

THE ASSOCIATION OF FRIENDS OF THE DERWEN

Founded in 1967, the Centenary Year of the birth of Dame Agnes Hunt DBE, RRC
Registered Charity No. 208745

Treasurer:

Richard Beaman
10 Oak Drive
Oswestry
Shropshire
SY11 2RU

Executive Principal:

Ruth Thomas
ruth.thomas@derwen.ac.uk

Secretary:

Paul Crosby
Derwen College
Oswestry
Shropshire
SY11 3JA

NEWSLETTER 2013-14

THE COLLEGE

Derwen is a vibrant and forward-looking College. Its specialism is the teaching of vocational skills in real work settings. The whole learning experience is focused on life after Derwen and we are very proud of our students' achievements. When they leave us students are equipped with the skills necessary to move forward with their own dreams and aspirations. Students work in real work settings such as the farm shop, the office, a gallery, a restaurant and the cafes. They do estate work, care for our small and not so small animals, and they use their talents in craft, art and design. Derwen offers students the chance to achieve genuine employment skills in all these areas.



The past twelve months have been an incredibly challenging period for the College and staff have worked consciously to ensure that the challenges and changes have not had a negative impact for the students and for the College. Indeed this has been another successful year for students and for the College. The achievements include Learner Voice Leading Provider of the Year, Makaton Centre of Excellence (renewed), various successes in national competitions and the excellent transition outcomes for students leaving us to move in to independent living and in to employment and further education.

The new state-of-the-art Food Production Centre is now open and offers many new opportunities for our students. We are working with the local community to strengthen the concept of the Derwen brand.

The Derwen College football team have become Derwen New Saints in partnership with The New Saints FC to play matches in the North Wales PAN Disability Football competition and 3 Counties Ability Counts League.





This year we have experienced success in national competitions and we have taken part in the National Skills Show. The feedback has been exceptional. The students put on two showcases, one showcase was singing and signing and the second showcase was a martial arts competition.



The Gallery has hosted a new exhibition, Landscapes through the Seasons. There are some stunning works on display.

COMMUNITY LINKS



This year we have continued to maintain and develop thriving and diverse community links. During the summer months we provided floral displays in Oswestry and Llangollen. The students produced beautiful hanging baskets by the score.

We took part in the Oswestry Christmas parade and we continued to go out to the many Farmers Markets and Community Fetes during the year.



We link with parents of prospective, current and past students, customers and friends throughout the UK, all of whom provide effective support for our social enterprises and our fund raising. This in turn supports the College to deliver a high quality curriculum with effective student support.

FUTURE PLANS

The College faces unparalleled challenges as we strive to maintain and improve on standards of excellence in teaching and learning at a time when funding constraints are both tighter and more unpredictable than ever before. The College has earned a reputation for delivering outstanding provision and we will continue to build on this excellent record of outstanding. We are [encouraging culture of enterprise](#) and being increasingly imaginative and active. To help meet the needs of the Government localism agenda the College has purchased a day provision in Wales and is working with Shropshire Council to develop local day provisions mid and south Shropshire. Excitingly

there is a planned re-development of the garden centre at the college to ensure we have the most up to date teaching facilities. The College is also fund raising for play equipment for Derwen Estates and towards a refurbishment of the Coffee Shop. This will help engage the community and local schools into using our excellent facilities.

SUPPORT FROM FRIENDS

The Friends of the Derwen lead the fundraising for the College and for the last two years have been raising funds for a new Chalet at Barmouth which was opened at Easter this year. It has been a real favourite with students and has been fully used during the whole summer.



Two students walked in their onesies

Our major fund raising for the year started with the sponsored walk which nearly had to be cancelled due to there being 2ft of snow along our normal route. Thanks to a massive effort by both the committee and the Derwen staff we were able to have a reduced walk through the College campus. Anyone who was involved on the day will not forget it. Despite all these problems we raised over £18,000 which was a staggering amount considering the conditions.

The Summer Fete and Open Day in June was very successful and raised nearly £14,000 which included £651 match funding from Barclays Bank. The Friends also raised over £2,200 on a golf day in September that was extremely well supported. Finally the Friends were able to collect £765 from a flag day in Oswestry.

We have also been very fortunate to have financial support from other sources which include the following:-

- A duck race and BBQ organised by Friends at St. Oswald's Church which despite wind and rain managed to raise £575;
- A legacy of £2,000 from the late Mr D C Gander; and
- A sponsored cycle ride by two directors from Rees Astley Insurance Brokers of Shrewsbury who raised over £5,000.



The Friends are pleased to have supported the opening of the Bradbury Food Centre and have contributed towards the landscaping of Jubilee Square which is in front of the new centre. The Friends have supported students' and trainees' trips to Blackpool, Alton Towers and Emmerdale. We are also pleased to confirm that we have raised the funds needed to contribute towards a new minibus which is sponsored by the Lord's Taverners but there has been a delay in its delivery and the College is now expecting to receive it in the spring.

Our major project for this year is the £30,000 grant that we are giving towards the improvements to the Garden Centre which will mean that the Centre will have a far greater student and customer focus.

In addition to this major project, the Friends will once again be funding trips for students and trainees, supporting Riding for the Disabled and awarding a number of personal grants to needy students and trainees. Success of the fund raising events is essential in supporting such commitments to the students and the College.

The Committee would like to thank all of our Friends – the walkers, stallholders, sponsors and guests – who have helped this year’s fundraising. This has made it possible for the Friends to support the two major projects - the new minibus and landscaping of the new Jubilee Square - while continuing to support students and trainees in other ways, including many leisure and social activities.

Once again the Friends are organising two major activities this year – the Sponsored Walk that will take place on Sunday 6th April and the Summer Fete and Open Day on Thursday 29th May. We look forward to welcoming you on both of these occasions. If that is not possible you can still help – by completing the attached form to sponsor one of the many students taking part in the Walk. They are always delighted to know they have the support of a friend. If you cannot come to the Fete, please let us know if you would like us to send you tickets for the Grand Raffle, which is a major feature of the afternoon.

... AND FINALLY

2013 has seen many changes and we would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who has supported us in the past.

The Annual General Meeting of the Association will be held in the Orangery Restaurant on Tuesday 4th March 2014 commencing at 8.00 p.m. You are most welcome to attend or to send any ideas you would like to have put forward at the meeting regarding future fundraising events or activities. We hope to see you at our

DERWEN SPONSORED WALK - SUNDAY 6TH APRIL
DERWEN FETE AND OPEN DAY - THURSDAY 29TH MAY

DERWEN SPONSORED WALK

Organised by the Friends of the Derwen – Registered Charity No. 208745

TO: Paul Crosby, Derwen College, Oswestry, Shropshire SY11 3JA

I would like to sponsor a student of Derwen College in the Sponsored Walk on Sunday, 6th April 2014.

I will pay a total of £ for this student completing the walk.

Name:

If you are a UK Taxpayer
please tick this box ✓

Address:

.....

Signature

Please help us make even more money! If you are a UK Taxpayer and have paid enough tax, we can claim an extra **25p** for every **£1** you donate at no cost or inconvenience to you. Please tick the box above. ✓