



**The Queen's Award
for Voluntary Service**

www.nwbb-lancs.org

January 2017 Newsletter



Welcome to the first Newsletter of 2017:

HAPPY NEW YEAR:

"Tide & Time wait for no man", (St. Marher AD:1225) and never a truer word spoken, but where has the time gone? It seems like only yesterday when we started.



In August 2011 three of us got together at Rivington Barn after I heard that Graham Jones and Kevin Taylor were looking at setting up a Blood Bike Group to cover the whole of the North West. At this time there were none in the North of the UK.

As we all know now, there were a couple of guys thinking of setting up groups in Manchester and Liverpool, so we left them to that.

Norman Corke (now Merseyside & Cheshire Blood Bikes) joined us in September and in January 2012 Scott Miller and Andy Gilroy joined us, Dave Sammons, Graham Miller and Haydn Williams shortly after along with a few more.

Graham Jones and I started having meetings with Lancashire Teaching Hospitals (Preston & Chorley) who couldn't believe we would do what

we do for free. It took quite a while to convince them of our sincerity, but gradually we did, especially Maria Burn from the Path lab at RPH who remains our staunchest supporter.

We advertised and by May we went live with just 12 volunteers and on the first night Haydn Williams was the duty rider, but didn't get a call. Rumour has it that he slept on the settee in his bike gear 😊.

Word spread and more and more members joined us and the Hospitals started to use us. It soon became clear that it was going to work. Building up a trust with Lancashire Teaching Hospitals was the hurdle, but as soon as they realised we were what we said we were, the trust came and it gave us the model to go to other Hospital Trusts and gradually, one by one they came on board.

The times were quite trying and we had to find the best way of dealing with calls and fortunately Dave Sammons found Switchboardfree after trying several others and we still use them today.

For those who don't know Dave Sammons he left us to become an Ambulance man and is still a staunch supporter, and has mentioned us to his colleagues, hence we have a great working relationship with NWAS.

More and more people joined us and it was soon realised that we needed a Controller team and what a great team we have now.

At first Denise and I got to know everyone because uniform, ID's etc., were collected from our house, but now we have more than 350 members, which is simply amazing, so if I ask

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who you are please don't be offended, I get asked too 😊.

As most of you know, in our first year we completed 812 jobs.

Now, thanks to all members, past & present we have reached an unbelievable goal:



As you can see the Controller was Neil McCall and the Rider Alan Heyes, but it could have been anyone.

Who do we help?

We rarely get to know who we've helped, but we know they must be in the thousands, because even taking a single sample for analysis has helped that one patient find out what's wrong with him/her quickly and at no cost to the hospital. The cost of Blood is enormous and add that to the cost of transport and the bill shoots up, except with us 😊.

In one of the films made by the National Lottery a Matron at RPH said that what we do is "vital" and whatever else is said we can't better that word.

Her Majesty The Queen has even recognised us as "The Best", so apart from being mentioned by World Leaders there is no higher accolade.

Be proud you've earned the right.

What will 2017 bring us?

More members will join and more will leave for one reason or another, but collectively we have

made NWBB the largest and best Blood Bike group in the UK and we should all be proud of what we do.

In 2015 we did approximately 10,000 call outs which is 833 calls per month on average, more than we did in our first year. In 2016 we did over 12,000, that's more than 1,000 per month. When will it level out? 😊

In May this year we will be celebrating our 5th anniversary and we are looking at holding a "Beer Festival", thanks to Haydn & Angela Williams who have started their own microbrewery.

I have already sourced a field courtesy of Pete Marquis Demolition and Plant Hire, an old client of mine who owns loads of land in Clifton. More on that nearer the time, although we are looking for someone who can provide entertainment, Band, Comedian, etc. Free of course.....

So, What's on the horizon:

Rota system:

Neil McCall, and consultation with Duncan Oag has been in regular contact with a pair of software writers who write software for charities and they are working hard on a new bespoke Membership and Rota system. Neil has already been testing some of the new systems, but they are not ready yet.

Like anything new there will be hiccups and it will need tweaking, it will also flummox some people at first and I'll be first in the queue 😊, but it will take us away from Google Docs, which is good, but there are problems with it.

Bikes:

As some will know we have purchased some new bikes and retired some older ones, thanks to funds brought in by you.

The District Governor of the Rotary for Lancs & Cumbria has chosen us for his charity and is hoping to raise enough money to buy us, and Blood Bikes Cumbria, a brand new bike each,

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hence we have prioritised talks to Rotary Clubs. If anyone feels they can help out with talks, especially Rotary ones (you get fed and watered) contact Brenda Taylor talks@nwbb-lancs.org and she will put you on the list. If you're not sure about doing them you can always come along to a talk any of the existing presenters are doing, just let them know.

Blues & Twos:

I am hoping to get more advanced riders trained in the use of B&T's so they can be on call for Very Urgent & Emergency calls.

Advanced Riders:

As you know we have left NABB, simply because one of their rules states that every rider **MUST** be an advanced rider. The fact that we are so big we have not been able to achieve that, but we are suggesting that all riders take advantage of our offer of £25 when a rider has successfully completed an advanced course.

We have several members who are IAM National Observers who can put you through the paces and there are even offers from the IAM at times, reducing the cost even further. It makes sense to do the course for your own safety, let alone allowing you to use a fleet bike.

Funds & Donations:

Many of you throughout the years have given talks, attended events and quite rightly we should shout about them, because without these we can't function. I used to publish them with images in these Newsletters, but in fairness to everyone I have stopped because there are only a few of us who can do that, yet every single member gives up as much time as they can.

That doesn't mean they can't be put on Face Ache though 😊.

Good times and Bad times:

We have all had good times, especially in summer when we ride in lovely weather knowing we are helping someone or we attend events and meet other members especially Controllers.

Some of us get embarrassed when told how well we have done and I won't forgive Lee Townsend for secretly plotting to have me presented with the Christmas Star by the BBC News team, because I only got it because of you.

We have sad times too, none more so than losing a friend and member, Marcel.

We have also been asked to escort several funerals and have done so professionally with the help of Lancashire Constabulary.

It's never a good thing to do, but it shows our respect for our fellow man.

I'm going to finish this off with a massive

Thank You

To all members and wish you and your loved ones all the very best for 2017.

Remember what we do is

“VITAL”

but

***NO JOURNEY IS SO URGENT AS
TO PUT YOUR OWN LIFE AT
RISK***

Paul (Founder, Chairman & Trustee)

If I've missed or forgotten something, forgive me, (but let me know, I can always do another supplement) also, if you want something including in the next newsletter? Feel free to Email your copy (text and images PLEASE) directly to me, chairman@nwbb-lancs.org

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