further our service and hopefully save the lives of others. Mr. John Vasey, who planned the escort, commented "They told me Luke had wanted to be a volunteer rider when he'd gained enough experience, hence the donation". Many thanks to Mr. Vasey of North East Biker Escorts, the biker community who attended (including several blood bike volunteers), and both Northumbria and Durham Police for their help which ensured a smooth passage through some dangerous junctions.





LS2 Helmets, Ashington donates two helmets:

Some time ago our Secretary Chris Mitchell was on the NABB stand at the Bike show (Motorcycle Live, NEC Birmingham). He had a long conversation with the Managing Director of LS2 Helmets, John McQueen, as Chris was buying an Adventure style helmet from them.

Clearly something stuck in John McQueens' mind, as he approached us in January this year to offer a donation of two "LS2 325 Strobe" helmets for our charity. Good timing, as it coincided with our volunteer David Makepeace's accident on the A69 (next page) whereby his helmet took a major impact and

was beyond repair. We have decided the fairest way to choose who gets one is to pick names out of a hat. Participation is via a form emailed out to eligible riders, and those taking part will be notified who the winners are. Arrangements will then be made for the winners to go to the factory shop in Cramlington to try on and collect their helmet.

We're very grateful to John McQueen for his donation, and it will undoubtedly come into good use in the coming months. LS2 only sell to trade, so there's little point in promoting his business to our readers, but this makes his contribution all the more valued when it's done from the heart with nothing expected in return... Thank you, John, on behalf of all of us at Northumbria. You're a true gentleman!



We've had a pretty good run... two years of 12-hour shifts, 365 days a year, without any major incidents.

As the number of hospitals we serve has steadily increased, so too have the number of riders on the road, and it was inevitable that the risk of accidents or injuries would increase them.

At 7pm on Friday 15th January, our shift controller received the call nobody expects.... A member of the public reporting that one of our bikes had been involved in a road traffic accident.

Volunteer rider David Makepeace had just picked up a package from Hexham General Hospital and was en-route back towards Newcastle on the A69 near Ovingham, when a collision took place. (We have to be very careful to not imply who caused the collision, as that's a matter for the police to investigate, and we can't be seen to suggest liability towards either party). David took a tumble and landed on the tarmac of the inside lane of the dual carriageway. Fortunately, witnesses at the scene were sensible enough not to move him for fear that he may have spinal injuries....so he laid on the icy January ground for the best part of an hour while the ambulance team attended to him.



Debbie Paton was our volunteer shift controller, and was first to find out after David, still conscious on the roadside, gave one of the witnesses our hotline number. Debbie then called Graham Moor, who alerted the appropriate people to respond while Debbie focused on maintaining the service for our riders & hospitals. She also arranged for duty rider Nathan Harold to attend the scene to see if the package could still be delivered.... And it could! The response was so efficient that the Blood Dave had been carrying was on its way to its original destination before he had even left the roadside.

(Naturally we informed the hospital of the accident so they could check that everything was okay).

David (right) had a broken clavicle, a fracture in his elbow, and multiple cuts & bruises as you would expect from a high speed accident. His helmet (above) was a good quality one and saved him from serious head injury; you can see the impact it sustained! He was discharged from hospital the following day, and with his wife Sharon he thanked everyone involved for their overwhelming support, and especially to Debbie, who remained calm and composed throughout the entire duration of the



incident. The bike, our silver FJR1300, was recovered and is being examined to see if it can be repaired, or written off. Let's hope it's at least another three years before our next accident.

-and as for our shift controller Debbie.... (continued from previous page)



Debbie Paton hasn't been answering phone calls for us for long, but she's taken it in her stride and can handle the best (and the worst) that our hospitals and members can throw at her. All the same, you simply can't predict how you will react until you receive a call telling you that a rider is down.

"I knew I had a call waiting on the customer number but as I was on the phone, I had to let it go to voicemail. I retrieved the voicemail assuming it was another job. It was a woman who said a rider had an accident, he was ok and an ambulance had been called. For a second I froze, then while checking Andromeda (our GPS tracking system), I used my landline to call the committee emergency number to avoid the hospital hotline number being in use."

Jo contacted Rota Manager Steve Rawlings, who then asked Debbie to call Alan Ross (Vice Chair) and Richard Scholfield (Fleet Manager) to initiate a response to the scene. Duty rider Nathan Harold was also asked to attend the scene with a view to assessing the condition of the package David had been carrying, to see if it could continue its journey to the hospital...and it could! (Naturally we had to tell the hospital about the incident so they could check the package thoroughly for any damage, but the boxes used are quite robust and designed to take a lot of punishment!). The response was so quick that there were three members of the committee on-scene, and the blood was already back en-route to the hospital, before David had even been lifted into an ambulance.

Just two days earlier, Alan Ross had been dealing with a comment from a rider who suggested that the Andromeda radio system was a 'waste of money'. At the time, Alan responded "Fortunately we have not yet had a situation where a rider has been involved in an incident and cannot phone due to their injuries, but the system is there for that scenario." - Little did he know that the very same scenario would unfold less than 48 hours later. Debbie later remarked "It proves Andromeda is needed, as without it we wouldn't have known where Dave was and could only guess based on his departure time from Hexham".

There are lessons to be learned from this our first major incident. We've already collated information from Debbie, David, and the various people involved in the response to see what improvements can be made to ease the pressure if it ever happens again. We'll be looking at it in the coming weeks to make sure that any changes to procedure are implemented as quickly as possible. The nature of our work makes it inevitable that there will be more accidents, but hopefully we will be even better prepared next time around.

"I'm not sure how an incident like this could be managed more efficiently, I just kept thinking if there was anything else I could or needed to do, I think I handled it the best I could." Said Debbie.

-And we agree! You did a great job, and we're thankful you were there to keep the wheels turning. We only hope it doesn't put you off volunteering!

Pictured right are some of the team who looked after Dave following the crash and he got the opportunity to go back and say thank you..... Lucy, Jim and Bob from the trauma and emergency centre and Gloria, who sorted me out on ward 22. "I can't thank them enough" said Dave, "True Heroes..."





Bishop Auckland Methodist Church donation Sunday 24th January



Northumbria Blood Bikes volunteers Johnston, Andy Watson and Ken Tait attended Bishop Auckland Methodist Church to collect a fabulous donation of £1000.00. They were able to bring a bike inside the church so that the congregation could see how we carry vital supplies to and from hospitals across the region.

The cheque was the result of a 4 day fundraiser arranged by the church, which took place at Morrisons' in December and raised £920.00.

The organiser, Keith Dinning, took his family for Christmas lunch and was telling his sons about the amount that had been raised. They promptly chipped in the remaining £80 to make it £1000.00.

The presentation was a really nice service; the minister spoke highly of us and gave Northumbria Blood Bikes his blessings. Thank you to all who contributed; we will use the donation to help to save money for the NHS, and the money saved will hopefully be re-invested into front-line patient care, improving NHS healthcare for everyone.



A very generous donation from Bright Northumbria!

Bright Northumbria is the charitable arm of Northumbria Healthcare NHS Trust, and you might recognise their logo (left) from one of our blood bikes. That's because they are the group that previously donated the funds for our fourth

Bike. We received the fabulous news in the last week of January that they have agreed to reimburse the costs that our charity incurred for the purchase of the Andromeda Digital Radio system. Andromeda is a handheld communication radio which also tracks the location of the user. This serves two primary purposes. Firstly it frees up the hospital phone line by allowing communication between riders, drivers and shift controllers without the use of telephones. Secondly, it tracks the location of users, so the controllers don't need to distract riders with "location check" phone calls, as they can see their positions on a computer screen. Combined, these features provide a better telephone response for

hospitals, and improved safety for our

drivers and riders.

Northumbria Healthcare NHS



NHS Foundation Trust

We are extremely grateful for this generous donation of £7,239.09 which had been requested as part of the implementation plan for the system. Our Bright Northumbria blood bike, pictured right, continues to serve our hospitals in the region and helps to save time and money for the NHS.



More news in brief:

A £30.00 donation was given in memory of Brian Patterson, from Wrekenton, who passed away on 9th January. Donations in lieu of flowers were shared between Northumbria Blood Bikes & Crossroad Care.



St Columbia's Church in Wideopen very kindly donated £250.00 to us.... Unfortunately we don't have any information regarding the circumstances of the donation, but we are very grateful for it all the same. Thank you!

A talk on 28th January to the ladies of the St James' URC Group in Alnwick yielded A donation from the group of £40.00 and a full collecting tin... "You do a wonderful Job" said Gertrude Jones (right), though she declined to try Madathlon Bike 'Claire' for size! Many thanks to Ian Young for his help.





Northumbria Blood Bikes is celebrating after receiving a £300.00 donation from the GALAXY Hot Chocolate Fund. After a mere 3 days of voting we received news that we had been successful in gaining enough votes to be selected as recipients of the donation. Thank you to everybody who helped us with this vote!



On 19th January, our Chairman Peter Robertson and volunteer Nigel Barlow visited St George's Church Morpeth Ladies Group for a talk/presentation, and received a cheque & a full collecting tin. Thank you!

On Tuesday 2nd February, our volunteer Adam Morris was on blood bike duty and found himself talking to someone in the RVI, when a lady passing came over and shook his hand. "Thank you for being here as my husband is still with us through the work you do", she said, "He had emergency blood given to him in a near fatal RTA." ... "That people is why we do what we do" Says Adam. -And we agree wholeheartedly. If you volunteer with us, moments like this will come, and they make it all worthwhile!





On Monday, 1st February, volunteers Philippa Bromley & Stevie Brain presented a talk to the Sunderland Ladies Fellowship at the Salvation Army, Roker Avenue in Sunderland. Pictured left are two of the ladies with our FJR "Bright Northumbria". They kindly gave a cheque and a cash collection from the night. Thank you, ladies!

£317.00 (and two 25mm fibre washers and a Vietnamese Dong!) was the result from a recent casual day collection with volunteer Jerry Trowbridge & his chums at Northumbrian Water Head Office in Durham. Thank You Jerry, and all who donated. Now if you wanna make an offer for the fibre washers...



Red-Dog Print & Embroidery are stocking a range of Northumbria Blood Bikes branded items including baseball caps, hooded sweatshirts, beanie hats, neck/chest warmers and Embroidered over-locked badges (left), with more to follow shortly. Please take a look at their website... a percentage of the proceeds go to our charity!

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

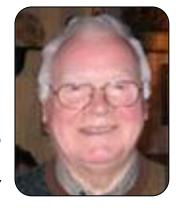


A fitting farewell to Jack... Friday 23rd January



Jack was one of the early members of DAM (Durham Advanced Motorcyclists), and a founder member & former Chairman of NAM. As such he was well known by many of our riders (all of whom hold an advanced riding qualification), and well respected among the North East motorcycling community.

"I shared many happy motorcycling moments with him" said Bob Brown, ex-Durham Police Motorcycle Sergeant & IAM examiner. "Since he left DAM to help with the formation of NAM he continued to promote advanced riding & was as enthusiastic now as he was in 1995/96 when he started with DAM. I will certainly miss his humour & words of wisdom."



Michael Goodwin, Chairman of NAM, said "Jack served the Group tirelessly since its inception. Latterly as President, he was a father figure and a source of sound advice. I know Jack took a particular pride in NAM's close association with Blood Bikes. It will be a very fitting tribute to have three Blood Bikes escorting him."



Jack will be remembered as a true gentleman and a friend to all. He will be sadly missed.

The **Bridges** Shopping centre, Sunderland.



Many thanks to our volunteers Kirsty Downham and Wilf Moralee (both pictured Left) and Chris Mitchell for attending our fundraising and awareness stand in the Bridges Shopping Mall on Saturday 23rd January.

It was an early start, but made easier by the fact that it was in a nice warm indoor mall, with a Greggs just a few feet away! What more could you possibly want !!!

They managed to collect an impressive £575.00 of donations from shoppers, which will keep our fleet fuelled for about a week... Well done!

FUTURE EVENTS FOR YOUR DIARY:

Just a couple of events at the moment, but we expect to have more before the next newsletter is published, so please check our website for new additions! NBB members can register their attendance for most of these events on our website (login required).



February Asda, Gateshead Metrocentre. 10:00-17:00

January's event at the Metrocentre was on a quieter Thursday, so the store have very kindly allowed us to return on a (busier) Saturday in February, too!





Tesco Consett Family Fun Day 11:00 - 14:00

One of our volunteers, Kirsty Lawrence, is Community Champion at this large Tesco superstore. Thanks to her, we've been invited to attend and promote our services to the shoppers in-store. Please come & join us!



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...