



# NEWSLETTER

Issue 43 September 2023

**We hope everyone enjoyed the summer and is feeling refreshed and ready for the new academic year. Our aim is to support more children than ever this year and we are grateful to all our staff, volunteers, trustees, donors and other supporters for helping us do so.**

## Volunteer meeting 4<sup>th</sup> July

We welcomed Deputy Lieutenant Robert Buckeldee to our volunteer meeting on 4<sup>th</sup> July to present awards to long serving volunteers



Some of our award winners pictured with DL Robert

### 5 Years

Beverley Birmingham  
Caroline Brain  
Gill Brook  
Jane Hames  
Julia Huddart  
Isobelle Jaques  
Jenny Leighton  
Clare Manolopoulos  
Pam Naden  
Annie Cripps  
Sam Schad  
Clare Turville  
Mark Tickle  
Nilam Moorcroft  
Jane West  
Jane Cartledge

### 10 Years

Anthea Boylston  
Kerry Tucker  
David Bettie  
Judy Gay

### 15 Years

Jane Bhattacharya  
Don Ferris



Robert was delighted to hear so many inspiring stories, including an emotional account from Bicester volunteer Victor Puddick, winner of the Christopher Quinton award this year  
Victor's story...

First of all, I want to thank Elaine and her team for this award, and for all your kind words, and also to thank them for all the good times I have had with ARCh over the past 14 years.

Elaine has asked me to say something about my time, so far, with ARCh and a bit about my own reading history.

Because I was, believe or not, a good and quiet little boy at Primary School (in Chingford, Greater London), my time there just passed by, and I arrived at Secondary School being completely unaware that I could not read. I have no memory of books or comics at that age, but I did learn at home how to use a sewing machine and how to crochet!

I carried on being good and quiet, but was terrified of Secondary School, and had 90 days off in what we would now call Year 7. But that was fine because I could help my mum in her business of designing and making clothes, which later became my own career.

In my third year (now Year 9), for the first time ever, a teacher, a maths teacher, spotted I couldn't read, and after the lesson, she came up to me and directly asked me if I could read and write. And, of course, the answer was "no". She asked that, if I could read what would I read and I said, "Science Fiction". She turned and went to her classroom cupboard and brought out a book, "Chocky" by John Wyndham, and told me to take it and read the story and not to worry or think about the words. Just enjoy it. I was 13. That direct encouragement was the spark. I read Chocky and then I couldn't stop, but to this day, with some books, when I don't know the word, I make it up to fit the story. I have never understood phonics!

As an adult it was confirmed that I have dyslexia, and I have learnt to read the shapes of words and can now speed read.

When I retired, I saw a flier for ARCh, and wondered if I could become a volunteer and help children who, as I did, find reading difficult. I look forward to my Tuesday and Thursday afternoons at St. Edburg's Primary in Bicester, preferring to work with Y6 children whenever possible. Like we all have, I have had many children over the years who have lacked reading confidence, who love the games, but are not so sure about some of the books. One lad spent a whole year reading one book – "Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone" – but we were determined, and we made it – and were both delighted. More recently I have worked with children from Hong Kong who have very little English and with help from Hannah and the ARCh library we have used dual language Chinese/English books and the school electronic translator. To see a 10-year-old squiggle a symbol on a touch pad and have the machine produce on the screen both the right symbol and the English equivalent is amazing. But try doing that with the word "well" when you want it to mean "Well I never"!! Both children, by the time they got to leaving St. Edburg's were able to speak and read English.

I have become an expert in Stars Wars, although I can't read or pronounce any of the names! All this year, until Easter, the child I was working with was reluctant even to speak unless it was about "Fortnight" the computer programme, until together we discovered Star Wars books. He has seen all the films, and now is reading all the books we can lay our hands on, and he tells me the words I cannot read!

All this proves that it is never too late to learn to read and enjoy books, and I look forward to the next school year, with three new children, and facing the challenges once again. Thank You.



## Professor Teresa Cremin's presentation on Reading for Pleasure



We all enjoyed the film our videographer friend Luke Harrison made of Professor Teresa Cremin's presentation on Reading for Pleasure which she had given at our event for schools back in March – covering the importance of autonomy, connection, choice and valuing children – all aspects of the ARCh ethos too of course.

There was a vibrant atmosphere in the room with lively discussions on our own memories of reading as children too.

At the meeting we presented our Annual Report for 2022 – you can view the report here

<https://archoxfordshire.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/07/ARCh-Annual-Report-2022-with-signed-accounts.pdf>

It was good to see former ARCh staff members Julia McLaven, Liz Riley and Charlotte Miles-Webb at the meeting .

An account of the event and awards appeared in the local press

<https://www.oxfordmail.co.uk/news/23663986.bicester-reading-volunteer-recognised-years-service/?ref=twtrrec>

Huge thank you's to Rose Somerset and Martin Wackinier for very kindly taking expert photographs at the meeting, both formal and informal.

## Goodbye Hannah!



Sadly we are losing one of our staff team members however – Hannah Morrell our Bicester field worker moved to Sheffield with her family over the summer, following her husband's job related move there.

"It is with real sadness that I said goodbye to ARCh this summer after my husband and I, with our young children, decided to relocate to Sheffield.

Working with ARCh has been a privilege and I am grateful to have had the opportunity to be part of such a worthwhile charity that makes a tangible, positive difference to the children and primary schools in Oxfordshire. Thank you! I want to wish all the volunteers, school contacts, ARCh colleagues and trustees the happiness, success and satisfaction that you deserve.

An oft-quoted line from Dr Seuss's *Oh, The Places You'll Go!* reads, 'The more that you read, the more things you will know. The more that you learn, the more places you'll go.' But another line from the same book feels apt both as I look forward to my new life near the Peaks, and as I think of you ARCh volunteers re-starting in school this term - meeting your new readers and tackling challenges together through reading, games and friendship: 'You're off to great places, Today is your day! Your mountain is waiting, So... get on your way!'

All the very best!  
Hannah

We will endeavour to find a replacement for Hannah as soon as possible – keep an eye on our website for more news on this as soon, but in the meantime volunteers and schools in Bicester will be supported from the office.

## Coronation events

Earlier in the summer term we attended a number of local events making the Coronation and in particular the King's wish to increase voluntary work (The Big Help Out)

In Oxford the event was at Flo's café in Florence Park. Jane and Nick were delighted to have support from volunteers Chris Poad, Ann Partridge and Sarah Beaver.

Deputy Lieutenant Imam Monawar Hussain was so impressed hearing from Chris about his ARCh experience that he asked him to speak as part of the official opening of the event. Chris did a marvellous job, completely unscripted!



At Abingdon trustees Honor Somerset and Sue Hine manned a stall at Abbey Meadows together with volunteers Christine Mather, Penny Clover and Sarah Smith.

Banbury celebrated with volunteers helping including ARCh mascot Georgie (Jeremy's dog) who seemed enamoured by Sir Tony Baldry!



## Quiz evening

In June we enjoyed a wonderful quiz evening as part of our efforts to raise funds for expansion of our work this year. Huge thanks go to field workers Clare and Amanda and the rest of the staff team for all their work organising.

Around 70 participants came along to Islip Village Hall on a perfect summer's evening to enjoy questions posed by Clare and husband John. We especially appreciated the bespoke questions relating to ARCh that Clare compiled!

Congratulations to the winning team – appropriately named the Archers!

We are very grateful to a number of local businesses who donated prizes for the raffle:

**Mercure Hawkwell House Hotel**  
**Red Lion, Islip**  
**Tesco (Bicester)**  
**Thames River Sightseeing Team**  
**The Swan Inn Islip**  
**Fairytale Farm**  
**Milletts Farm**  
**Diva Hairstyle (Sona Kiedronova)**  
**(Plus volunteer Wendy Williams who donated a book token)**



A number of raffle winners included Clare and John who celebrated their wedding anniversary with their winning meal at The Red Lion Islip.

Also volunteer Sophie Mavor pictured (right) enjoying afternoon tea with her husband at Hawkwell House Hotel. Beverley Birmingham also won an afternoon tea.



## Events

Sometimes our schools invite us to attend events and towards the end of the summer term we were invited to St Blaise summer fete. Carolyn manned a stall with help from volunteers Gill Brook and Frances Jackson, together with ARCh supporter (and former field worker) Janet Money.



## Thank you supporters

We are grateful to Nuffield Health Oxford who accommodated an ARCh display stand for 2 days to help us recruit new volunteers and supporters. Jane and Amanda were able to man the stand at times, helped by volunteer Judith Goldsmith – thank you Judith!



Thanks go to our author friend Sue Palmer who donated 2 workshops for schools attending our Reading for Pleasure event (please see our last newsletter) Winners were St Francis Primary in Oxford, who have already enjoyed their workshop, and St Marys Primary Banbury.

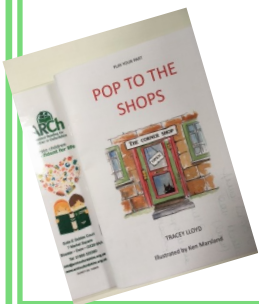
Thanks to trustee Honor

Somerset and Nikki Hampton who have been working on a publicity film for ARCh. We are very grateful to volunteer David Jones and his school St Johns Wallingford who agreed to filming of sessions there and also to Windmill Primary headteacher Lynn Knapp and volunteer Judy Gay for helping with filming there too. We are excited to see the results soon!



Elaine attended a charity lunch hosted by Banbury MP Victoria Prentis

More exciting news for ARCh – volunteer Maggie (Tracey) Lloyd has self published a second book of duologues, with beautiful illustrations from the much missed Ken Marsland.



## OXFORD'S OLDER PEOPLE'S DAY 2023

### IN OXFORD TOWN HALL

**WEDNESDAY 4th October 10am – 3pm**

meet friends for an interesting day & enjoy a drink or lunch at the Elegant Cuisine Café in the Assembly Room  
**BANBURY MILL ARTS CENTRE**

**WEDNESDAY 4TH OCTOBER 9am—1 pm**

**ARCh will have stalls at both events so do pop in and say hello**

## Company volunteering scheme

We are pleased to report that our scheme with Oxford University Press (now in its 12<sup>th</sup> year) is starting to expand again. This summer we were able to resume the annual visit to the Press for children supported by their volunteers. Those who attended



were treated to readings by field worker Clare and volunteer Sam Schad and enjoyed a visit to the museum too. An inspiring afternoon to meet their volunteers at their workplace!



## Employer supporter volunteering

This year we are looking forward to welcoming more organisations to work with us – including Oxford law firm Freeths and Abingdon company Oxford Wood Recycling. We also hope to recruit Oxford University alumni as volunteers thanks to support from



Baroness Jan Royall, Principal of Somerville College.

We are entering into our second year of working with St Edwards School In Oxford, recruiting more of their 6th formers as ARCh volunteers. Last year's pilot scheme was a great success and we attended a celebratory event at the

school which showcased St Edwards' students voluntary work with 40 different organisations.

These schemes are helping increase our volunteer numbers but we do need more people to come forward from the general community too so please continue to spread the word for us!

## Funding Thanks to

Magnox - to support South Abingdon/Didcot

SODC Everyone Active grant

Caldecott Comm fund (Abingdon)

Oxfordshire Community Foundation

St Michaels Feofees

Asda

Localgiving

Witney Lions

Bicester Town Council (picture with Bicester Good Citizen Susan Dennyson— Congratulations!)

Pangbourne College

Doris Field trust

Stanton Ballard

*Thank  
You*



## Events coming up this term;

As well as the usual book exchanges and coffee mornings there will be a Phonics workshop and safeguarding refreshers.

Please ensure you read the latest edition of **Keeping Children Safe in Education (part one only)** as this document is revised each September. Here is the link

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/1161273/Keeping children safe in education 2023 - statutory guidance for schools and colleges.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1161273/Keeping_children_safe_in_education_2023_-_statutory_guidance_for_schools_and_colleges.pdf)

## ARCh Trustees

Two of our valued trustees have stepped down this year – enormous thanks go to Pauline Edwards and Nilam Moorcroft for all their work on the board. We are keen to recruit replacements and in particular would welcome applicants with expertise in the fields of IT, HR, or PR. If you know of anyone with relevant skills who may be interested in joining please ask to them to contact us. We also need to maintain a “volunteer voice” on the board so please ask us for further information if you are interested in this role. The board meets 6 times a year usually on a Tuesday afternoon in our office in Bicester.

## King's Garden Party

As we mentioned in our last newsletter, long serving ARCh volunteer and founding trustee Chris Williams and her supporter husband Eddie attended the King's Garden Party in May. Here is their account of the memorable day;

"Wow. What an incredible day!

The big day came and the sun was shining. It was really warm unlike the days beforehand that had been wet and cold.

Everyone was very glamorous and friendly. We were really honoured to be there. What an atmosphere.

As the band played the national anthem the royals appeared. There was the King and Camilla, the Duke and Duchess of Edinburgh and the Duke of Kent. Wow.

As the royals came down the steps they all branched out in different directions. Each had 5 or 6 security people, smartly dressed wearing top hats and tails with furred umbrellas.

They cleared the way and stood round as different people were introduced to the royals. The Duke of Edinburgh was the one that came our way—he was so close I couldn't believe it. (I'd never ever imagined actually seeing royals close up.)

After a while one of the security men asked if I would like to speak to Camilla. I politely refused saying I would feel too embarrassed and would get tongue tied not knowing what to say. He said that the royals were used to this, it was part of their job, but accepted my refusal.

Afterwards I thought how stupid, it was a chance in a million that I'd turned down. So when the next guy asked if I would like to speak to the Duke of Kent I immediately said "yes please". He asked my name and why I was there, then asked me to stand behind a couple. The person in front curtsied so I knew what to do.

I'd spoken to a lady earlier joking about curtsying and falling over and she offered to loan me her stick.

My turn came and I couldn't remember whether I bobbed or not. Luckily Eddie took a photo and I had. The body guard introduced Eddie and myself and talked to the Duke about ARCh. I'm sure the Duke's eyes were the same colour as the Queen's, and he was so lovely and kind.

As the day progressed we got to be close up to each of the royals and managed to get in the front row to see them come out of the marquee after they'd had their teas. We chatted with a paraplegic man, who'd won an Olympic gold medal, and another volunteer for her charity work in the community.





As we waited we got to talk to lots of the security men and one one told us he worked for the London Met. They all looked so smart. He and lots of others were wearing earpieces and chatting into them.

From the marquee the royals walked past us to meet the group waiting outside the swimming pool area.

This was obviously the cue to leave as lots of people started to make their way to the palace gates. As we walked out we were alongside Lionel Richie and Levi Roots who both had glamorous young ladies with them.

As we got to the front of the palace there were lots of police on motorbikes both inside and outside the gates.

The royal cars drove past us and we saw Sophie and Edward in one but didn't recognise anyone else because of the blackened windows.

What a day, what an experience.

I was with many of the ladies who took their shoes off as soon as we reached the pavements.

Thank you Jane and Elaine for making such a success of ARCh and giving us this opportunity.

I thoroughly enjoyed every day of working (as an ARCh field worker) and my 21 years of volunteering."

**We were so pleased that Chris and Eddie enjoyed their special day, so well deserved after all they have given to ARCh.**

**As Chris mentions, Elaine and Jane were honoured to attend the garden party in 2016 following the news that ARCh was being awarded the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service. We are very proud of the award, a testament to the valuable work ARCh volunteers do.**

