

Support our psychic night

PSYCHIC medium Yvonne Lillie, pictured) is returning to Aberdeen at the end of October to hold a fund-raising evening in aid of Aberdeen Cyrenians.



She and a hand-picked team will be at the Hilton Hotel, Springfield Road, on Sunday, October 27 for an evening of two, 45 minute demonstrations (involving three demonstrators) and up to eight readers available for pre-bookable one-to-one sessions.

"I'm really looking forward to this evening and I'm thrilled to have been asked to do this for Aberdeen Cyrenians," she said. "When I lived in Aberdeen I worked for the organisation so I know what a wonderful organisation it is." Yvonne is now based in Glasgow where she is also a qualified psychotherapist and combines her understanding in this area with her spiritual gifts to work with many people who may be concerned about particular relationship situations in their lives.

Yvonne's interest in Spiritualism goes back to when she was in her teens. She trained through the Spiritualist centre in Dee Street before moving to Glasgow to further her career in this area.

Its something she enjoys doing but admits it is always nerve wracking before a demonstration begins and she can never be sure she will receive any messages. That's never happened so far and she has memories of some very emotional evenings when she has passed on very special messages.

Tickets for the evening are available from Aberdeen Cyrenians at 62 Summer Street. They cost £20 each and you can call by in person or write in with a cheque and we will post your tickets out. One-to-one readings must be booked in advance by writing or emailing info@aberdeen-cyrenians.org. Each reading costs £25 payable to the reader on the night.

"I'm thrilled to have been asked to do this for Aberdeen Cyrenians,"

Tickets

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Harvest appeal

OUR ANNUAL HARVEST APPEAL is just about to begin and we are asking for your help to make it bigger and more successful than ever before.

Every year we feed hundreds of homeless people. This can either be through hot, nutritious two-course meals four times a week at our Street Alternatives projects for those with no access to cooking facilities or by giving food parcels to those with limited access to cooking facilities and to those suffering hardship, perhaps as a result of welfare reform. Our ability to continue to provide these services is dependant on the donations we receive during the next few weeks. At present we feed up to 20 people at each of the four Street Alternative sessions each week and give out on average 200 food parcels a month.

But to do this we need to keep our food cupboards well stocked and this is the time of year when we try to fill them to capacity for the coming year. We can only do this with your help whether you are a private individual, a business, a church, school, voluntary organization or a group of work colleagues.

Over the years we have built up a dedicated following who support our annual Harvest Appeal and we are very grateful to them. We hope to welcome them and new donors this year. You can hand in your donations to our headquarters at 62 Summer Street during office hours but we would appreciate if you can call ahead so we have someone available to accept your donation. If you can't make it to Summer Street but have a donation, please let us know and we will try to collect it. Our number is Aberdeen 625732.

Asda at Bridge of Dee has offered to host a food donation weekend on Saturday August 31 and Sunday September 1. Shoppers will be handed our wish list as they go into the store so they can buy something for our appeal and drop it off with one of our volunteers who will be on hand in store through the weekend to accept it.

We are looking for tinned and non-perishable foods such as: **Tomatoes, beans, peas, spaghetti, tuna or other fish, custard, rice or similar kinds of pudding, meat such as tins of mince, stew, steak and kidney pie, Spam, corned beef, cooking sauces, soup, Cupasoup, rice, pasta, tea, coffee, hot chocolate, powdered milk, seasonings and spices, biscuits, long-life snacks, instant noodles, tomato and garlic puree, stock cubes, lentils, pulses and diluting juices.** We also appreciate donations of toiletries such as shower gel, shampoo, shaving foam, disposable razors and deodorant.



Socks update

Last month we asked you to help us replenish our stocks of socks and underwear. Turn to page 2 to find out how you responded.

Aberdeen Cyrenian's office administrator Lesley Allan borrowed her grand-daughter Caitlyn's colourful tights to create this soxy picture.





Lots and lots of socks

THANKS to everybody who has supported our pants and socks appeal. Stocks are building up thanks to all the donations which have either been handed in to 62 Summer Street or sent through on-line shopping, sometimes anonymously and sometimes with the name of the donor attached.

We have received socks from as far away as Canada from someone who read about the appeal on our Facebook page as well as from local supporters. We have received budget packs of socks and socks with posh designer labels and we are grateful for them all.

Although our immediate crisis is over, there is a constant need for socks and underwear to give to service users.

Soxy Pictures



Turning Point Scotland are supporting our pants and socks appeal and sent us this picture of staff members and mum and gran-to-be, Rachael and Ann in the front of the picture with baby socks.



Volunteer Kenny models kilt socks



Aberdeen Cyrenians depute CEO Scott Baxter with his Mr Blobby socks. That's Scott on the left, just in case there's any confusion



Colin Ferrier, an Aberdeen Cyrenians volunteer who is working with social enterprise Iceberg, sent this picture from a family holiday at Kicking Horse resort, Golden, British Columbia. "We're happy to see our donations travelling so far and we promise they are not smelly," he e-mailed.

Please send your soxy pictures to soxandpants@aberdeen-cyrenians.org. Donations of socks and underwear can be handed in at 62 Summer Street during office hours.

Allison makes an impact



STREET Alternatives volunteer Allison Swanson was a finalist in the recent ACVO Aberdeen Impact Awards.

We nominated her for her tireless, enthusiastic work. Here's what our nomination said:

"Allison volunteers to work with Aberdeen Cyrenians Street Alternatives project because she enjoys it and not so that she can be nominated for this kind of award. However her dedication and willingness to go the extra mile is an example to so many and deserves to be noted.

In addition to everything she has already done for the project, she surpassed herself last winter when, during December 2012 and January 2013, Street Alternatives opened for additional sessions to ensure service users had somewhere warm and welcoming and access to hot food over a time when other people were spending time with their families. This meant relying on new volunteers who were prepared to give up time to prepare meals in the project kitchen.

Allison led groups of volunteers, encouraging them, offering guidance, being supportive and ensuring that all food hygiene and health and safety guidelines were observed and that the project fridges and freezers were full.

Over the Christmas period she roped in her husband, Robbie who is also a Street Alternatives volunteer and her sister and father who were visiting from Thurso, to ensure that there were enough volunteers so that the project could open on Christmas Day. Through Allison's efforts and dedication, Christmas 2012 was a happier occasion for many of the city's homeless and most vulnerable people. She demonstrated the true meaning of Christmas by ensuring there was a place for those with nowhere else to go. Allison has a wonderful rapport with fellow volunteers and service users alike. She is an inspirational, enthusiastic, dedicated person who transmits her passion for Street Alternatives to everyone she meets."

Could you be a volunteer?

VOLUNTEERING with Aberdeen Cyrenians is a great opportunity to make a difference in the local community. We are currently looking for enthusiastic individuals to join our team.

Our services, including preparing and serving meals with Street Alternatives, sorting donations of food, toiletries and clothes, rotating stock and making up food parcels, rely on a large pool of volunteers all year round but we are just coming up to our busiest time. September till December sees our Harvest and Christmas preparations and we need extra help during these four months to manage generous donations, to run additional services and to extend our opening hours over the festive period.

Whether you are looking for a regular, long-term role or have some spare time to lend a hand during September - December, please come along to a volunteer information session to meet our Volunteer Co-ordinator, Jenna Ingram, and an existing volunteer. Have a coffee and a chat and learn about volunteering opportunities with Aberdeen Cyrenians.

The next session will be held on Wednesday, September 18, 2013, starting at 6pm at our Head Office, 62 Summer Street, Aberdeen. Please RSVP jamie.thomson@aberdeen-cyrenians.org to say you will be coming.

For individuals who have already been to a volunteer information session and are interested in applying for a regular volunteer role, please download an application form and return via email or post to our Head Office.

Thanks to all those who attended our harvest lunch and learn recently. They had the opportunity to learn more about Aberdeen Cyrenians and how food donations are used.

Sainsbury's

City centre Sainsbury stores have raised almost £1140 through collecting cans beside tills in the past couple of months.

Spree books

This year's Spree books are now on sale at 62 Summer Street. They cost £23 each with Aberdeen Cyrenians receiving £5 for each one sold. Once again the book will be filled with money-off vouchers for dining, leisure and recreation, health beauty and wellbeing, shopping and services.



Volunteer's view: Alison's 100 voluntary hours

JULY 2013 saw one of our volunteers, Alison Sim, complete a milestone 100 hours of volunteer time with Aberdeen Cyrenians. Alison volunteers her time once a fortnight as a Street Alternatives cook, helping to prepare, cook and serve lunches for between 10-20 service users at a time. Here's her story:

I first became involved with Aberdeen Cyrenians in August 2012 through my previous employers when a team of us helped to sort out the mountain of food donations that Aberdeen Cyrenians receives as part of its annual Harvest Festival. I knew before the end of the Harvest Festival that I wanted to continue my involvement with Aberdeen Cyrenians and so I offered to become a permanent volunteer, as a cook for Street Alternatives. No-one was more surprised than me to find myself volunteering to become a cook except perhaps my husband, who regularly makes the comment at home that I don't cook, I just heat things up! When I learned the origins of the name "Cyrenians", it really struck a chord with me. The concept of ordinary people sharing in the burden of others is central to why I became a volunteer for Aberdeen Cyrenians.

I thoroughly enjoy my Street Alternatives sessions. You never quite know what to expect and it's amazing how many office-based skills are transferrable into the kitchen environment. We only have two hours to prepare and cook that day's lunch, so time-management is essential, as is good organisation. We usually work in teams of three or four, so delegation of tasks, good teamwork and effective communication are essential to keep things on track. Creativity is also vital, as we don't have a library of recipe books to consult, and we have to make the best of the ingredients we have available on the day. Consequently, we do experiment from time to time, but thankfully there haven't been any total disasters so far!

The banter and camaraderie among the volunteers is great and I also enjoy

engaging with our service users, getting to know their names and learning a bit about them - they all have a story to tell. They're a pretty up-beat bunch, all things considered, and they're very appreciative of the Street Alternatives service.

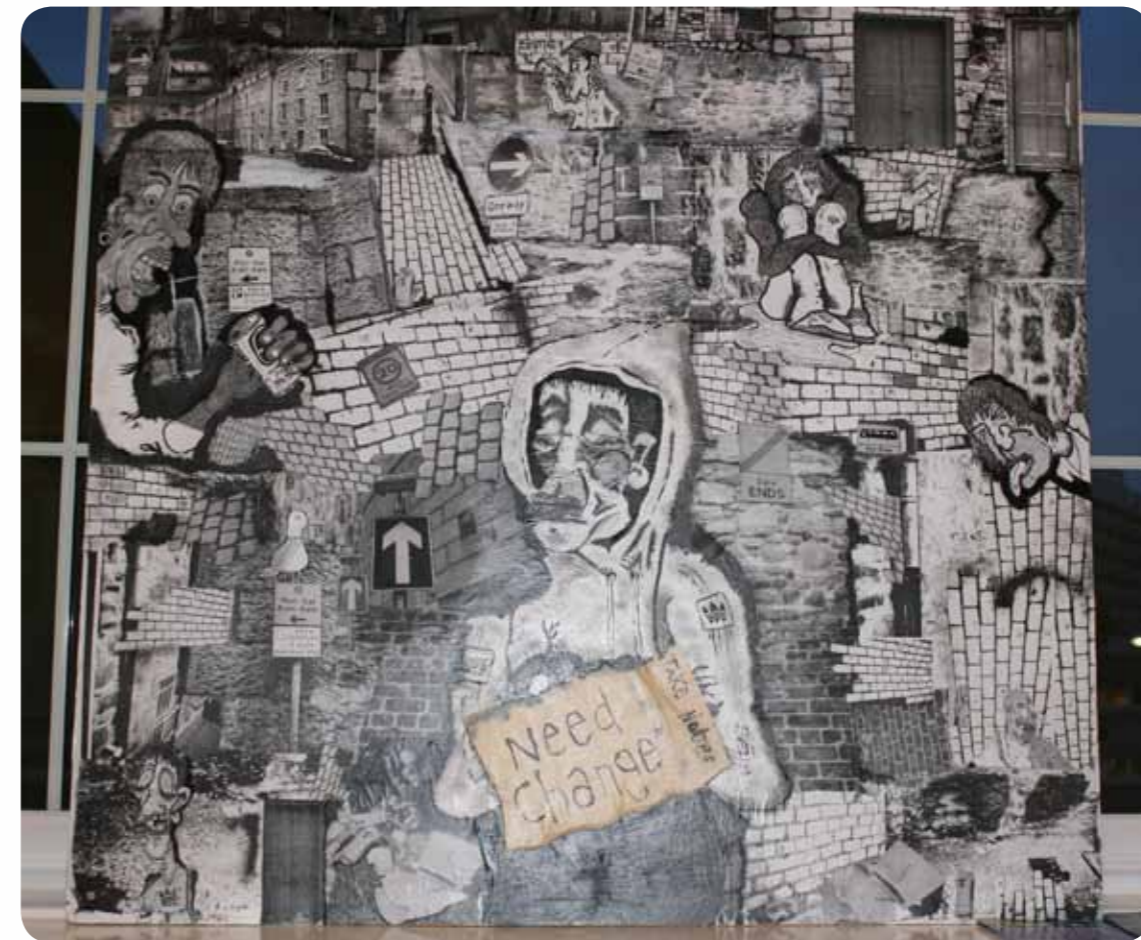
Earlier this year, my commitment to Aberdeen Cyrenians was recognised by my new employers, through the award of £400 from our Charity Committee under our Volunteer Award Scheme which is open to employees who have a sustained involvement with a charity, who volunteer for 20 or more hours in any year and who have been involved with the charity for at least six months. To raise more funds, myself and some of my fellow volunteers are in the process of compiling a cookbook to sell later this year, just in time for the Christmas market.

Hopefully, it will be a bestseller!

Pictures show Alison with Volunteer Co-ordinator Jenna Ingram presenting Alison with a certificate to mark 100 hours volunteering with Aberdeen Cyrenians Street Alternatives; with volunteer Roland sourcing ingredients for a meal and in the kitchen with volunteers Kenny and Colman.



Original artwork with a powerful message



"a unique and thought-provoking piece of art work"

Aberdeen Cyrenians' training room is available for hire. It comfortably seats 20 people around one central table or can be reconfigured for smaller groups. There are audio visual facilities, the room is air conditioned and opens into a well-equipped kitchen.

There is a unique and thought-provoking piece of art work on one wall. It was created by service user Bob Gifford at Stopover, a previous Aberdeen Cyrenian project, and bought by the organisation. In stark monochrome it drives home the message about need for change by using brutal images of closed doors, brick walls, cobbled streets and statutory road signs along with images of homeless people.

If you would like to know more about hiring the training room (and seeing this picture) please call 01224 625732 or email info@aberdeen-cyrenians.org.

aberdeen cyrenians
tackling homelessness

Thanks to Asda at the Beach Boulevard for an amazing donation of more than £300-worth of Smart Price range goods.

Wernham House

THERE are lots of things that link the residents of Wernham House but one of the most poignant is that without it, many say they would be dead.

Wernham House is one of three residential projects run by Aberdeen Cyrenians.

It can accommodate 17 residents over three floors at Virginia Street and it has been home to many over its 25 year existence. Wernham House provides supported residential care and respite placements for men and women aged 18 and over. It is used by individuals who have alcohol, mental health and substance misuse problems.

Several residents are long-term service users who wouldn't want to live anywhere else. They enjoy the family atmosphere of Wernham House, the easy access to company

and friendship, the support of the staff, three meals a day and the busy, communal life. It has been a lifeline when homelessness, alcohol dependency and other problems threatened to overwhelm them, by providing an alternative home for those who are unlikely to move back into the community

Respite placements provide shorter term intensive support for individuals who may be in crisis, struggling with day to day living. A placement at Wernham House provides a stable base to enable physical recovery and rehabilitation and enables an individual to return home better equipped to maintain his or her independence.

The staff at Wernham House seek to improve the situation of vulnerable

people by providing non-judgmental support within a context of voluntary engagement.

They establish relationships based on respect, acceptance and personal value and encourage service users to be involved in and direct all aspects and decisions about his or her care and in the development of effective interventions.

A keyworker and co-keyworker is allocated to each service user and an individual care plan is agreed and regularly reviewed. Service users are supported and encouraged to demonstrate personal responsibilities and rights e.g. being responsible for their own living space, their own personal care and laundry, compile food menus,

to organise activities, be involved in the recruitment of staff. There is currently a residents' representative and several service users volunteer

with decorating and craft making. Wernham House's service users enjoy life in Virginia Street, but they also enjoy trips out to the countryside, cinema and have recently been to the circus. Staff at Wernham House have been fundraising in their own time and this raised monies to fund a service users' holiday to

Perthshire, an experience that will be savored and remembered long after the event. High on Wernham's wish list is funding for an amenities kitty to pay for these kind of outings.

But day to day Wernham's service users are happy to be there and happy to be alive.



Legal firm McLay, Murray and Spens has chosen Aberdeen Cyrenians as its charity of the year.

About 20 service users enjoyed a barbecue in the garden at 62 Summer Street this month. Salads, hot dogs and burgers were served and everybody had such a good time they have asked to do it again soon.