

# The MASE Monthly Newsletter

## June 2015

### Winners of Queen's Award for Voluntary Service



### Stafford Launch



The launch of the Stafford MASE Group was a great success, with 135 people attending. Some were dignitaries, some were Carers and cared for from our other groups who came along to show their support. Many were new faces to the MASE who wanted to see what it was all about.

The evening was a huge success and everyone had a good time. We look forward to the numbers increasing as the months go by.

This local Group is for the people of Stafford and we hope they will come along and enjoy the evenings. Please remember to spread the word if you know someone who would benefit from our group.

### Poignant words of a Carer . . . . .

I've just finished reading a novel and short story, both by the same author, both reasonably well written, enjoyable and easy to read. Not really my kind of read, but ones I turn to after finishing something more substantial.

So why am I left feeling dissatisfied and rather empty? They were basically romantic stories, love stories with a happy ending. My reaction - if only . . . . .

For some reason, today, the feeling of loneliness and emptiness loom large. Why today, I don't know, nor do I imagine such feelings come from reading a couple of love stories. No, these feelings are deep. They come to the surface from time to time, like an earthquake which will subside but the effects of which continue to rumble around. Albeit more quietly and more manageable but still there, waiting to surface again.

I had a love story which lasted for nearly fifty years, married to a generous, funny, adventurous man. Over the years we had grown together, understanding each other's needs and with an uncanny ability to almost read each other's thoughts.

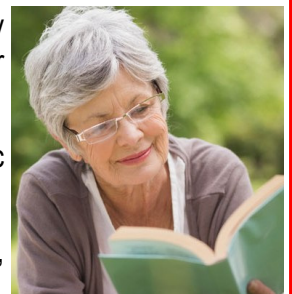
Sadly, several years ago that relationship began to change with my husband's on-set of dementia. Gradually, the man I married began to disappear. Initially, the change was quite subtle, just small things happening which individually were of no consequence. But those small things escalated and took on greater significance. Frustration and anger began to take over when my husband realised he could not function in ways he had always done. He could no longer deal with our finances and for a time didn't trust me with them. His understanding of situations became very confused, which caused greater frustration and anger, which eventually turned into violence.

For the past two years my husband has been in a care home. He is well looked after and is happy in his own world. When I visit, which I do regularly, I have no expectations. I don't know how he will be, or how he has been. There are still periods of real aggression when carers try to help him. He recognises me when he sees me, but not as his wife, I think possibly in the way he recognises his carers.

My husband, the father of our two sons, has moved away from us and will continue to do so.

A happy ending? Hopefully a peaceful ending with I suspect a feeling of relief.

No not a happy love story ending, but years of memories of love, and happiness and friendship.



Elaine Dunlop ☎ 01785 823110 or 07812 440226  
Daphne Sharp ☎ 01785 211140 or 07939 505455

**MASE Co-ordinators**

✉ Elaine.dunlop12@btinternet.com  
✉ Daphne.ssharp@ntlworld.com

## Interesting Statistics

For the first time in history there are **11 million people aged 65 or over** in the UK



**3 Million**  
people in the UK  
are aged 80 or over



A baby born in 2011 is almost eight times more likely to reach 100 than one born in 1931

## Want to get away from it all? Why not try a 'Poppy Break'?



The British Legion Poppy Break offers much-needed breaks to ex-Service and serving personnel and their families. If you or a member of your family is recovering from an illness, bereavement or other life affecting event, the Legion can provide a comfortable and enjoyable break. There are four Break Centres located in prime locations around the country, and for the [family breaks](#), they also have close ties with Parkdean and Haven Holiday Parks.

**Families say: 'If it wasn't for the Legion we wouldn't have had a family holiday, it was lovely just to get away'.**

**How to apply:** British Legion Poppy Break services are available to serving or ex-Service men or women and/or their dependants who are in genuine need of a break. (Please note that all applications are assessed on the basis of need and means.) Contact your local Legion office to apply or call **0808 802 8080 for more information.**

**One simple telephone call could make a world of difference to Carers and their families.**

## Creating a Song and Dance (for You!!)

Those living with dementia and their carers are invited to join professional singing and dancing practitioners in the Stafford and Cannock area for **Creating a Song and Dance (for You!!)**. This is a research and development project that builds on the current work being delivered in Stafford and Cannock community.

Service users and their carers in the community have a chance to meet and socialise with others and engage in an activity with their partner or loved one in a safe and supportive environment, rekindling interests and connections.

Sessions are free and will commence at : **Berkswich Methodist Church, Stafford on Monday 8 June and St Barnabas Community Hall, Cannock on Tuesday 30 June.**

For more information contact Helen Wilson on 01785 221328 or email [helen.wilson@sssft.nhs.uk](mailto:helen.wilson@sssft.nhs.uk)



## Great Wyrley Group will close after the Group on 6 July 2015

Trustees of the MASE are very sad to announce the MASE in Great Wyrley will close after the Group on 6 July 2015. This decision has not been an easy one to make; but sadly, although the numbers each month are reasonable, we do not get enough local people attending to make the group viable for the Charity.

However there is light at the end of the tunnel, as Carers and cared for from Great Wyrley will be made most welcome if they wish to attend the Hednesford Group which is held at the Aquarius Ballroom WS15 2EH, on the last Thursday of the month, starting at 7.00 and ending at 9.00.

We would extend our sincere thanks to Kim, Ken and Dave who welcomed us five years ago, and who have supported us every month. Special thanks to Kim who always laid on a lovely buffet and looked after the needs of the MASE.

Also to our volunteers, past and present - you have all been wonderful and we could not have run the groups without your commitment to the MASE.

**Monday 6th July will be the final Group at Great Wyrley, so let's celebrate the fun we have shared and the lasting friendships that have been made over the past five years.**

**If you have a computer please take a look at our website which covers all MASE activities: [www.themasegroup.com](http://www.themasegroup.com)**

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