Connect

News for our Tenants and Service Users

DECEMBER 2010

Features:

We will remember them

A world of Music and Dance

St Martins Annual General Meeting

St Martins
SUPPORTING INDEPENDENT FUTURES

Welcome

Season's greetings and welcome to this latest edition of Connect. I hope you enjoy it and are able to take part in some of the activities St Martins has organised over the holiday period.

This time last year I was letting you know that the format for the AGM would change and I hope that those of you able to come to this year's event found it more entertaining and inclusive. I hope also that you have had a chance to read the first Service User Annual Report, published last month. It is important to us that you know what is going on across the organisation and how we are meeting our obligations to you.

Finally, I would like to wish everyone a happy and peaceful Christmas and New Year.

John Thompson Chief Executive
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We will remember them

Remembrance Sunday is Armistice Day which is also known as 'Poppy Day'.

When the Great War ended in 1918 it marked the defeat of Imperial Germany and its surrender to the Allies. The Great War started in 1914 and ended in 1918. On 11th November at 11am, when Big Ben strikes, two minutes silence is used to commemorate the surrender of Imperial Germany to the Allies and British Empire. This is when the major hostilities of World War One stopped on the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month 1918.

The "Last Post" is traditionally played to introduce the two minute silence in Remembrance Day ceremonies. It is usually 'played on a bugle. (In military life, 'The Last Post' marks the end of the day and the final farewell.) Wreaths are laid beside war memorials by companies, clubs and societies. People also leave small wooden crosses by the memorials in remembrance of a family member who died in war. A national ceremony takes place at the Cenotaph in Whitehall, London. The Queen lays the first wreath at the Cenotaph. It is important to remember many of the Germans were farmers and ordinary people. Remembrance Sunday is when we think of the Commonwealth, the Allies and the German dead. Also, we should remember the French and the USA war dead.

I personally remembered the war dead this year by visiting my local Church and praying for those who died for us to live in peace today. Remembrance Sunday remembers all those who gave their lives throughout any war; not just in WW1 and WW2.

May we remember them, for they will not be forgotten.

By Sheikh Muhammed Ali
Wilton Villas

A World of Music and Dance ... and Camping

It was a beautiful sunny Thursday afternoon when we set off to The Womad festival. We had been looking forward to this for months and it was actually happening!

We started saving for the festival as far back as January when the Activities Coordinator, Simon Julien, suggested we could go camping and enjoy a music festival. We wanted to go to Glastonbury but Simon said there was far too much drugs and alcohol available and for my wellbeing this was not a good idea. However, he was happy to take us to Womad. I had never heard of Womad before, but Simon explained that there was going to be lots of bands from all over the world performing and dancing and, as the name suggests, it would be the 'World of Music and Dance'.

This sounded very exciting but the tickets were expensive at £125.00 each. Again, Simon suggested that if I was serious about going then I needed to save £20 per month towards the trip. Simon also wrote to various local charities who made generous donations and we were able to buy the camping equipment we needed. So the four of us, Simon Julien, Robert Hutton, Simon Jones and me, Alan McGrath arrived at the campsite late afternoon. After we had checked in we had to put the tents up, which was easy with the help of the two Simons. For dinner we had what Simon called 'traditional' camping dinner – sausages and beans with lots of bread. It was delicious!

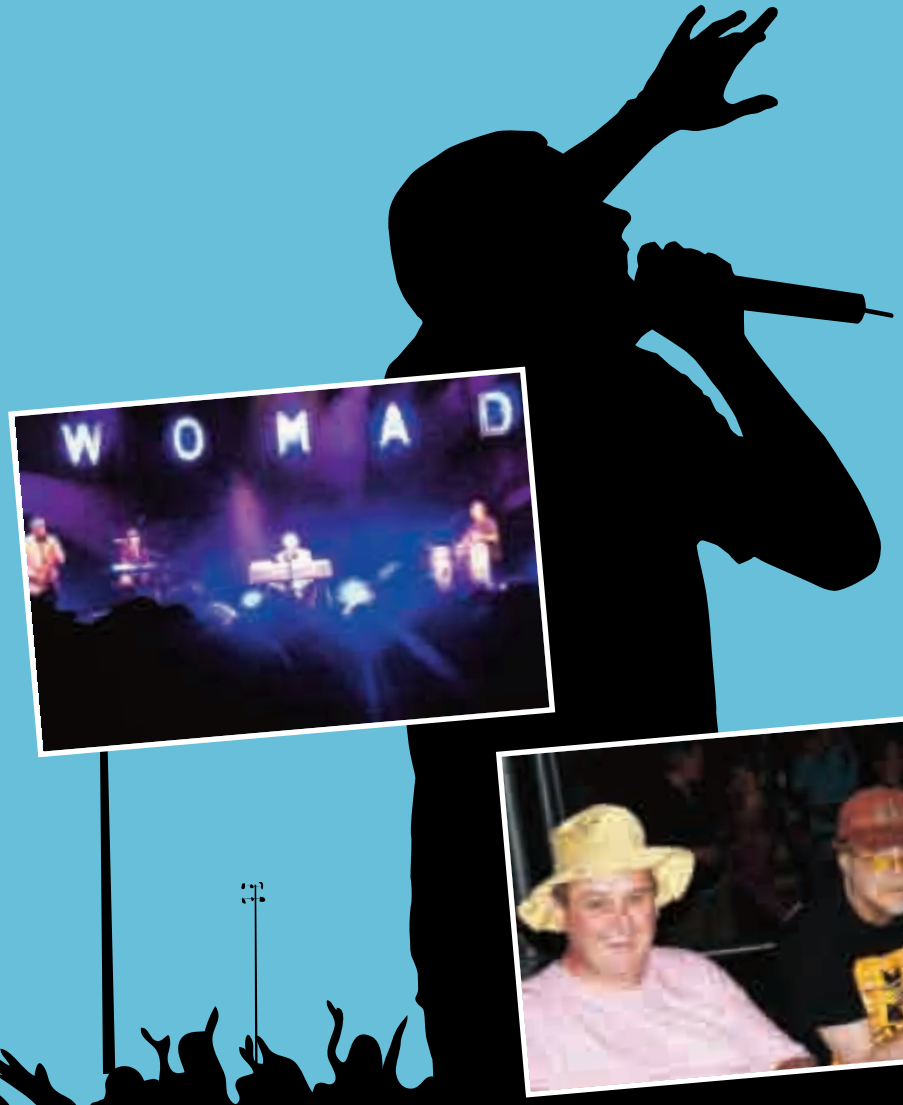
On Friday morning I decided it was time to have a wander round my home for the next 3 days. A few hundred yards from the campsite 6 main stages and lots of smaller stages had been set up. There were also lots of food stalls, and other stuff like hats, books, tee shirts and CDs. It was like a carnival with lots of families and children running around having fun.

Over the next three days we saw lots of very good bands and musicians. I had not heard of most of them before; people like Gill Scott-Heron, Salif Keita, Sentimento Gypsy Paganini, Calypso Rose Drummers from Burundi. Rolf Harris's performance was out of this world; he was the only performer I had heard of! He drew the biggest crowd and we all sang along with him. Everybody knew the words to all his songs; everybody, young and old.

For three days it was magical. The music was good, the weather was better and even the staff were on their best behaviour!

We are already planning to go in 2011, why don't you come along and join us...?

Alan McGrath
Wilton Villas



St Martins Annual General Meeting

This year's Annual General Meeting, held on the 30th September, was always going to be a bit different, but what an event it turned out to be! You were all invited to take part and so many of you did.

From photography to fashion, personal reminiscence to musical performance, this year's AGM was all about you and your talent and enthusiasm to get involved.

On display throughout the evening was photography by Ray Gorthy and Stephen Jackson, the original artwork from Dan Locke's art in the community project at Wilton Villas, a collection of drawings by Robert Omer and a selection of Angela Rickwood's poetry.

After the formal business was complete, the party could start in earnest! Terry Page spoke eloquently about his experience of St Martins over the years and Angela Rickwood recited some of her own poetry. Gary Ryan performed an outstanding set of reggae-based rap songs before everyone broke for a drink in advance of the theatrical highlight of the evening - the fashion show!

Throughout the summer, many of you had worked tirelessly with staff and the fashion designer, Masato, to produce new clothes from recycled garments. All of that work was leading up to this fashion show at which the creations would be displayed.

When everyone was sat back down, the lights dimmed, the music started, and the first model took to the catwalk under the spotlight. In all, over a dozen complete outfits were displayed, with models including both staff and residents. Many of you who had helped design and make the clothes were at the AGM to see them in action.

As the lights went back up, there were broad smiles all around the room. **We are likely to do the same sort of thing for next year's AGM too so if you want to perform, or display art, or have a great idea for an event, let us know!**

Get Involved this Christmas

It's that time of the year again... the festive season is upon us once more and it is time for you all to have fun and show goodwill to all mankind. Last year we had a great time and we planned several festive activities. We had a pool competition, which lasted a few days, and the quiz night was eventful and exciting! Service users and staff also went to the Angel to have an 'all you can eat' Xmas meal, which was greatly enjoyed by all, as usual!

Cardboard Citizens came to Wilton Villas and performed a show for us which was brilliant and creative. People exercised their lungs for our first ever Karaoke night which proved a great success. For those who wanted to relax and enjoy the Christmas period in the warmth of indoors some video/DVD nights also took place with a few nibbles and drinks. For the more adventurous, staff and service users went to view the Christmas Lights in the West End, the tree at Trafalgar Square and enjoyed mince pies and hot chocolate afterwards.

This year we want to have even more fun and the programme for the latter half of December is printed on the back of this copy of Connect. Many of last year's activities have been added to the timetable again as they were such a success.

This month's drumming workshop organised at Wilton Villas was great fun and the decorating of the Christmas tree went very well and was a great communal activity for everybody to take part in resulting in a beautiful tree. The boys are currently testing their competition and pool skills in the pool tournament, which has just started. Christmas Bingo was also a really good laugh and the prizes were great.

Thanks to everyone who has organised and taken part in activities so far this year and who will be taking part in many more fabulous events over the Christmas and New Year period!

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to everyone!

Simon Julien
Activities Coordinator

St Martins
SUPPORTING INDEPENDENT FUTURES

DECEMBER 2010 ACTIVITIES

MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT	SUN
		1	2 Go-Cart Racing	3	4	5
6 Christmas Bingo	7 Drum Work Shop	8 Theatre Trip Hackney Empire	9 Bowling	10 Decorate Christmas tree	11 Cinema Trip	12
13 Pool Match	14 Pool Match	15 Meal Out	16 Ice Skating at Hyde Park	17	18 Hot Chocolate and Mince Pies	19
20 Baking Session	21 Christmas Party	22 Food Shop	23	24 Christmas Eve Meal	25 Christmas Day Meal	26 Board Games Night
27	28 DVD Night	29 Wii Night	30	31 New Year's Eve Buffet		

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