

MEERKAT MAIL

HELLO MARVELLOUS
MEERKATS!

Issue 12



YUMMY
ice cream....



... and cake!



... at the party

WELCOME TO ...

... another jam-packed issue of Meerkat Mail! We have had a busy few months supporting lots of children and their families as well as celebrating a **MASSIVE** 10 years of Rowans Meerkat Service with an extra special party in September.

In this issue, you can find out more about the plans for the future of Meerkat Central, and you can read about some fantastic fundraisers who have been busy raising money for the charity over the last few months.

There is an article from Skye, one of our Meerkat Gang, about her Nanny who died in 2016, and answers to some questions that people often ask us about Rowans Meerkat Service. On the back page there is a crossword all about us!

You will also find lots of pictures from our brilliant 10-year celebration party. Celebrations are a great way of bringing lots of people together and having fun, but they can also make us sad as we remember the people who are can't be there. It is really ok to feel happy and enjoy yourself, even after someone you loved very much has died, but if you do feel sad then you might find it helpful to talk to someone you trust about how you are feeling. There is no right or wrong way to feel in the days, weeks, months and years after someone special has died; your feelings are as unique as you are.

Look after yourselves Meerkats,

Rowans
Meerkat Team x

Plans for Meerkat Central

In 2019, Rowans Hospice will be celebrating its 25th birthday. There are lots of celebration events planned throughout the year in the run up to this, and we hope that these events, along with the fundraising activities of people in our local area, will help to raise enough money to give the Hospice a complete makeover.

There are exciting plans in place for all parts of the Hospice – the patient rooms will all look different, there will be lots of new areas for families to sit and have time together, and even an inside garden to enjoy when the weather outside is a bit too cold and miserable!

BUT, we think the best and most exciting part is the plan for a new home for Meerkat Central! Lots of you will have visited us in our current room which was originally built as an office. Our team is now much bigger than when the service first started and we are working with lots more families, so we have run out of space in our room. A new extension is planned for the back of the Hospice and part of this new building will be a brand new Meerkat Central. There will be places for arts and crafts, areas for our groups to meet and, of course, space for one-to-one chats with the team. In this picture you will see the beginning ideas of what Meerkat Central might look like – the multicoloured steps are our favourite part. We would love to know what you think. Do you have any suggestions for what should be included? Please email us and let us know what is important to you so that we can make sure your ideas are added to our 'Meerkat Central wishlist'!



Skye's story

Hi everyone reading this Meerkat Mail. It is so amazing to be able to write something in this to tell people a bit of my story. I first came to the Rowans when my Nanny Vicki was diagnosed with her fourth cancer in her lifetime - Pancreatic cancer. This was devastating but what happened later on was even more devastating when we were told by the hospital it had spread too far and there was nothing they could do. She was brought in to the Rowans Hospice to have a comfortable end of her life and this is when I started to have counselling sessions with a super kind lady at the Rowans called Sarah. She really helped me and now I am doing everything I can do in return to help everyone in the hospice.



Skye with her brother Noah

Nan's War

I love my Nan I see her everyday
A great nature walk is our favourite thing
She is best and perfect in every way
When the C word was heard our hearts thumping
That night the stars bright and green be the grass
When the call came, threw our hearts in the bin
Cancer is a bridge that some have to pass
It was war for my nan and she fell in
And then we went to the Rowans Hospice
Who gave my nan a happy loving home
I met with counsellor Sarah, lossless
I started to speak out my sad dome
We wish we could feel your loving sweet touch
You will always be missed and loved so much.

I now go to anything to do with the Rowans: sponsored walks to raise money, I have gone to parties, done photo shoots, everything that is to do with the Rowans Hospice. A few months ago my school English class were given a piece of homework to write a sonnet (a piece of poetry with specific rules; 10 syllables a line, every other line rhymes, rhyming couplet at the end, to do with something/someone you love).

This is what I chose to write

This poem I read out to my class, I couldn't have done that without the Rowans help.
The Rowans inspired me to do this and now I could never forget about the Rowans. If someone in your family is living through cancer and you are filled with emotions and can't speak about it, start counselling with the Meerkats - it will really help; and if you are the one who is not going to make it through cancer the Rowans is a lovely place to live the rest of your life. I can speak out about my nan all because the help the Meerkats gave me.

10th birthday party!



10 years of Rowans Meerkat Service!

Fantastic Fundraisers



Emily, age 11, used to have hair all the way down to her bottom! She had it all cut off to raise money for Rowans Hospice in memory of her Uncle Mark. Emily raised an incredible **£822!**



Millie, Talia and Anya got creative in the kitchen, making slime pots that they then sold to friends at school. The sales raised a fabulous **£369** which the girls donated to Rowans Hospice in memory of Millie's Grandmother.



Mattie, age 14, and Raph, age 15, presented Rowans Hospice with this ginormous cheque for **£2,350** after they swam a channel relay with four other kids from their school and one of their teachers in memory of Mattie's Grandfather.

Your Questions:

Hi! We're Sarah and Sophie and we work for Rowans Meerkat Service. We get asked all sorts of questions from children and adults. Here are the answers to four of those questions:

1. *Do you meet many children in your work?
It feels like I am the only one going through this.*

Yes! We meet lots of children of all different ages. Over the past 10 years of the Meerkat Service, we have worked with nearly 1,000 young people.

2. *Do you just work with younger children?
I am 16 - am I too old for you to help me?*

No! There are lots of teenagers that we work with - Rowans Meerkat Service supports children of all ages up to 18 years old.

3. *How do you find out about children who need Rowans Meerkat Service?*

There are different ways we hear about children and teenagers who might need us, but it is usually through the people that we work with. Staff at the Hospice work really hard to look after those people who need our care - not just patients but their family and friends too. If a Hospice worker meets a parent who is worried about their child, or a child asks to speak to someone, Meerkat Central will receive a call asking if we can help.

4. *Does my family have to pay for me to have support through Rowans Meerkat Service?*

No, definitely not! Rowans Meerkat Service is part of the Rowans Hospice organisation. We are a charity; all of the Hospice services for patients and their families are free of charge. We receive a small amount of money from the government but most of the money comes from all the lovely people in our community who shop in our Rowans Hospice shops and do all sorts of creative and sometimes crazy(!) activities to raise money. Rowans Meerkat Service also receives funding from BBC Children in Need.



Quiz corner

Can you find these 10 words in our word search?

Meerkat
Charity
Central
Feelings
Hospice
Children in Need
Ten
Birthday
Fundraisers
Rowan

H	O	S	P	I	C	E	J	N	W	V	X	A	C
R	G	F	Q	S	B	I	R	T	H	D	A	Y	N
W	N	J	D	S	C	V	W	E	A	M	D	P	S
E	M	H	F	F	D	C	L	N	V	A	E	L	F
I	Y	R	E	J	O	X	D	Q	X	C	H	D	U
X	K	K	E	C	G	M	S	I	F	E	C	G	N
C	H	I	L	D	R	E	N	I	N	N	E	E	D
H	S	F	I	C	G	E	W	I	J	T	K	P	R
A	G	T	N	E	Q	R	T	L	N	R	O	U	A
R	K	S	G	K	C	K	F	O	M	A	J	Y	I
I	F	K	S	O	W	A	U	G	H	L	I	Y	S
T	M	C	M	I	Z	T	X	F	L	X	N	W	E
Y	R	S	Q	C	C	N	V	L	B	Y	N	G	R
C	X	W	Z	X	Y	Z	R	O	W	A	N	B	S



Joe, Imi and Tess at our Lush Party!

We'd love to hear your thoughts on Meerkat Mail!

Was there anything you liked or didn't like?
What would you like to see in future Meerkat Mail issues?

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Hospice

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