

AGM – Saturday 25 April 2009

Saturday 25 April was the day for CLAPA Cambridge annual talk and AGM. The day started at 12noon with people arriving to chat, mingle and to enjoy the lovely food laid on in the buffet.

The meeting began with an introduction to the CLAPA Cambridge committee members, Rosanna Preston and Sue Carroll from CLAPA headquarters and Alix Talbot from Operation Smile.

Alix Talbot, Chief Executive from Operation Smile gave an introduction to the work of Operation Smile and showed a short DVD that gave some background about the charity and the wonderful work they do.

Per Hall, then started his talk on his recent trip to Ethiopia to work with Operation Smile. In the mean time the “restless” children were entertained by Mary and Andrea in the garden until the official children’s entertainer arrived in the form of Billy Banana!

Per’s talk and his wife Sarah’s photographs were extremely moving and informative, there was lots of furtive rustling in the background while people hunted for tissues to wipe their eyes. The work of Operation Smile is fantastic and truly makes you appreciate the medical care we have access to in the UK. The age ranges worked on was incredible, fixing cleft lips on little toddlers all the way up to a 65yr old lady. One that touched everyone’s heart and in particular Per Hall himself was a 15yr old boy he operated on under a local anaesthetic, a photo was shown of the boys reflection in a mirror that he was holding, just staring at his new face. Per’s wife Sarah has already done another trip with Operation Smile and Per told us how he hopes to make return visits to Ethiopia in the future as it now holds a special place in his heart.

After a quick break for refreshments, the meeting began again with a talk from Rosanna Preston, Chief Executive of CLAPA. Giving details of where CLAPA was going in the future and also giving details of the CLAPA Conference in Birmingham on 30 May.

A cheque presentation followed where Jaimee Tuck presented a cheque for £232.06 raised by Rackham Primary School, Witchford recent non-uniform day. Also a cheque for £5.500 was presented that was used to help purchase the blue-tooth monitors for ward D2.

Mary Newbold, Treasurer of CLAPA Cambridge gave a run down on the opening and closing balance of CLAPA Cambridge funds. Mary also gave a rundown of last year’s expenditure. A list of donations was read out that had been received over the last 12 months, there were far too many to mention on the day, but they can all be found under the “fundraising” pages on this site. A big thankyou was given to everyone who made a donation.

Anna Zeffertt let everyone know what CLAPA Cambridge is planning for the next year. This included details of the coffee mornings that have been set up in Clinic 7. Andrea Thompkins, along with other committee members will be providing drinks, snacks and chat for parents and children whilst the joint cleft clinics are running. It is hoped that Andrea Thompkins, CLAPA Network assistant and Fran Tanner from the committee will be able to visit new parents and on parents on the ward when children are in for surgery. Further plans for the summer and winter parties as well as future Harry

Potter days for the children were also mentioned. It is hoped that CLAPA Cambridge can also fund another piece of medical equipment for the hospital this coming year as well as helping to fund another trip to Ethiopia for Per Hall. Anna also introduced Brian Devlin co-founder of the web forum FaceForward. Committee members Mary & Carole were particularly pleased to meet him after "chatting" to him many times on the forum. The forum is a great place to talk to other parents about your experiences, go to <http://www.faceforward.org.uk/> for more information.

When the day ended, everyone went home inspired by the work of Operation Smile and with a fresh appreciation of the work done by our Cleft Team at Addenbrookes Hospital. Another really successful afternoon!

Many thanks to Carole Tuck for writing a summary above the meeting. We will upload some pictures about the event as soon as they are ready. A very special thank you to everyone on the committee and Andrea Tompkins, CLAPA Network Assistant for all your help in organising and running this amazing event, as well as to Eileen Cottrell and Dr Ann Harding-Bell for helping on the day)