

## From Coffee Cups to Charity Balls and a lot in between!!!

September 2004 saw the first step toward the successive fundraising achievements of Joyce Sharpe & Sarah Thomas, who worked in the offices of Wood's, **team** Estate Agents & Auctioneers in Newton Abbot when they hosted their first coffee morning as part of Macmillan Cancer Support's flagship event, the World's Biggest Coffee Morning and were surprised when they raised £405. *(Note: Westcountry **team** had made Macmillan their charity partner earlier that year).*

Not content with supporting Macmillan, in January 2005 Joyce and Sarah held an impromptu coffee morning in aid of the Tsumani Appeal and in the space of three hours raised £220. Their Macmillan Coffee Morning that year raised a staggering £844 and marked the beginning of a concerted effort from the formidable partnership to drive their fundraising from strength to strength.

The coffee morning successes, which are now extremely popular, sowed the seeds for what was soon to become a main event on Devon's social calendar.

With the link to auctioneering through their work, Joyce and Sarah had in mind the possibility of holding an auction in one of the local hostelries to raise more funds for Macmillan in South Devon, but that all changed after attending the Macmillan Pearl Ball in Torquay. Joyce and Sarah were inspired and organised their first Charity Ball and Auction in 2006, sponsored by Wood's, **team** Estate Agents & Auctioneers, which continues as main sponsor of the now annual event.

To put the wheels in motion, Sarah put a news item in the local paper to seek out a suitable venue and The Grand Hotel was chosen. Joyce said: "The enormity of what we had taken on hit us as we left the hotel – we had a date and venue but had to find 200 guests and had no committee as backup! Making coffee suddenly seemed an awful lot easier." But no matter, they were determined to make it successful and through hard work, marketing and PR, emails and the support of local businesses, their first charity ball raised £7,450, setting a very high standard with more than 230 guests attending. Two more balls followed at The Grand raising a further £17,500, and Joyce and Sarah's fundraising for Macmillan alone has now passed the £30,000 milestone!

Initially, due to the economic climate Joyce and Sarah had planned not to arrange a ball for 2009 to give people some financial breathing space - but it was not to be and, bowing to pressure, they organised a Charity Ball and Auction with a Bond theme and chose Help for Heroes as a joint

beneficiary alongside Macmillan. The event had outgrown The Grand so a larger venue, the Palace Hotel in Torquay was selected and the evening raised £2,500 for each charity.

Not content with organising coffee mornings and fundraising balls, the formidable pair also gave their support to other charitable events in the area.

Joyce retired at the end of 2006 but the charitable partnership continues to flourish. Their success in fundraising was first rewarded in 2008 when both Joyce and Sarah received the Douglas Macmillan Award for services to the charity. Wood's was also awarded the **team** Association National Award for Charity & Community Service.

More awards came in 2009 – both Joyce and Sarah were presented the Bronze Macmillan Award for over five years of service to the charity; Joyce received the Douglas Macmillan Award - presented to those who speak up for Macmillan, advocate on its behalf and represent it to raise money or promote its charitable purpose; and Sarah is extremely proud to have received the Young Macmillan Supporter Award - at the time the only person to have received this in the South West.

Wood's was awarded the Jenny Murray Punchbowl for its charity work by the prestigious Mayfair Office, which was presented at the estate agency group's Annual Dinner and Awards Ceremony in London. Joyce and Sarah both said: "There are a lot of unsung heroes all over the country, who fundraise without recognition and whose tireless work helps so many people in need - but it is truly an honour to receive these awards."

Calvin Lovelock, fundraising manager for Macmillan in East, Mid and South Devon, said: "I have got to know Joyce and Sarah fairly well over the years and they really are lovely, caring ladies – and with an incredible capacity for staging events of the highest quality, with all the hard work, creative energy and attention to detail such events entail. Macmillan does not have accolades enough for golden hearted people like them! With their dedication to Macmillan and other charities, they are deserving of every award they receive and I'm delighted for them. We're all very much looking forward to the next event spectacular."

The 5th Black Tie Charity Ball in support of Help for Heroes and Macmillan Cancer Support will take place at The Palace Hotel in Torquay on Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> October 2010. Tickets are now on sale.

For further information, call 01803 812743 or 01626 336633, email [joyceandsarah4charity@hotmail.com](mailto:joyceandsarah4charity@hotmail.com) or visit [www.justgiving.com/joyceampsarahmac](http://www.justgiving.com/joyceampsarahmac).

- ends -



*Lovely ladies in a line - Joyce Sharpe, Bridgette Pryce, Sarah Thomas, Gemma Cambell, Rachel Green and Samantha Chapple;*

*With flowers - Rachel Green, Sarah Thomas and Joyce Sharpe with Nick Wood*



*Group shot including Ian Holden (far right)*



**Digital images are available from [bubblepr@mac.com](mailto:bubblepr@mac.com)**

**Notes to editors:**

Westcountry **team** is part of **team** Association, the largest organisation for independent estate agents in the UK, with hundreds of members. Westcountry **team** covers Cornwall, Devon and West Dorset, and consists of 70+ members at this time, all of which work together to sell property for clients, and are actively committed to their nominated charity, Macmillan Cancer Support. **team**'s 'blue sky' image, with transparent team logo on a blue sky background reflects the association's and each individual agent's commitment to providing a clear, transparent service to their clients and conducting business in a straightforward, honest and professional way.

**For further information, please contact:**

Samantha Mason, Bubble Public Relations. Tel: 01869 248524. Mobile: 07957 364179. Email:[bubblepr@mac.com](mailto:bubblepr@mac.com)  
Woods, **team** estate agent, Newton Abbott. Tel: 01626 335008