



KALEIDOSCOPE OF LIFE

OUR volunteers and staff come from all walks of life. Anyone who reads the Volunteer Newsletter regularly will be very aware of this.

And this edition is no different in sharing the personal journeys our team has travelled or is currently undertaking.

Included are a Hollywood movie star, a chess champion, bank workers pouring tea and YOU...our wonderful volunteers.

ISSUE 2026/3
WELCOME TO THE
AUTUMN
EDITION OF YOUR
REGULAR NEWSLETTER. IT
IS FOR YOU - THE
KILBRYDE HOSPICE TEAM
OF VOLUNTEERS.
WE HOPE YOU ENJOY IT.
PLEASE SEND US YOUR
NEWS AND PICS FOR THE
NEXT EDITION



JOHN RAE: At the wheel

Meet John Rae

ONE of our longest serving volunteers, John Rae, celebrated his 80th birthday in April. A butcher by trade, he has been a resident of East Kilbride for 51 years and a volunteer with Kilbryde Hospice for 15 of those years.

Over that time, John has taken on numerous voluntary roles since the early days at The Red Deer Centre in Westwood when he started as an outpatient driver, which he still does to this day.

Also on his Kilbryde Volunteer CV is head of a walking group, taking him far and wide in the Glasgow area. (see P2)

80 and counting

by John
Rae

I was a butcher in Scotbeef, East Kilbride, for 39 years. I retired on my 65th birthday, which was a Friday, and never went back.

The company had started off in Brancumhall before making way for housing, then moved to College Milton before building a huge factory in Easterhouse.

I finished my time in College Milton, the factory is still there but the company has sold out to an English firm.

My colleagues all said 'you'll be back' - they even tried to get me to go back part-time but I had made up my mind - I was retired and that was that!

Before that I had worked in butchers shops all over Glasgow and had left to work as an insurance man, going door-to-door, which I loved.

Unfortunately another territory was broken up and I was given a rough area in the East End of Glasgow and thought 'I am not doing that'.

Around then we decided to move to East Kilbride as, at that time, if you got a job in the town the Development Corporation gave you a house.

So I started with Scotbeef in June 1975 and got a house in September of that year...we have been at that same address now for 51 years.

My daughter, Sharon, and son-in-law Stuart are now parents to my two grandchildren, Chloe who is 27 this year and 22 year-old Lewis.

After retiring from Scotbeef in April 2011 I started volunteering with Kilbryde Hospice and have been here 15 years.

I had volunteered for a short time with a charity called Hands On Leap [now called The Leap Project] doing odd jobs for people which I enjoyed.

My wife Sadie had cancer around 18 years ago and was supported by Lanrkshire Cancer Care, so that's why I started volunteering in the first place.

A job which should take no more than half-an-hour would sometimes last two hours as I would end up blethering to people.

If the resident happened to come from Glasgow that was it! We would start reminiscing about old Glasgow.



GARDEN HOUR: John (left) mucking in

Although I loved volunteering there, I was starting to struggle lifting things, it was affecting my back, and I knew I would have to leave.

Sadie had told me there was a notice in the window of the hospice shop and they were looking for a driver.

The hospice was based in The Red Deer Centre at the time and I was given the job of driving patients to and from the centre.

After a while I started a walking group, driving patients to places like Rouken Glen and Maxwell Park in Glasgow and sometimes further afield.

We discovered a park in Cambuslang, which no one knew about, so I would take the group there and they loved it.

When we moved to the current hospice I started doing the garden but recently it has been too much for me, bending down, lifting and suchlike.

But I still help in the garden, watering the plants, litter picking around the grounds and odd things but everything else is not good for the 'old knees'.

Just recently I met my old gaffer from Scotbeef in the car park here and I never recognised him, but he knew me and shouted "John Rae!"

He told me I hadn't changed any. I told him what I tell everyone...I am going to keep going at Kilbryde Hospice until I know it is time to chuck it!

John Rae

MY JOURNEY

by Sister
Sophie

I entered the Convent of Franciscan Sisters of Mill Hill when I was 16-years-old and was at an exhibition event in Glasgow. We never did any outside studies until we were fully professed, after which we could choose our own vocation, so I chose nursing.

Then I went to Drogheda in Ireland to do general nursing and came across a child with additional support needs in the unit where I was working.

I wasn't happy with the way some of the staff were treating him. They would wash his face and wash his hands and declare him ready.

But I would say 'He is not ready' and would get him ready properly and that is when I became involved in caring for those with special needs.

I moved back to work at a home in Scotland, a village in Midlothian called Rosewell, and it was there I first met an autistic child and he was something else!

After that I worked with The Irish Society for Autism, who sent me over to North Carolina for six months to learn more about looking after people with the condition.

It was there that I met Dustin Hoffman, who played an autistic character in The Rain Man film, and had officially opened an autism training centre.

They were introducing autistic people into hotels, restaurants, Pizza Huts and other places as they could be trained to do the job properly.

Every instruction would be carried out exactly - there were no half-measures - and that is where I would be working to get to learn what knowledge I could bring back to Ireland.

The Society opened an Autistic Farm in County Kildare and I was sent there although I told them I knew nothing about farming.

But I was told that I would be looking after 800 pheasants, as well as the resident children, and all I had to do was keep quiet and they would lay eggs.



FAR TRAVELLED: Pheasant farming and a film star both played a part in Sister Sophie's amazing journey

Through time, we had a contract with a local shooting club and they bought the pheasants, so that's how we made the money to run the farm.

When I started volunteering with Kilbryde Hospice, I told Doctor Richards that he could forget about me being the chaplain.

People do sometimes ask for spiritual guidance though and after speaking to a patient I maybe suggest saying a prayer. There was one man who said to me when I walked in: "Ah don't kick wi' the same fit as you", so I said: "Well you stand on my toe and you'll know what fit ah kick wi'!"

Another person said: "I'm an Atheist". I said: "You're a what? God is sitting behind you and he'll push you off that bed one day."

So it depends on your approach. People might not agree with me but I don't care. I'm not going in to read the Bible to them.

I am going in to see what is in their own mind about end-of-life. Some will say they're dying and I will say that 'so am I' - we all know that.

In that way you can divert them and keep them on your side of end-of-life but you cannot go in and quote scripture to them.

You have to wait for the opportunity. I usually say 'all faiths, one faith or no faith, it doesn't matter. It is not my policy to find out'.

CHESS & CHELSEA

I have been volunteering for Kilbryde Hospice for 14 years. I applied and got my induction when there was a vacancy and, ever since then, I have loved working for Kilbryde. Initially I was doing the media but for the last seven or eight years I have been on the till, which I enjoy.

As it is a great cause, which is really good, because of that I don't mind giving up my time because I get myself into a routine each day as a volunteer, from 9am to 5pm, Tuesday to Saturday, which means I get Sunday and Monday off to do things I want to do.

I am a keen chess player and the East Kilbride Club Champion - this year is a four-way tie but last year I was outright winner. Hilda, my favourite boss, doesn't mind me getting time off for the chess tournaments as she knows I will come back and so doesn't need to worry.

I also play Dungeons & Dragons (D&D) online roleplaying game and am a Dungeon Master. When I am not Dungeon Master I play a character called Thunderstone the Dwarf, who has been alive a long time which is good.

I am also a singer-songwriter with my own 12-track album called Swanea Riverside. It was recorded at Carlton Recording Studios with Adam Neville on drums and Lewis McPherson on bass.

I have also sent some stuff to the BBC, so fingers crossed something will happen with that. But I just love working for the hospice, love getting up every day, working on the tills...with a wee coffee here and there.

I treat the till as if it was my pet and I am very proficient with it. Over the years I have worked in all the hospice shops. East Kilbride, Hamilton and Rutherglen shops were't open when I started with Kilbryde Hospice.

I would see bosses and volunteers come and go, changes in location from warehouses to retail parks and I'm still here!

But it is really rewarding working as a volunteer with Kilbryde Hospice and able to attend the Volunteer Events that are held twice a year and it was good recently to get my certificate for 10+ year volunteering.



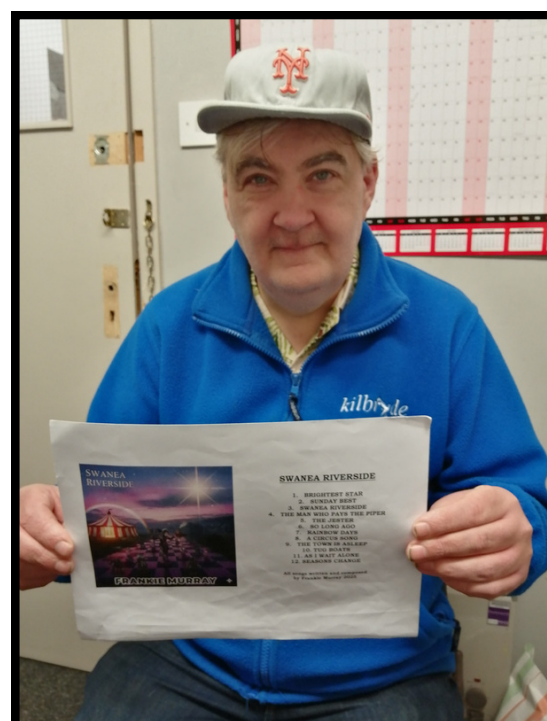
I support Chelsea Football Club - I have supported them since Frank Lampard was brilliant as a player and is now a successful manager at Coventry City.

I've been to Chelsea's ground, Stamford Bridge, flew down to London, did the stadium tour and inside the trophy room which was brilliant.

I recently competed in my third chess championship, which took place in Hamilton, so was easy to get to. When you enter the Scottish Championship you are up against the best players from different countries.

In this year's Scottish event I did well with two wins, four draws and three losses against strong opposition.

It was my third Scottish Championship, but I've played in many tournaments and have won 20 trophies.



Frankie Murray



CD RELEASE: Frankie combines music (left), chess and Chelsea FC (above) with his dedication as a volunteer in our retail team

Picture Special

INTEREST FREE: A group of Barclays Bank staff members spent a day at the hospice. Some worked in the garden, others in retail and at the Volunteer Thank You Event, pictured here.



TABLES CLEARED:
Almost moving
too fast for the
photo to be taken



TEAS POURED:
Milk and two,
please and thanks



WELCOME DRINK:
Prosecco or Noseco
was the choice



BUFFET TIME: The
spread was well
received by all

HAVING A 'MAD' DAY

HAVING a Mad Day can mean a lot of things but for our regular Barclays Bank group of volunteers it signals that Make A Difference Day is coming up.

Planning everything, which includes putting a call out to her colleagues to help at Kilbryde Hospice is Lisa Palmer, who spoke to the Newsletter while blowing up balloons for the Volunteer Thank You Event.

Lisa said: “We have been doing this for five years. At first it was just for one day but now we volunteer at the hospice for two days each time we are here.

“It started off with around 10 people but more recently we have had 26 or 27 who come along and help out.

“Depending on how many I can get to volunteer the bank pays more if I get more - anything between five and 24 I get £500 and for 25 and above I get £1,000.

“Barclays Bank will then give that money to the charity directly. Initially when we started coming to the hospice it was for the garden.

More recently Lisa and Fiona [Volunteer Support Officer] were talking and Fiona mentioned that she was short of volunteers for the summer thank-you event.

Lisa said her team could do another day and help out which meant that more of the hospice volunteers could enjoy the event thanks to the Barclays volunteers.

“We have come to the church hall for the last three years - a lot of our guys have been here before and every single person who has done it has found it rewarding.

“Don’t get me wrong, it’s a day off work, but we are not coming here for a ‘jolly’, we are coming here to work and reap the benefits of that.

“What has been so good for everyone from Barclays is the staff and volunteers from the hospice who come up and thank them for being here.

“They say ‘thanks for doing this, it is really appreciated’ and I think it brings home to our people how much it is needed,” Lisa added.



Lisa also has a special personal and heartwarming reason for organising and helping the Barclays team each time they are here.

Her mum, Maureen Murray, was a Kilbryde Hospice in-patient, for two and a half weeks, six years ago.

Although it was a difficult time, Lisa is full of praise for the staff and volunteers in the IPU as well as the catering department.

She explained: “Because it was oesophageal cancer my mum had, the chefs would make special food for her.

“So for me it is good to give something back to Kilbryde and help make a difference with my colleagues.”

Lisa added that there is an engraved brick bearing her mum’s name on Tony’s Path, yet another aspect making each visit so poignant.

Teddy's Travels



**TURRET
TEDDY: At
Stirling Castle**



**NEIGH
BOTHER:
The Kelpies**

**SCOTTISH
SOJOURN:
Volunteers
Frank and
Gillian,
who are
dad and
daughter,
with Gill's
daughter
Sienna
were on a
tartan trail**



**TABLE MANNERS: In
the banqueting hall**



**TURNING
POINT: The
Falkirk Wheel**



QUIZ TIME

This edition's quiz features all Scots of life, in keeping with our theme of 'variety being the spice of life'.

What sport
is Andy
Murray
famous for ?

Who was the
only Scottish
James Bond
actor ?

Which Scottish
novelist
created Peter
Pan?

Which
Scot
invented
the TV?

Who is Lewis
Capaldi's
famous
relative?

Which city
does Lulu
hail from?

The people
of Paisley
are called
The ... ?

Which islands
give their
name to
ponies and
wool?

Which
county in
Scotland is a
man's name ?

Which sport was invented in Scotland?

CLUE : NOT football !!

Loading aircraft, to serving Lords and Ladies, and more...

EDUCATION

- 1982-1984 The Queen’s College, Glasgow. HCIMA Pt B. (Gained 3 of 5 subjects)
- 1977-1979 Motherwell College. O.N.D. Hotel, Catering & Institutional Operations.
- 1972-1977 Duncanrig Secondary School, EK

EMPLOYMENT : from now until then

- Kilbryde Hospice: Joe’s Bistro front of house volunteer team member.
- Boots UK Ltd: 20/11/19 - present: Customer & Healthcare assistant.
- ARC Recruitment March 2018 - Jan 2020: Ayr Racecourse hospitality.
- Sodexo Live: June 2017 - April 2023: Box Host, bar tending, wine waiting, plate service. Worked in venues including Hampden, Hamilton & Perth Racecourses, National Museum of Scotland, Aberdeen FC. VIP events: Forth Awards at Usher Hall, Keepers of the Quaich at Blair Castle, European Championships 2018 and Euro 2020.
- SECFood: Event Team Member. May 2017 - April 2024. Service of food and beverages in Hydro retail units, SSE lounges, Capital FM Star Bar, The Armadillo. Hospitality service at SEC conferences/shows. Food & bev service in Clydebuilt bar & kitchen. VIP event: Andy Murray's Charity Banquet food server. Kitchen was managed by Albert Roux and his Michelin star chefs.
- Boots UK Ltd, East Kilbride: Photo Consultant/Healthcare Assistant. November 2004-May 2017. Initially engaged as a photo assistant. During my time here, I also became healthcare trained, promoted to Photo Processing Consultant & store licensee. Duties include training and mentoring lab team members. I daily shared my experience with the store team. Acting duty manager when needed.
- Crutherland House Hotel: Barman July 2004-December 2006
- Cellcom Mobiles: Self employed mobile phone retailer. May 2000-November 2004
- Busby Hotel: Food & Bev Assistant. December 1991-September 2002
- Eastwood Theatre: Steward (zero hours, dates unrecalled)
- F.C.V.P. Video Production: Self employed video film maker. April 1991-October 1999



In keeping with this edition’s theme of the variety of life, we give you John McCardle. In the left hand column is a 40-year CV timeline of every career he pursued right up to his current job in Boots as well as volunteering here at Joe’s Bistro

- John Menzies Retail: Sales Assistant. February 1992-November 1994
- Peel Park Motel: Assistant F&B Manager. December 1989-December 1991
- Lovat Hotels, Perth: Assistant F&B Manager. September 1987-December 1989
- Marriott Inflight Services, Manchester: Account Supervisor March 1987-May 1987
- Cresta Court Hotel, Altrincham. Pembroke Hotel, Blackpool & Belgrade Hotel, Stockport: Night Manager August 1985-May 1986.
- Royal Stuart Hotel: Assistant F&B Manager May 1980-September 1982
- Stakis Redhurst Hotel: Waiter. June 1979-April 1980

Getting his present job with Boots in 2022 was described by John as a ‘Godsend’ due to there being no hospitality work because of the pandemic.

It was the latest [possibly final?] stage of a career path which to say was varied is a huge understatement, but John was happy to chat with the Newsletter and reflect on his various roles.

He said: “I have served many people who were well known, but possibly the most famous were Lord and Lady Mansfield who own Scone Palace and Perth Racecourse.

“At a Hampden Park event I served philanthropists Tom Hunter and Bill Hoey as well as Kenny Blair, owner of Buzzworks.

“Although it involved long hours and low pay - my first wage was £55 for a 60-hour week - I enjoyed working in hospitality.

“It could be hard going. At the racecourses you could have 25 or 30 people that you had to look after all day.

“Now I am drawing a state pension, although I ‘don’t look it!’ and volunteer in Joe’s Bistro every Tuesday morning.

“It’s all about the charity and Joe’s Bistro is here to raise money for the charity,” he added.

FIRST STEPS ON CAREER JOURNEY

OUR YOUNG TALENT

Rounding off our edition focussing on variety in many ways, we feature one of the newest and youngest members of the team, 26-year-old Andrew Robb, (pictured right) on cafe duty. One in eight of our volunteers is aged 26 or under, a fantastic 14 per cent of the amazing team that gives their valuable time to Kilbryde Hospice.



ANDREW'S AMBITIONS

In 10 years time I don't think I would be working in my own company or maybe not working for one of the major companies. Ideally I will be with a medium sized accountancy firm having a good work-life balance but, most importantly enjoying my job that I am interested in. Something I can engage in which keeps me busy, but not working crazy hours, would be my ideal job.

I am about to go into my fourth year at Glasgow Caledonian University, studying accountancy.

At the moment I hope to get the Chartered Accountant qualification and become a financial accountant.

The way that would work is if I get an opportunity with a company in a training position - some of them give you time off to sit your exams.

But whether I would do that right away, and go back into exams, I'm not sure about it as I would like to take a break from exams and studying.

Although having started a new job I would be learning all the time with the plan to sit exams further down the line.

After leaving school in 2018 I was finding it difficult to find a part time job during university and decided that I would like to do some volunteering

There were lots of times I applied for jobs and would sometimes get an interview, get a knockback or hear nothing back at all!

So I made the decision to do something worthwhile, right away, which would also mean there were no gaps in my CV.

While that was the main reason I now get to, and enjoy doing, a variety of work in Joe's Bistro...it's not all about washing dishes.

It's also serving customers, doing the barista and getting to work in the kitchen making sure everything is clean which gives me a variety.

I also feel it is good for my CV, volunteering when I could have been sitting about doing nothing and there are big gaps in the CV.

Especially when there are long breaks from Uni, during the summer, when a lot of people are just sitting about the house.

Obviously it is also good to be helping raise money for the hospice by giving up your time and doing something positive for a good cause.

Personally, it has been a help to my future career prospects as my personal communications have improved so much.

Sometimes you are talking to the chef, who is quite busy, and you have to give clear instructions, or have to clarify something, for a customer's order.

Certainly it has given me more confidence in my communication skills being clear in what I am saying which helps the customers as well.

Right now, working in the hospice has been accommodating in giving me the opportunity to try things, helping in the cafe or the shop, which means I get something out of it.

At the end of the day, it is all to help the customer as it can get very busy and it helps having a smooth process to keep customers happy and want to come back...and raise money for the hospice.



WHAT WE DID ON OUR HOLIDAYS

A short story on the joys of summer

DATELINE: East Kilbride : mid-September

MUM, dad, two sons and two daughters, are excitedly making last minute checks before loading the car for a fortnight in Blackpool - a well deserved break for both harassed parents in particular.

But before the entourage gets moving dad has one task, which is to scrape the iced-up windscreen, not entirely an unknown scenario in East Kilbride, which once had a White Easter !

A very important task for dad, when he has demanded everyone's attention, is the issuing of instructions for the journey and holiday which demands 'best behaviour' for the three-hour drive.

Not even a mile has been clocked though when dad has to pull into a bus stop because son one and son two are knocking lumps out of each other...reissuing of prior instructions needed with added impetus.

On the road again and daughter one requests that her playlist is inserted into the car radio/CD player for the duration of the journey over the border to Blackpool.

That does not go down well at all with daughter two and both sons whose opinion of the playlist is not very favourable but mum intervenes with her country and western CD which in turn doesn't please dad.

Mum, on this occasion and numerous other occasions, had the last word so Charley Pride and Kenny Rogers were blasting out of the Renault seven-seater as it sat at The Whirlies Roundabout.

Thankfully the ice had finally fully melted from the car windows and everyone started to relax, kind of! The next hurdle was the East Kilbride Expressway morning traffic which needed a calm head to successfully negotiate before reaching the M74 southbound... and a smooth journey all the way to Blackpool (hopefully!)



A hearty breakfast had been organised in the house before departure as dad had announced 'We are not stopping until we have a toilet break when we get over the border'.

Son one had stayed in bed until the last minute with the consequence that he hadn't had any breakfast, informing everyone else in the car as it passed Strathclyde Park that he was 'totally starving'.

Inevitably, this led to the first parental argument of the trip when mum instructed dad to come off the motorway at the next exit as the boy couldn't go all that way without food.

So the first 'unscheduled' stop was before the car had even left South Lanarkshire and into the village of Stonehouse so the lazy sod/poor wean (delete as appropriate) could get vital sustenance.

His siblings also took the opportunity of spending some of their holiday money and the car echoed to the sound of crisp packets, drinks cans and various other confectionary goodies being opened and devoured.

Unsurprisingly, nature took its course and the toilet stop was sooner than planned. At this stage dad gave up and said 'what the hell'...happily the family ended up having a fantastic holiday with great weather and lots of fun.

*Who was the under-pressure dad I hear you ask?
It was a hospice volunteer who asked not to be named !*

**ICE IN SEPTEMBER ? HAVE YOU A FREAKY
WEATHER TALE TO SHARE HERE ?**

Email frank.cassidy@kilbrydehospice.org.uk with your story or leave your contact details at Hospice Reception.