

Grammar team walks the furthest in Million Miles for MS

by Juliet Pouteaux

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ISLANDERS clocked up 181,104 miles during September to raise money for the MS Society and the Guernsey Cheshire Home.

And Grammar School students managed to do a third of that, winning them the trophy for the best team.

The Million Miles for MS event was held for the first time last autumn, where islanders were challenged to walk as far as they could during September.

It was held in commemoration of long-term Cheshire Home resident Paul Diligent, who passed away in 2015 after living with MS for decades.

His niece, Maddy Diligent, helped organise the event.

In total, 408 individuals and 39 teams took part, and they managed to cover a total of 181,104 miles.

The Grammar School had aimed to walk 50,000 miles over the month, but managed to achieve 59,565, making them the most successful team.

Paul Diligent's sister, Jacquie Vining, came to the school to talk about her



Awards for contribution to the MS Society fundraiser A Million Miles for MS. The Grammar School won the best team trophy and the individual trophy went to Steve Le Page. Left to right, front, representing the school are: Lisa Loller, 11, and Grace Coulson, 12. Behind them are Steve Le Page, Jacquie Vining from the MS committee, chair of the MS Society Linda Fermont, patron Colin Fallaize, Grammar head teacher Liz Coffey and chairman of Guernsey Cheshire Home Rob Shepherd.

(Picture by Adrian Miller, 20395050)

brother and present the school with a trophy.

'It is very emotional for me,' she said.

'He [Paul] was a truly exceptional person and he would have loved this chal-

lenge. 'We really wanted to keep his memory alive.'

Grammar students measured how far they walked using phone apps and Fitbits.

Headteacher Liz Coffey said students kept a running total with their tutor groups. She had set the 50,000 miles target.

'I had no doubt the students would do it,' she said.

'When given a focus they always respond.'

Steve Le Page, 61, was awarded with a trophy for furthest walked by an individual, after clocking up 126 miles over a month and

managing to raise £2,140.

He said he was keen to support the good causes.

'At the start of the month I bought myself a new pair of trainers and off I went,' he said.

'I would start off from home and take different routes each day and covered most of the St Saviour's over the four weeks.

'I definitely know St Saviour's a bit better now.'

He had known Paul Diligent for 50 years and the pair had gone to primary school together.

'He would have loved it,' he said.

MS Society chairman Linda Fermont said the fundraiser had gone well and had raised more than £8,500, which would be split between the MS Society and the Cheshire Home.

'I think it has been a great success,' she said.

Cheshire Home chairman Rob Shepherd said the event had been really important in making people aware of the work they do, which was vital as they do not get any States funding.

It is planned that the fundraiser will return next autumn.

Aurigny set to change its musical instrument policy

Productive meeting is held with keys reps from music community

by Juliet Pouteaux

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CHANGES are being made to Aurigny's musical instrument policy, following concern from the local music community that instruments could get damaged.

The airline previously had special arrangements with a small number of musicians to allow them to collect the instruments directly from the hold – on the tarmac – but that is no longer permitted due to customs and security restrictions.

Now changes are being proposed, but the airline will not be releasing them until the information is confirmed to avoid causing confusion.

Earlier this week, Aurigny met with world-renowned harpist Andrew Lawrence-King, Richard de la Rue and Music Service head Mervyn Grand to discuss the new policy and see what adjustments could be made.

Professor Lawrence-King said that it had been a constructive and productive meeting.

'A number of problems have been resolved, and it's very good to know that Aurigny is working with island musicians to seek solutions for their needs,' he said.

Mr De La Rue said the meeting with Aurigny CEO Mark Darby had lasted for 90 minutes, which showed that the airline was taking the matter seriously.

'We can't talk in detail about the proposed changes, but it is very positive,' he said.

Currently larger instruments, which are placed in the hold, are solely handled by Aurigny staff at Gatwick. Alternatively, musicians can buy a seat for their large instruments, which is sold at the standard

price, but without airport taxes and air passenger duty.

Aurigny has made concessions for musicians travelling with violins, violas and other similar-shaped instruments, which means these instruments can be taken on board as hand baggage provided that the instrument and case is no bigger than 20cm x 36cm x 100cm – which is much larger than the standard hand luggage allowance.

All parties at the meeting have now agreed that a letter would be sent to the relevant authorities in the UK, addressing the requirements and rules for musical instruments placed into the aircraft hold.

Mr Darby said they were pleased to have the opportunity to discuss the carriage of musical instruments with key representatives from the island's music community.

'[I] feel we have had productive discussions over some of the practicalities and issues involved,' he said.

'Hopefully we have been able to show that as a community airline, we value musicians and the contribution they make to the community, and we will do everything we can to look after them the best we can.'

'As anyone would expect, there are rules and regulations we cannot ignore as a responsible operator, but we will look at practical ways that we can support our customers and make their travel as hassle-free as possible. We have taken on board some suggestions that have been made at this meeting and will look at some changes that should make it easier for some musicians.'

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Fence posts taken from Alderney harbour

POLICE in Alderney are appealing for the return of a seven-foot steel fence post and two smaller posts taken from the harbour. The posts had been leaning up against the harbour shed at the recycling depot ready to be erected nearby.

Police say that the size and weight of the three items – around 600kg – mean a van and at least two people would have been needed to remove them.

The posts vanished some time between

the start of December and the beginning of January. Police believe they could have been taken by someone who believed they were scrap metal as they were close to a scrap metal pile.

Anyone with information is asked to contact Sgt James Taylor at Alderney Police on 824999 or at James.taylor@guernsey.pnn.police.uk, or anonymously via Crimestoppers on 0845 555 111.