

Issue 45 – September 2023

Bringing all Deaf people together as a community

JDAtogether



*Celebrating a Coronation,
an OBE... and JDA life together*



CELEBRATIONS

CELEBRATING KING CHARLES III'S CORONATION AND SUE'S OBE

On Tuesday 9 May 2023, the air was filled with excitement as 98 members, friends of JDA, Dcafe regulars, Dcafe volunteers, JDA staff and JDA Trustees gathered to celebrate the Coronation of King Charles III and the OBE of our Chief Executive Sue Cipin.

Mira Goldberg writes:



The organising committee consisted of Neil Kaufman, Christine Bennett, Ann Clements and me. We worked tirelessly to ensure that the event was a success. The hall was decorated beautifully with British flags and balloons and

there was a spectacular display of banners and flags featuring King Charles and Sue! Some people travelled from as far as Liverpool, Leeds, Bath and the South East of England for the party.

Jack Schwartz and Brinthan Nanthabalan captured the memorable moments on camera and video.

We had a lovely cream tea, with sandwiches, scones, and mini cakes. The highlight was the special cake designed by Christine Bennett and baked by Ravit Freeman (Peaks and Swirls Cakes).

Trudy Kling, Chair of JDA, welcomed everyone to the event and shared the significance of Sue Cipin's OBE award. She talked about how fantastic Sue is for JDA and how meaningful the award is for the JDA community.

Neil Kaufman made a speech explaining how he had successfully nominated Sue for the OBE.

The crowd applauded him for his efforts and for achieving such great success!

Sue Cipin has worked for 24 years at JDA, transforming it from a small organisation to one that supports everyone from babies to older people. She has been an inspiration to everyone and has worked tirelessly to ensure that their needs are met.

Christine gave Sue a special present on behalf of everyone in the JDA community — a stunning cushion, which Sue was very excited to receive.

To cap off the afternoon, Christine led the group in a rousing rendition of "God Save The King" in BSL.

The event was a joyful celebration of Sue's achievements, and everyone enjoyed themselves tremendously.

Sue expressed her gratitude to everyone involved. She said, "A BIG BIG thank you to all who helped to make today so special — for me, and for everyone who was lucky enough to come to this wonderful party. It was brilliant, and I really appreciate all the hard work you put into making it fabulous."

All in all, it was a fantastic party, and everyone went home with happy memories and full hearts.





SUE CIPIN IS AWARDED AN OBE

JDA's Chief Executive, Sue Cipin, was awarded the honour of Officer of the Order of the British Empire (OBE) in the 2023 New Year Honours List for services to charity and to people with hearing impairments.

For over 70 years, JDA has enabled Deaf, Deafblind and hard of hearing people to overcome their daily challenges and to get the very best out of life.

Sue joined JDA 24 years ago and has been the inspirational force behind the launch of **innovative new initiatives such as Dcafe — JDA's popular signing café, run by unemployed Deaf people**, providing a diverse hub for the Deaf community while giving Deaf volunteers qualifications, confidence and transferable life skills for employment.

To provide a haven for Deaf sign language users of all faiths and backgrounds and give them somewhere to turn for the support that was missing in their lives, **Sue set up Independent Deaf Support Services. This drop-in has since rescued hundreds of Deaf people from crises** including homelessness, poverty and abuse.

And to alleviate the loneliness of older people in care homes who are isolated by their hearing loss, **Sue launched Hearing Matters in Care — JDA's pioneering hearing support service for care homes.**

The only service of its kind throughout England, it has so far trained over 1500 care home management and staff to understand and address the needs of residents with hearing loss and provide the right communication, support and equipment to enable the older people in their care to engage with their family, the staff and fellow residents, join in activities and enjoy a happier and more social later life.

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, Sue and her dedicated team of professional staff and volunteers worked tirelessly and **succeeded in keeping all the Deaf and Deafblind people the JDA cares for — and hundreds more — safe, well, reassured, connected and mentally stable.**

In May 2021 Sue received the Barnet Civic Award for Lifetime Achievement for services to deaf people.

Lead nominator, Neil Kaufman, said: *"Sue has improved the lives of so many people who, through lack of communication, can often feel left out of society. She goes the extra mile to ensure that the JDA caters for us all. Although she must be under a great deal of pressure, she always comes out smiling. Sue is truly a selfless and remarkable lady."*

On receiving the news, Sue said: *"I am thrilled to have been awarded an OBE, which belongs to all our inspiring and committed staff and volunteers who do such incredible work. JDA is part of who I am and I feel truly blessed to be a part of the JDA family."*



Just another Wednesday!

NEIL LEE, SUE'S HUSBAND, TELLS US ABOUT THE INVESTITURE AT WINDSOR CASTLE

I awoke to the sound of the hairdryer going at full speed. It was only 6am but it absolutely had to be a good hair day, for this was the morning Sue was going to receive her OBE.

We were to be at Windsor Castle at 0930 and as we drove up the 'Long Walk', passing dog walkers and tourists, we felt just a little bit special and very excited. Pulling up at the gates, there was a greeting party of 12 armed police officers. They were charming and chatty, congratulating Sue (the recipient) as they checked under the car, the bonnet and the boot.

Having passed the security test, we parked in the front garden to be met by the first of dozens of the most delightful and welcoming members of the castle staff. They gently guided us through the halls and rooms, each one more beautiful than the last. We walked along with our mouths wide open. Priceless furniture, suits of armour, oil paintings celebrating battles won and the aristocracy of England... and the largest dining table imaginable — enough room for 50 guests or more!

At this point, we still had no idea who would be giving Sue her medal. She was secretly hoping for Prince William.

An army Captain in full dress uniform briefed all the recipients telling them that they would be called one by one and were to stand at the edge of a gold rug in front of the Royal and could either curtsy or bow their head. Sue said she would bow her head in case she fell backwards in her high heels mid-curtsey.

In moments, we were standing in the doorway of a huge ornate room festooned with gold drapes. There was a string quartet playing classical music, soldiers dripping in gold and medals, beefeaters and a Lord Chamberlain and — standing right in the middle — Prince William, so tall and regal.

While I took my place at the edge of the room, Sue's name was called and she walked forward, bowed and took the outstretched hand of our future King.



The recipient before Sue had a brief conversation of around 30 seconds. But (I know you'll find it hard to believe!) Sue had a lot to say, and so did William it would seem.

They were soon chatting away as though they'd known each other for years. The Prince seemed really fascinated and it was a genuine and informal moment surrounded by the pomp and circumstance.

And far too quickly it was all over. We walked out of the castle so proud and overwhelmed by our experience, and most importantly, Sue was finally able to take her heels off and skip back to the car barefoot!

SUE'S VISIT TO WINDSOR CASTLE

How It Feels to Receive an OBE

SUE TELLS US HER EXPERIENCE OF RECEIVING THE AWARD



Last December, I received a suspicious email. The email said it was from The Cabinet Office. It said: "There is a letter attached to this email. Please click on the letter and send us your reply." I immediately thought it was a scam. I suspected that if I clicked on the email attachment, criminals might be able to hack my computer, and then they would steal all my money from my bank account.

I phoned the Cabinet Office and told them about the email and they confirmed it was genuine. I had been awarded an OBE. They couldn't tell me who had nominated me, but that the announcement would be made on New Year's Eve, so I must keep this secret from everyone until after that.

I was absolutely stunned. I couldn't keep the secret for more than 30 seconds and immediately called my husband Neil, laughing while I shared the exciting news with him. We walked around for the next two weeks with me saying "No it can't be true. They must have mixed me up with someone else" and Neil replying "There is no one else like you!" (I think he meant it in a good way?)

In March, I got a letter from Lieutenant Colonel Stephen Segrave explaining he had been commanded to inform me of my investiture.

Obviously, my biggest concern was what to wear and I spent weeks worrying about this. I finally decided on a purple dress with a fascinator (hat) in bright JDA pink.

The Central Chancery of the Orders of Knighthood sent me strict instructions for collecting my medal. With my tickets to the ceremony, they included a blue ticket with the letters WC in bold print.

I honestly thought it was a ticket to go to the toilet... until I realised that it was actually a parking permit to put in the car window for Windsor Castle!

On Wednesday 9 May 2023 (the day after our fabulous JDA party), Windsor Castle was closed to tourists and open solely for visitors who were receiving awards such as MBEs, OBEs and Knighthoods.

I was accompanied by my husband Neil, my sister Laura and her husband Bryan. We were warmly welcomed and treated like VIPs in every way, and I was personally congratulated by each official.

The awards ceremonies are divided into groups. I was in the Civil group. The only time we were with a large group of people was for a briefing, when 60 of us all gathered together in a grand hall called The Waterloo Chamber. **As I looked around this imposing room, I realised everyone here was receiving an honour for doing something incredible for the people of our community. I felt truly proud to be among them.**

The presentation of the medals follows the same tradition every time. Prince William is escorted by the Lord Chamberlain who, after the National Anthem is played, stands to the right of Prince William and announces the name of each recipient. Prince William takes the medal from a velvet cushion held by a senior member of the Household.

An Equerry in Waiting reminds Prince William of why each person is being given this honour, so he knows what to talk about with them.

My name was announced and I walked towards Prince William with a beaming smile. I was so excited to meet him and I couldn't believe how charming (and tall!) he looked. I bowed and waited for him to step forward, which was my cue to step forward too. He asked me about JDA's work and I explained.

I told the Prince I had watched King Charles III's Coronation Service on BBC2 and was delighted that BSL interpreters had provided full access to the Deaf community, enabling them to join the nation in this monumental experience.

Prince William enthused that, at the Coronation Concert, he had found it extremely moving when all the choirs stopped singing and signed part of the song in silence together with the Deaf choir, Unify.

We both agreed it is uplifting to see progress being made in improving access and inclusion for Deaf people.

As I walked away from chatting with Prince William, I was walking on air!!! I saw the delight on my family's faces and I thought to myself, I hope I remember this feeling forever.

I now know who was responsible for my receiving this incredible honour. A BIG thank you to each of them for working so hard to make this happen — Neil Kaufman, Trudy Kling, Mira Goldberg, Alan Murray MBE, Miriam Solomon, Judith Morgan, Rabbi David Lister and Mike Freer MP.

The OBE is a massive honour for JDA. It shows the **community what an amazing organisation JDA is. It is a brilliant achievement that Neil Kaufman — and everyone who supported him — should be so proud of.**

JDA has become not a job, but a part of who I am. It's what I think about, what I worry about, what I lose sleep over, what I really really care about.

But this OBE is not only for me — it's for:

- Each and every one of our incredible staff, who are absolute heroes — and who make me happy every day.
- All the fantastic people of the JDA community, who have given me such a fulfilling career and a legacy I'm proud of. Being a part of the JDA community is not only crucial to our service users — it feeds the souls of all of us who are lucky enough to work here.
- My husband Neil, who has always helped me to be the best I can be.
- And of course it's all thanks to Neil Kaufman and everyone who did the brilliant job of writing lovely things about me.
- **This award belongs to all of us. Let's always appreciate and celebrate how blessed we are to be a part of our wonderful JDA community — JDA OBE!**

