



*We wish you a very Happy Christmas*

**through the medium of our end of Term  
Newsletter December 2015**



If you received and read our last Newsletter you will have seen that I listed a few of my (wildest) dreams for Skillway. Well none of them have come to fruition (yet!) but we have had some splendid support from various organisations and lovely people:



Wendy Varcoe visited the workshops with her staff from Community Foundation for Surrey, prior to their move of office to Godalming.

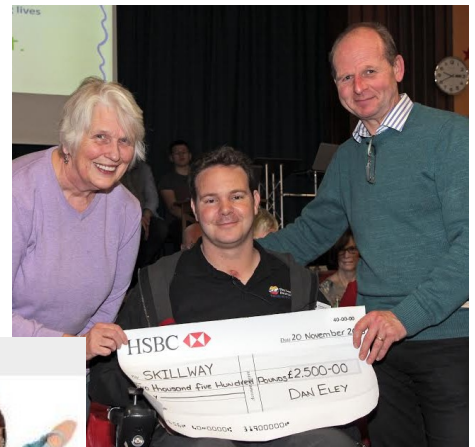
In the summer we also had a splendid Concert on the Godalming Bandstand, organised as usual by Joy Poulter, and sponsored by Hart Brown who ran a Pimms Tent. The Heroes Band played their brilliant best and a collection was taken for Skillway. The end result of over £1,000 in the Skillway Bank was superb and we thank everyone who contributed in any way.

Compton Church were kind enough to invite me to speak at one of their Sunday Services and were very generous in the collection that was taken on that day. Parsons Brinckerhoff who supported our acquisition of 2 Go Karts

for the students to renovate and service, then drive at Dunsfold Park, have been kind enough to support another grant request, for which we await the outcome. Do watch the Go Kart video which is on the Home page of our website.

Representatives of Thermotech and Sentesoftware in Guildford are visiting us again very soon and we hope to make some exciting announcements soon about our plans for the New Year.

Dan Eley and his redoubtable Mum Carolyn, hosted another great Quiz Night at Broadwater School last month. I think they were worried because the evening clashed with another well-known host of Quizzes, but such is the pull of Quizmaster Mark's questions, the Hall was full and Skillway were delighted to be presented with a cheque for £2,500 from the evening. Godalming College students worked hard on the evening, and it demonstrated how effective Dan's mentoring and example are. We are pleased that Dan has been paired with a local lad attending Skillway, who is working hard to overcome some very significant problems in his life.



**g**  
GODALMING CHORAL SOCIETY

**hallelujah**

**Hummel:  
Mass in B flat**  
**Charpentier:  
Te Deum**  
**A Selection of  
seasonal carols**

**Saturday  
12<sup>th</sup> December 2015  
7.30pm**

The Great Hall, Charterhouse,  
Godalming, GU7 2DX

**Conductor: Michael Veazey  
Orchestra Eroica**

**Tickets  
(£15, students £8)**

Record Corner, Pound Lane, Godalming  
Online: [www.godalmingchoral.org.uk](http://www.godalmingchoral.org.uk)  
Guildford Tourist Information Centre  
155 High Street Guildford, GU4 4SQ  
Box Office: 07505 203468  
or at the door

in support of

*The Cellar Café and  
Skillway charity event*

**"A TASTE  
OF INDIA"  
AUCTION OF PROMISES**



We shared with The Cellar a super evening of fun and food with incredible fund-raising through an Auction of Promises – over £5,000 to be shared between us. A taste of India was experienced through the decorations, the food and the classical Indian dance performed by a local girl. We were privileged to be hosted at Clock Barn Hall by Isabel and Kevin Mason – the venue was perfect for our function. We are very grateful to them, to all the helpers and most of all to the donors of some very worthwhile Promises. Thank you all.

In the next few days, we are fortunate to be able to make a short presentation at the Christmas Concert being staged by the Godalming Choral Society, and allowed to take a voluntary retiring collection. It is at Charterhouse on Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> December at 7.30 pm and you can get tickets at the door.



And not forgetting in any way, the wonderful individuals and small grant makers who have donated funds over the course of the year. The Three Lions in Meadrow has made us their local Charity to support over the whole year – is anyone else able to do that for us in 2016?

So what about Skillway's daily life? We started the term with a three day First Aid at Work Course attended by 9 of the staff and volunteers. It was a good team building exercise as well as qualifying us all in first aid. We have again hosted a Police recruit who came to us for three days to experience working amongst young people, and I have subsequently attended a Crime Stoppers event to learn more about that and the work done at Mount Browne.

We have had a visit from a member of the Hampshire County Council team who is working on improving the training of young people to enter the construction industry and tying that in with builders, so that they can give work experience and apprenticeships to them. There was a lot of synergy with what we do and we hope to develop this link further. This also ties in with our discussion concerning the future path for Skillway – we want to stick with what we are good at, but we also regret that life is changing around us. The ways that young people are supported in acquiring skills for life and being taught manual skills is changing and there is greater emphasis on helping and supporting “NEETS” – that is “Not in Education, Employment or Training” We have looked at how we can work with these young people aged 16-19 and hope to offer some courses suitable for them. We do feel that earlier interventions have a much better chance of success, but have to work within the real world.

We are continuing to offer some segments of BTech and are expanding the specific topic areas with a few pupils.

So what are the challenges ?

Well they are **big** ones: The economic climate in the country is affecting many parts of life – some very visible, some behind the scenes. Young people are not supported as well as they have been and Charities are taking more of the strain in offering interventions. But Charities are also now all trying to source the same diminishing stream of grants and funds and charitable donations. Skillway is affected by this – there is no denying it. We will bend with the wind and do what we can to adapt to the circumstances but life is tough. This is where maybe YOU as a reader of this Newsletter can help us:

- We want / need donations, big and small. Blunt, but true.
- We would like the names of people who can influence donations – an introduction if you like - to philanthropists and benefactors and grant-making trusts or organisations who might be able to help us
- We also need someone with multi-media art skills who would like to volunteer to help teach some challenged young people on a Monday at the workshops - they are great kids underneath, but emotionally vulnerable. If you might be able to help, or “know a man who can” then please contact Greg on 01483 414081 or [skillwayworkshop@talktalk.net](mailto:skillwayworkshop@talktalk.net)
- And of course, we would welcome your prayers for the whole organisation and for all who work within it to help this embattled next generation.

Dear Reader - Thank you for reading all of the above. Thank you for being there for us, supporting us in all kinds of ways. It is comforting and encouraging to know that you are there, and interested in what we do.

I cannot finish without saying a huge thank you to the tutors at Skillway – they are cheerful, stoical, generous with their time and expertise – and they are a marvellous team. Skillway just would not exist without you.

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