

## **Our Ambassadors**

We are delighted to have some truly wonderful friends and supporters who are our Rose Road Ambassadors. They are listed below, with background information and their own perspective on what Rose Road means to them and why they are so passionate about the charity.

### **Paul Murray MBE**

I have been involved with Rose Road for nearly twenty five years and it been an honour and a pleasure to be contributing to such a worthwhile cause and such an exemplary organization, that does so much for children and young adults with profound and multiple disabilities.

I started as Chairman of the Winchester Fundraising Group and then the Southampton and Winchester Regional Fundraising Group raising money that went towards the build cost of the 'Bradbury Centre'. I then became Chairman of the Rose Road Fundraising Committee and then in 2015 to 2016 was a fundraising committee member.

I am honoured to continue as an ambassador for Rose Road.

I received an MBE in 2018 which was largely in recognition of my work at Rose Road. The award also reflects positively on the large amount of work put in by my fellow committee members and the fundraising staff at Rose Road.

### **Mike Andrews**

A lifetime drawing maps for the Ordnance Survey, with 30 years running a Theatrical Event Company, and launching a dozen F1 cars around Europe. During this time I became aware of Rose Road, and it's wonderful work with the special young people in this area. I've been delighted to produce the annual Dinner Dance working with Heather, Neil and the team, and these events have proven a huge success raising almost £100,000. I was always greatly impressed with the enthusiasm and commitment of their staff, and, as the years have moved on, the respect, hard work and love for the children. From such humble beginnings, who could have imagined such an impressive set-up, in what is a relatively short time-scale – and I am delighted to be an Ambassador of such a special charity.

### **Nina Basset**

Nina and her late husband, the world renowned somelier Gerald Basset OBE, have been wonderful friends of Rose Road, and have raised over £15,000 for the charity through very special dinner and wine tasting events.

"Gerard and I were linked to Rose Road since Hotel TerraVina (now Spot in the Woods) opened its doors way back in 2007. We were introduced to Rose Road when as a local business, we were looking to "adopt" a local charity and Rose Road stood out as the most outstanding, inspiring and special place and we had no hesitation to lend our support to them.

In the intervening years, we have never failed to be still more impressed and touched by all that the team do for the children and families who are cared for by Rose Road. Our support is tiny in comparison to the efforts and hard work that so many very special and dedicated people put into running Rose Road on a day to day basis.

I have been asked by other charities to consider adopting them, but my admiration and support will always be with Rose Road and I am thrilled to have been invited to be an Ambassador of what is an incredibly special charity."

### **Alan Blair MBE**

I first became involved with Rose Road in 1988 when I sought advice about a boat project which was being planned by the New Forest Rotary Club to take disabled people for trips on Southampton Water.

I became committed to the Charity because of the outstanding work it carried out on behalf of severely disabled children and their families and I have been extremely pleased to have been able to help in a variety of ways both personally and

through the New Forest Rotary Club.

Not only have I been so impressed with the services provided by Rose Road but I have been inspired by the children and young people whom the Charity supports. Let no one be in any doubt about the challenges faced on a daily basis by those families who have to care for profoundly disabled children, and give thanks for all that Rose Road do to support those families.

It has been, and remains, a privilege to be able to help Rose Road in a small way and I am honored to have been invited to become an Ambassador.

### **Bruce Elkins FCA**

Bruce has been a keen supporter for many years and most recently was the driving force behind the 123 Decathlon and assisted in raising £30,000 for Rose Road from the 10 sponsored sporting events.

"I have been taking part in sporting charitable challenges every year since 1991. Around the year 2000 I found out more about The Rose Road Association and having visited the school, I am pleased to have supported them since. The support infrastructure is second to none in my opinion and everyone that I have worked with at Rose Road has been a delight and a privilege to work with. I am extremely honoured and proud to have been asked to become an Ambassador and will strive to continue to do what I can to help such a wonderful school and facility."

### **The Rt Revd Debbie Sellin**

Debbie is Bishop of Southampton in the Diocese of Winchester. Bishop Debbie is passionate about young people being able to reach their potential and is very supportive of the support and care which are given to all the young people and their families through the work of Rose Road. Bishop Debbie supports Rose Road by leading services, including the annual Carol concert and by never missing an opportunity to speak - publicly and in private - about the way in which Rose Road values young people, celebrates their achievements and encourages them in their life choices.

### **Geoff Holt MBE DL**

"I first heard of The Rose Road Association more than ten years ago and was so inspired by their enthusiasm that I persuaded my company bosses to make them our charity of the year. More than a decade later, when I got back from my sailing trip around Great Britain, I was flattered to be asked to give a talk to the Association at their wonderful new Bradbury Centre.

From the moment I arrived at Rose Road, I was reminded of the all the wonderful staff, their commitment and dedication. They clearly focus their young people on what is possible, not dwell on what is not, and that's the philosophy I live my life by. They are doing a great job but like all worthy causes, they need funding to continue that work and if having me as an Ambassador helps the Children's Appeal then I'm delighted to be involved!"

You can find out more about Geoff on his website.

### **Martin Jay CBE DL**

"I became Chairman of the Rose Road Children's Appeal when it was launched in 1996 to raise £5 million for a new state of the art building for their wonderful work supporting severely disabled children. The Association had been operating from a small cramped building in Rose Road since the 1960s, and our vision was to replace this with facilities for many more young people with profound disabilities. As Chairman I mobilised support from all parts of the community including the business sector, where I was The Managing Director of Vosper Thornycroft.

After much hard work including events at the House of Lords, Southampton's QE2 Terminal, The Lord Admiralty Portsmouth and HMS Victory, The Bradbury Centre was opened by HRH the Earl of Wessex in January 2003 and I was delighted to welcome HRH back as the Association celebrated it's Diamond Jubilee in 2012."

## **Michael Kurn**

TV Presenter Michael Kurn has been involved with Rose Road for over 3 years, having first got involved presenting the annual dinner dance back in 2012. Michael currently presents the Premier League Football along with many other sporting programs and events across the UK and the world.

"It's an absolute pleasure for me to have been asked to be an Ambassador for Rose Road, having been involved for a number of years with the charity and seeing the great work they do it's a real honour.

When you see the smiles on the children's faces and also how passionate every member of staff is you appreciate how special Rose Road is and what it means to everyone. I look forward to supporting the charity and all the great work they do." [www.michaelkurn.com](http://www.michaelkurn.com)

## **Jan Peirson**

Jan has been supporting Rose Road since our appeal for the Bradbury Centre, to date she has raised over £40,000 through her fabulous events and wonderful community support.

"Rose Road is a very special local charity and this is why I fundraise for them so that the children can find peace and enjoyment while they are at the Bradbury Centre."

## **Nina Schofield**

"I'm so proud and pleased to be continuing my patronage for The Rose Road Association.

It's a fantastic charity and their continued support of children and families in the area I grew up in is as inspiring as it is beneficial.

I look forward to helping in any way I can throughout the year."

## **Karl and Kim Simmonds**

Karl and Kim are wonderful supporters of our Rose Road and they also run events for us across the year.

"Rose Road has given us much needed respite, to re-charge our batteries. Our daughter April, enjoys these short breaks, and talks about friends from school, she has seen there. She also attends playscheme on some evenings and during the school holidays. This is a fantastic organisation, and we are very proud to support it!"

## **Chris Smith**

Chris has been a wonderful friend and supporter of the Rose Road Association for many years.

As well as regular attendee of our events and involvement in a variety of ways with his wife Fiona, Chris has been instrumental in developing our partnership with The St. James's Place Foundation, who have supported Rose Road for a number of years, helping provide vital short breaks for disabled children.

## **Richard and Jane Smith**

"Richard became involved with Rose Road some 20 years ago, after the fundraiser at the time invited him to a Friday afternoon school assembly. He was so moved by the atmosphere and inspired by the children that he persuaded his partners at Paris Smith to support Rose Road as the firms charity of the year. Jane later answered an advert for a volunteer with database knowledge to help in the fundraising department and she managed the databases and worked with the fundraising team for more than 10 years. Both of us are honoured to continue our association with Rose Road and are very pleased to be invited to be Ambassadors of this wonderful charity."

## **Kerry Swain**

### **Best Video Journalist, Southern Royal Television Society Awards 2013**

"As a journalist I can vouch for the vital role Rose Road plays in supporting families. I've interviewed parents who've told me they couldn't have coped without the respite care. Many of the children are unable to express their thoughts but you only have to look at their faces to see the joy they feel in spending time at Rose Road.

Each time I walk into the centre I'm struck by the warm, relaxed and loving atmosphere. Too often in the media we portray disabled children in a negative way, at Rose Road each child is treated as special and they blossom. I am delighted to support this wonderful charity - although I hope not to be pushed out of a plane again in order to prove it!"

## **Clive and Eryl Thompsett**

"In 1998 I was asked to become a trustee to help with the Bradbury Centre project. I worked on the fundraising committee and as the liaison trustee between the technical professionals, the fundraisers and the Board of trustees. Eryl immediately became interested in Rose Road and wanted to be involved.

Over the past fourteen years both of us have become more and more inspired by the loving atmosphere engendered by the staff and volunteers and the achievements of the children. It is our 'number one' charity and we both miss no opportunity to give it publicity.

Eryl regularly gives talks to groups around the County on a variety of subjects and nominates Rose Road as the fee recipient. She finds that the charity is well known by name but there is seldom sufficient awareness of exactly what is done and achieved; she rectifies that.

I intended being a trustee for only five years but actually stayed for eleven! We are so pleased to see the expansion of the school and the way that the support facilities for children and their families continue to expand. It is a wonderful charity and we will keep talking to others about it, promoting its worth as a designated charity and supporting it ourselves."

## **Janice Viveash**

Following my role as Appeal Director with Rose Road, leading the Team to the successful completion of the Appeal and subsequent realisation of the dream to fund and build the much loved Bradbury Centre, I 'retired' but have always kept my links with Rose Road over the past ten years.

Ironically our first grandchild was brain damaged at birth and I know only too well how having a profoundly disabled child in the family affects us all. Many of the examples of the difficulties, frustrations and sadness that in the past I would tell prospective donors about to illustrate the need for support, are now in sharp focus in my own personal life and continue on a daily basis. This makes me more determined to maintain my link with Rose Road by offering my expertise to those who, in turn, offer the support to those families who are often so desperately in need.

I am pleased to be an Ambassador for the Association and look forward to continuing my support for such a worthwhile organisation as it develops services in the future.

## **Chris White, Gay Drysdall and Leonora Joy Road**

"We feel humbled yet honoured to be asked to be Ambassadors for 'The Rose Road Association' and know that the link is because we are three of the daughters of Leonora Welch. Our mother, along with our father Ray, were 2 of the original 10 founder members of the first committee in 1952. Our mother was the first chairman and later, after much fund raising, became the first Principal of the Centre built in Archers Road, Southampton.

As a family, we lived in 7 Rose Road and initially in 1953 Mum had 6 of the disabled children to teach in our home two mornings a week. Later the girls' workshop took place there, where the girls did sewing, printing etc. over several years. Children with disabilities were a very large part of our childhood and we were privileged to join in with many of the fun activities provided in those early days. We helped with holidays, outings, youth groups and sometimes at the centre too. It was interesting that finally in 1966 a two storey, purpose built Centre was constructed in Rose Road and that is where the Association was given its name. This also included a family help unit on the top floor.

In 2011/12 it was a large, but interesting task to put all the letters, photographs and cuttings from those early days, into chronological order. Those files brought back fond memories for us all. Many people who attended the Rose Road Diamond Jubilee events also enjoyed looking through these records. Now we are very pleased to continue our connection by becoming Ambassadors for Rose Road."

## **Clare Talks**

I am honoured to be an ambassador. Rose Road brings joy to so many children and young people in Hampshire. They are nurtured with extraordinary care and commitment and are loved dearly by all those who work at Rose Road. Its dedicated staff work tirelessly to support local families and to provide its children and young people with the best possible outcomes.

I initially became involved with Rose Road ten years ago whilst fundraising for a marathon and there has been no turning back. I was lucky enough to host Rose Road's memorable 60th anniversary celebration at Winchester College when families, carers, trustees and volunteers got drenched in an untimely downpour!

I look forward to welcoming all families of Rose Road when the pandemic is finally over and to being more closely involved with its inspirational work.

## **Nick Vaughan**

I am the Senior Partner of Paris Smith LLP Solicitors and we have had a very long connection with Rose Road. I specialise in working with and helping charities and am delighted and honoured to be an ambassador for Rose Road which provides so much care and love to so many children and young people in Hampshire.