

Consuming love affair/world domination/ Body's Arousal/Valentine's Day

Well, well, well ... flicking through the pages of the Observer magazine my eye was caught by my forecast astrological week ahead. What I hadn't realised was that because Jupiter is moving backwards, certain of my plans for world domination are up for revision. And....it also says... I am in line for a consuming love affair!

Another Observer magazine investigates 'the lust gap'. It talks about some women gritting their teeth and dreaming of England and how some men have been liberated by their discovery of emotional literacy to demand genuine affection. Apparently Simon Blackburn puts in 'Lust' that the most important element is 'the storm' ~ "that floods the body, that heats and boils and excites". He says we also need "the portrait in the mind of the body's arousal" and he quotes something said by the Ancient Greek poet Sappho "whenever I catch sight of you, even if for a moment, then my voice deserts me and my tongue is struck silent, a delicate fire suddenly races underneath my skin."

So I'll wait for that then.



And Ron received seven Valentine cards.

Nutrition News

The Observer magazine tells us that prostate cancer is the most common cancer in men. A number of nutritional factors are believed to help protect against prostate cancer, including a good intake of the mineral selenium. It seems that some studies suggest that men consuming relatively high levels of selenium have generally lower risk of prostate cancer compared to those with lower intakes. It also mentions the journal 'Cancer Epidemiology, Biomarkers and Prevention', in which 1,733 Dutch men were assessed for six years. Each year the selenium level in their bodies was measured by analysis of their toenail clippings. The study found that risk of prostate cancer was 31 % lower in men with the highest levels of selenium in their bodies. Look, it says, no further than brazil nuts: three or four provide 200 mcg of selenium, a daily dose of which is believed to be very helpful in protecting against prostate cancer.

AGEING (from Cambridge son)

Two old friends were sitting on a bench in a park.

They saw a refreshment van on the other side of the park.

One friend said "I would like an ice cream"

The other one says "O.K. what sort do you want?"

He said "I want an ice cream cone, one scoop of chocolate, one scoop of vanilla, strawberry sauce and oh yes, hundreds and thousands sprinkled on top."

"But", he continued, "it's not worth telling you because I know you from old, you'll forget it."

"No", said his friend. "I won't forget ~ you want an ice cream cone, one scoop of chocolate, one scoop of vanilla, strawberry sauce and hundreds and thousands sprinkled on top. I won't forget".

"Go and get the ice cream then, but I know you will forget. You always forget."

"I definitely won't forget" and off he goes to the refreshment van.

After ten minutes he returns and says "here's your cheeseburger".

His friend, in a frenzy says "but where's my flamin' chips?"

Attention Deficit Disorder

(read in The Times and sent to us by Jeanne)

This is how Age Activated Attention Deficit Disorder manifests itself:

I need to wash the car. As I start towards the garage I notice there's mail on the hall table. I decide to go through that before washing the car. I put my keys down on the table, put the junk mail in the bin and see that the bin is full. So I decide to put the bills back on the table to take out the bin. But then I think, since I'm near the post-box when I take the bin outside, I might as well pay the bills first. I take my cheque book off the table and see there's only one cheque left so I go to my desk in the study where I find a bottle of coke I had been drinking. I'm about to look for my cheques when I notice the coke is warm so I decide to put it in the fridge. I head towards the kitchen when a vase of flowers on the table catches my eye ~ they need water. As I put the coke down on the table I notice my glasses, which I've been looking for all morning. I decide I had better take them back to my desk, but first I must water the flowers. I fill a jug with water when I spot the TV remote on the kitchen table. Tonight when we go to watch TV we'll be looking for it, so I decide to take it back to the sitting room, but first I must water the flowers. I try to put some water into them and spill it on the floor. So I put the remote down to wipe up the spillage. Then I head back to the hall trying to remember what I was planning to do.

Now, it's the end of the day, the car isn't washed, the bills aren't paid, there's a warm bottle of coke somewhere in the house but I can't remember where, the flowers aren't watered, there's only one cheque left in the cheque book. I can't

find the remote or my glasses and I don't know what's happened to my car keys! I try to work out why nothing got done today and I'm baffled because I've been so busy and now I'm really tired. I realise this is a problem and I'll try to get some help, but first I'll check my e'mails!

Collection tin from the police

Two of the police officers who went on a sponsored slim for the Centre decided to raise money for us all year round whilst they were running training courses. So they had this Centre's collection tin and upon any pretext they could dream up, the officers on their courses were persuaded to drop money into the tin. One of them wrote to us

"Judge Janie and I wanted to raise some more money and I couldn't match her other name 'Willpower Woods' and carry on the sponsored diet any longer so we thought about a 'fines' penalty system for our students ~ painless to us, expensive to them and impactful for you! So, during our courses, if a mobile phone goes off it costs 10p. If they answer it it costs 20p and that increases if they leave the room to talk and are late back in!!.....and the fines go on!

Arguing with Janie left them to be overruled and the fine increased. There was no time off for good behaviour and Judge Janie's decision was final.

Me? I just put my money in at the beginning of each course we ran, in advance of any teaching misdemeanours I may (*always*) commit.

Working with Janie is an expensive 'treat'.

We hope you at the Centre enjoy the rewards of our 'badness' and spend it on something really inappropriate, which includes chocolate, but above all, ENJOY"

P.S. I role-played on one of their courses so I took their some chocolate cake. When it was being offered around I offered some and said OK, a little piece". I was charged However, they raised £107.47 for our Centre and now Steve Charlie shake one of our collection tins around during their courses ~ it is labelled 'swear box' and I think they have something like £20 in it. Marvellous.



students
was
£1!.
and

And our Jane says ~

Can't eat beef.....mad cow

Can't eat chickenbird flu

Can't eat eggsagain, bird flu

Can't eat pork.....fears that mad cow or bird flu will infect piggies

Can't eat fish.....heavy metals in the water have poisoned their meat

Can't eat fruits and veggies.....insecticides, herbicides and genetic manipulation

Hmmmmm! I believe that leaves Chocolate!"

Healing Plants by *Richard*

In this newsletter, instead of writing about one kind of plant, I am writing about quite a few that help heal various cancers.

All living organisms are built from cells ~ the smallest units of life. All cells are essentially chemical factories.

Cell growth is perfectly controlled in a healthy person. When control is lost, rapid and unrestrained cell growth occurs, so many cancer treatments aim to destroy these rapidly dividing cells. So, which plants can be employed to combat cancer?

Firstly the Madagascan periwinkle (*Catharanthus roseus*). In the 1950's it was discovered that this plant produces two of the most effective drugs in the fight against childhood cancer.

Many plants such as Vinca major and Vinca minor (*greater and lesser periwinkles*) produce alkaloids with useful and interesting physiological effects. The Madagascan periwinkle produces potent poisons vincristine and vinblastine. These are used in chemotherapy. I first knew of this in 1998 when I received eight chemo treatments. The nurse, knowing I was a gardener, informed me of the healing periwinkle. Vincristine and vinblastin are especially effective against lymphoblastic leukaemia, a major childhood cancer and are used in the treatment of lymphoma (*cancer of the white blood cells and lymph*) and to treat testicular cancer.

The Madagascan periwinkle is farmed in Texas, U.S.A. and 8,000 kg (17,600 lb) of flowers are processed every year. The flower is pink and most attractive.

The English yew (*Taxus baccata*) is one of the longest lived trees. The useful but poisonous nature of yew has long been known. North American tribes

used Pacific yew to treat skin cancer. In 1979 biological tests on Pacific yew bark revealed a potent poison called taxol, which stops cell division. Taxol is now invaluable in the treatment of ovarian cancer. It was noticed that although yew clippings of *baccata* contain only minute amounts of taxol they also contain a considerable amount of a related substance called baccatin 111. This can be elaborated in the laboratory to make either taxol itself or the closely related drug taxotere. In my gardening career I have collected young yew clippings and the clippings were sent to a French factory for these valuable drugs.

The autumn crocus (*Colchicum autumnale*) has long been known for its powerful effects. It was employed by Arab and Byzantine physicians and the Romans to treat gout. However it is too toxic for cancer drugs but is a helpful research tool.

Sweet cicely (*Myrrhis odorata*) is like a refined fragrant creamy-white cow parsley. Again it contains a powerful poison and is a useful starting point for the design of less toxic synthetic drugs which still retain their ability to destroy cancer cells.

Most of the world's population depends on plants as a primary source of health care. Yet few of the world's well known 250,000 plant species have been fully screened for their medicinal effects. In 1988 only 120 chemical compounds from plants were used in clinical practice and these came from just 90 plant species. Much remains to be discovered and it is therefore of great importance to maintain the diversity of the world's flora.

Wendy told me about a healing
welcome visits. It is free of
stay overnight you can, but you
address is



sanctury, near Hastings. They
charge, although if you want to
have to pay. Their website

www.healingsanctuaryofchrist.co.uk/

Barefoot Doctor in the Observer magazine says ~

do consider learning Reiki because it is totally non-invasive and discreet and highly effective in speeding the recovery process.

But if you don't want to learn it, then you can receive it at the Centre from any, or all, of our nine healers ~

Jane, Brigid, Julia, Lesley, Linda, Mandy, Scilla, Caroline and Dennis

They do not expect to receive payment but there is a collection tin for the Centre should anyone wish to make a donation.

You may also like to know that some of our therapists offer healing/reflexology and other therapies outside Centre hours. To find out more about this, including the cost, please contact them direct.

Jane Cornell: healing (Sekhem), home visits and treatments at my home. Donations please

Fran Dawson: Aromatherapy, Reflexology, Swedish massage and Remedial Massage. Home visits by arrangement. Fees from £25 - £40.

Please phone 01223 500555 for details.

Scilla Thurmott: Reiki, attunement for Reiki I and II, Kinesiology (*optimal health balance*). Willing to visit people at home. Travelling expenses.

Tel 01353 610172

Linda Dixon: (*Ladies Only*) Reflexology, aromatherapy massage, Indian head massage, Reiki healing II, spiritual healing. People would have to come to me at Linton. Fee is negotiable. *Tel 01223 892241 or 01223 890220*

Dennis Smith: spiritual healing (*travel contribution*) *Tel 01223 528856*

Other 'treatments' can be obtained from the following. Every one of them has been personally recommended to us at least once ~

Alison Davies: BSc. M.N.I.M.H. Medical herbalist at the Complementary Health Centre. *Tel 01223 264159*

Madeleine Morgan: BA Hons, MIFA, MANLP. holistic aromatherapy, remedial massage, life coaching *Tel 01223 426392*

Chrissie Gray: MH MGNI. master herbalist, iridologist, reflexologist and reiki master *Tel.01223 476730*

Julia Smith-Pearse: DC MMCA. McTimoney Chiropractor, consultations in Newmarket. *Tel 01638 508416*

THANKS to Jane who looks after all our therapists. She is also our librarian ~ keeps our book shelves in good order and sends us polite letters if we are late returning our books! And she does all sorts of helpful things

~ but don't mention portacabins!

*Big
Luck*

Issue /



Gentleman/Some

John Bird (*founder of Big Issue*) said that if you buy a copy of Big Issue you are being a bit like a social worker. Well, that's quite nice so I usually buy my copy from a gentleman who quietly stands, with his flask, outside the Nat West bank in St Andrew's Street., Cambridge. However, a few weeks ago I came across another Big Issue seller in a different location and it was very cold and wet. Aha, buy B.I. from him, I thought, it looks like his last copy, and he can go and get a cup of tea. So, keep the change I say, (*thinking now he can get two cups of tea*). However, he hung on to this last copy and said "it's my last one". Great I said. But he still didn't give it to me. He said I'd like to keep this last copy and get some more money. But I'd like to read it I said. But it's my last copy he repeated. So I gave up. In Big Issue I read that this can happen sometimes and it may be that the particular vendors who do this aren't 'badged'. So do support my gentleman, please, outside Nat West Bank when you see him. You can buy this following book and he will get £5.....

"Poor Boy, Poet, Thief, Artist, Road-Sweeper, Revolutionary, Drunk, Writer, Down and Out, Founder of the Big Issue"

John Bird founder of 'Big Issue' has written his biography entitled 'Some Luck'. The cover describes it as "Poor boy, Poet, Thief, Artist, Road-sweeper, Revolutionary, Drunk, Writer, Down-and-out, Founder of the Big Issue". The Spectator says "provides a marvellous documentary of a vanished London and life in the underbelly".

You can purchase it by telephoning 020-7526 3259 or by email "books@bigissue.com" Or you can write to The Big Issue, 1-5 Wandsworth Road, London, SW8 2LN. Payment by credit card or cheque made payable to The Big Issue Ltd. It costs £9.50, including p&p. And if you quote the badge number of your favourite Big Issue vendor (the Nat West gentleman is "CB 284") he/she will receive £5 of each book sold. All books are personally signed.

Why Quotations? ~ from Tricia

Winston Churchill once said,

"It is a good thing to read books of quotations. The quotations, when engraved upon the memory, give you good thoughts."

When my children were in their 'teens' I used to attach a carefully selected 'thought for the week' to the bathroom mirror, hoping to stimulate their 'good thoughts' ~ although my youngest often professed ignorance of the quotation's meaning, and the eldest sometimes added a response of her own ~ subtly changing the meaning of the original!

As a long-standing and enthusiastic collector of quotations, I was delighted recently to receive a letter and a beautiful little hand-written book from Fiona Benham's Aunt ~ Diana.

This is what Diana had to say:

I enclose a copy of 'A Little Book of Inspiration' which Fiona and I decided to compile during her illness. Fiona, of course, got down to it right away, whereas I lagged behind! She used to have it on her bedside table and I thought you might like a copy for your Centre library.

Well yes, Diana, we would love a copy for our library ~ thank you so much for sending it. We'd like to share it with our members so we shall aim to include one of 'Fiona's quotations' in each of our newsletters. It seems appropriate to start with one that she once said had "become a fundamental belief" for her ~

*The measure of a life
is not in its length
but in its content.*

Anon

*If anyone would
book please ask
~ it's quite small*

it in a special place so that it won't get lost amongst all the other books.

*like to see the
Ann or Tricia
and we keep*

Fiona's Network ~

Karen, who has organised 'Fiona's Network' and sent out reminders each year on Fiona's birthday, feels that it is time to wind up the Network on a high note. Since Fiona died in September 2000, we have received £2355 from her friends and relations. All of this money has been spent on the publication of our book *'Looking at the Stars'*: without such generous encouragement we would not have felt justified in embarking on this project. Karen says ~ *"I think we can be proud to have contributed something meaningful that will help others who suffer from cancer"*.

So thank you 'Fiona's Network' for contributing to this lasting memorial to your friend. We very much appreciate all your support.

The steady trickle of sales of 'Looking at the Stars' continues. We were pleased recently to receive a request from Bristol for copies for their Centre shop.

Girl With a Pearl Earring (and Desire, Pain, Longing and Shame)



You may remember reading about this book in the April 2002 edition of Lifeline. If you don't remember that perhaps I can reprint here some of what I wrote then.

*"Girl with a Pearl Earring" Harper Collins ISBN 0-00-651320-4.
The author of the novel is Tracy Chevalier.*

The picture on the cover of the book was painted by Johannes Vermeer and should it ever be exhibited here I think we should have a Wild Thursday visit to see it. One of the descriptions of the book is that it is mysterious and almost unbearably poignant. And if you are walking through a bookshop and her face is suddenly on view, you will see her expression revealing (*in my opinion*) Desire, along with Pain, Longing and Shame ~ all of that and all at once. And I find that looking at this picture brings a lump or two to the throat.

And now it is a film. Shall we have an outing to see it?

“Numbers are easy to manipulate”

~ from Tricia

We’re so used to being surrounded by statistics that perhaps most of us, most of the time, simply ignore them. But sometimes they taunt us just a little too far and we’re provoked into snapping out at them ~ as I am now.

I was reading a newspaper article about finance deals being offered by the supermarkets. It pointed out that various best-buy tables backed up the supermarkets’ claim to be cheaper for the consumer than a similar product from a broker. The brokers, on the other hand, have produced equally convincing statistics to show categorically that it is cheaper to buy from them.

Nothing unusual in that, you might think ~ conflicting statistics are being compiled each day in all sections of our society, and figures are constantly being used to trick us and conceal ‘the facts’, a point neatly expressed in five words by the writer of the article: *“Numbers are easy to manipulate”*. As I read those words I could feel the ‘camel’s back’ crumple under the weight of the straw!

It was the word ‘manipulate’ that did it: it had a sinister ring. It felt very different from the image of a juggler that I’ve sometimes used with my pupils to demonstrate how numbers can be moved from one side of an equation to another while still maintaining the integrity of the original equation. A skilful juggler keeps the balls moving around in the air. They don’t bump into one another although all are invisibly connected by the movement ~ a dynamic, harmonious kaleidoscope of changing patterns following mathematical curves that our eyes and brains find difficult to define. No element of the pattern is more important than the next. Each is an intrinsic part of the whole ~ no jockeying for position ~ no one-up-man-ship here!

“Mathematics is order and beauty at its purest”, says Paul Erdos, the Hungarian mathematician. But statistics are nothing to do with mathematics: they are a man-made frame-work for collecting, arranging and manipulating numerical data, very often to suit our own ends. While mathematics brings clarity, transparency and beauty, man uses statistics, very often, to cloud the issue and bring only fuzziness and ugliness ~ Beauty and the Beast ~ although in the case of statistics, the Beast appears to have no underlying morality.

Perhaps manipulative statistics are just an attempt by man to confine numbers to a straight-jacket and squeeze the essence from them. But numbers are not man-made and cannot be so restrained: they are part of the very fabric of our world and, like words, demand our utmost respect.

World Cancer Research Fund ~

Martin Howard

Martin's wife, Angela, told us that Martin died on the 21st December (*the Solstice*) at 7.30 am. Martin was in his own bed and Angela was beside him taking him through a guided meditation on "going to the light". Angela goes on to say that Martin was courageous, cheerful and positive throughout his illness and his bravery has touched many lives. Martin said that Christmas 2002 (*two months after diagnosis*) was "the best ever". He believed that what he called 'the upstairs team' were teaching him to understand suffering from the inside. It was no use just reading about it. He had to experience it. The last book he found 'The New Revelations' by Neale Donald Walsch (*ISBN 0 340 8255590*) really felt as if it *was the last book he*

"stopping cancer before it starts"

The Cancer Prevention Plan tells us to choose a diet rich in a variety of plant-based foods:

- Eat plenty of vegetables and fruits
- Maintain a healthy weight and be physically active
- Drink alcohol only in moderation, if at all
- Select foods low in fat and salt
- Prepare and store food safely
- And do not smoke or use tobacco in any form.

Fill two thirds or more of your plate with plant foods ~

these foods include cereals such as grains, bread, rice and pasta ~ whole-meal versions are best

Tubers such as potatoes, sweet potatoes and yams

Vegetables and fruits such as fresh or frozen green vegetables, root vegetables, salad vegetables, vegetable/fruit- juice and canned, dried or fresh fruit

Pulses such as beans, peas and lentils

Nuts and seeds such as brazil nuts, cashew nuts, pumpkin seeds and sesame seeds.

Fill one third or less of your plate with animal foods ~ e.g. meat, game, eggs, cheese, milk, poultry and fish.

Carolyn Dillon

You will know that a gathering of Carolyn's friends and family was held at our Centre. Carolyn's brother and sister came down from Scotland. About 50 or so of Carolyn's friends filled the Centre ~ sitting around, we drank Margot's pleasant, very pleasant, obligatory fruit punch as we do at all our "do's". We all talked about Carolyn. Jo, one of her friends wrote ~

F'ing funny, fiesty and bloody obstinate ~

Carolyn was (*kind of still is really*) the sort of woman who utterly accepted you and wished you well whatever you were up to without prejudice. She made you instantly welcome in a way that was disarming. She was the best person in the world to have coffee with and sit on our little balcony pondering the world and avoiding all the inconsequential chores one spends ones time stressing about. She told outrageously lewd stories to people she just met (*my god, the things I could tell*) and she liked to have regular 'toes ups' in bed - her own version of siesta and everyone used to like to join in! One day when I had given up smoking I told her I would only smoke again if she found some exotic smoking hookahs complete with aromatic tobaccos.., there I was dreaming away and a few weeks later she said "Jo, I've found some and off we went!" She was f*ing funny, fiesty and bloody obstinate at times. Oh God, why do we lose the best people. I can't understand how hard people like Carolyn have fought to keep life and then they lose it while others want to take it away. I have lost people in both ways. Carolyn was never one to be really afraid of pain. She would bring it up casually over breakfast in a way that was hard because we all want to run away from it.

Jo also gave us a copy of this poem she wrote when Carolyn first became poorly.

A present



I would like to give you a poem
as though it were a gesture
- the way someone tilts their head to the left that becomes endearing
or what it was that spurred the lady in the cinema to offer me her sari.

I would like to carve for you a space out of the sky
where you might stand sometimes
to look back and make connections.

I would like that it were something round
that you could touch, imbue with maps
trace tributaries, add in destinations, turnstiles
- perhaps mark in tiny crosses where the wrecks would lie.

I would like to give you this
because I cannot think of anything better to give.

And I would like this poem to spin upon its axis
for you to cartwheel like a child on meeting sand
and from the blur of colours slowly
wake to find yourself in green
gazing on a single leaf as though it were a world
complete with paths and bridges, junctures.

I would like this poem to be so long
you see the leaf turn gold and fall but feel instead like it were spring
and I would like its journey to the ground to be so beautiful
that it would make you cry
its fall so great that it would jolt
assume the weight of nations, of atrocities and lava spills
and I would like for you to hold this leaf and nurture it
while I suspend the trail of falling leaves
like phosphorescent streamers.

And in this poem I would like to tell you
how it is I feel sometimes in front of windows opened out to sea at night
when I can conjure things
and when it seems to me there should be someone drumming on the
distant edge of water.
I would like to show you terraces and ironwork
whose curves become the curves of waves and lose themselves
I would like to show you breathing sculptures
in the clay of sleep
- a mass of paint circled with space and silence.

And I would like this poem to leave you thirsty
with a taste for rain
a child looking upwards with an open mouth
as the rain stops suddenly.

Thank you
to everyone who helped make the evening memorable ~
Margot, Brenda, Ros, Jane , David

I think Carolyn's beloved tricycle is for sale ~ if you are interested please phone me. And if you left your fluorescent jacket at the Centre ~ give us a ring and we'll post it to you.

Jo is a published poet and one of her books "Permanent Emergency" is available from Borders and Heffers or direct from her (*I'll give you her address if you require it.*)



Paulette ~

you'll be a very much missed trustee.
We've known you through the sad times
and now the happy times.
Tiens-toi chaudement, amuse-toi bien en
France, avec beaucoup d'affection à vous
deux de la part de nous tout.

(thanks to Eileen Howe for the French translation)

The Cancer Battle

*Plan ~ a conference on 19 and 20 June at the Business
Design Centre, London N1*

This conference is for patients and practitioners and they say we can discover the ground-breaking new approaches that are revolutionizing cancer therapy.

Speakers include Bill Wolcott, the world's leading authority on Metabolic Typing, Jochen Toedtmann, a practitioner of New Medicine, Dr Karl Horst Poehlmann of the Hoehen Clinic in Germany. Frank Wiewal is one of the most knowledgeable and influential people in the world on alternative approaches to cancer., Lothar Hirneise is president and founder of the Menschen Gegen Krebs in Germany, Dr Patrick Kingsley, a holistic physician, is based in the UK.

For more information see the conference programme at the Centre. Or telephone 0870 444 9887 for an application form. Cost is £95 a place, which includes VAT, teas and coffees. Both days cost £175

How do patients who participate in cancer support groups differ from those who do not?

This is the title of Dr Gunn Grande's research project that was described in the May issue of *Lifeline* last year. She sent identical questionnaires to two groups of people in the Cambridge area: people with cancer who do not use a support group, and members of our own Centre (who, of course, do). The respondents (44 in the first group, 63 in the second) all remained anonymous. Gunn has now analysed their replies and has sent us a summary of her results. This is too long to reproduce here in full, though there is a copy in the office that you can look at, if you want to. What follows here is thus a summary of a summary, which means that it is bound to be over-simplified.

What you need to remember is that the point of the exercise was to identify general attitudes ~ what most people thought in each of the two groups. But we are all individuals, and this applies just as much to people with cancer as to anyone else. Some people expressed their individuality by not filling in the questionnaire at all; others expressed minority views. Inevitably, the more you summarise the results of such a survey, the less space there is to feature dissenting voices. It is important to bear this in mind. That said, there is genuine interest and significance in the majority opinion and in how this differs from one group to the other, and that is the basis of Gunn's final conclusions.

Here is what she said:

- CCHC members made relatively frequent use of the Centre when they did attend.
 - Most members joined during treatment or follow-up at a time relatively close to diagnosis, i.e. when cancer probably was a main factor in their lives. Many nevertheless remained members thereafter for a long time.
 - Support and friendship were seen as key benefits of, and reasons for, joining the CCHC. It was important that this was provided through peers who themselves had experience of cancer, rather than professionals. Mutual support, the sense of a safe haven, and psychological encouragement were also highlighted.
 - Complementary therapies, information and advice also formed important benefits of, and reasons for, joining the CCHC.
 - The main scope for improvement suggested lay in extended opening hours, provision of more spaces that ensured privacy, and more spacious and/or
-

permanent premises.

- Many people outside the CCHC still did not know about the Centre.
- Many people outside the CCHC had not thought about joining a support group, or were undecided, and might therefore still want to join one at some stage.
- Men, older people and those with less education might be groups that were underrepresented within the membership of the CCHC in proportion to the general cancer population. The Centre might wish to consider ways of appealing to these groups. (This pattern does nevertheless reflect the composition of support groups generally and may be difficult to alter.)
- People outside the CCHC were found to hold considerably more negative views of support groups than CCHC members did. This suggests that, if more people are to join support groups, their existing beliefs about them will need to be changed. (There were further psychological differences between CCHC members and other cancer patients, but these are probably less amenable to change than people's beliefs about support groups.)
- CCHC members were somewhat less likely to feel they had a special person giving them support than people outside the CCHC. It may follow that the Centre, in some cases, fulfils some of the role of a close confidant
- Results regarding some of the differences between CCHC members and non-members (e.g. beliefs about support groups) should be interpreted with some care. One cannot be absolutely certain whether these groups of people differed in the first place (suggesting that that was why some joined the Centre and others did not) or whether it is CCHC members' actual experience of the Centre that has made them different in these respects.

The longer summary reports on the research method and gives the actual figures on which the above conclusions were based. It also quotes many comments on the Centre made by (*anonymous*) members.



*Extract from a letter written to
Jan Arriens from a prisoner on death row
from Judith*

When Ann came to supper at my house a few weeks ago she saw on my wall the following piece of script. Never one to miss an opportunity she asked about its origin and.....could I write something for the newsletter! So ~

Sometimes it takes losing something in order to
find it, and I think our sufferings have enabled
us to really find ourselves. From this experience
I have been able to look at my life as that of
sand in an hourglass, with each day being
a grain of sand that filters through to
the bottom. When all the sand at the top
filters through to the very bottom
my life won't really end, the
hourglass will be turned
over and my life
will begin
again
with
each grain
of sand filtering
through. Looking at life
as being an experience that I
will re-experience, unable to alter anything
at all makes me do all I can to make this day the
best that I can. If I love all that I can this day, if I laugh all
that I can this day, if I give all of the happiness that I can this day
if I do the least amount of bad that I can this day, then when this day
comes back to me I won't want to change it even if I could.

You may wonder why I should give house room to something written by someone who has been judged to have committed a heinous crime; you may have strong feelings about the death sentence, but my concerns lie in neither of those areas nor indeed about the rights or wrongs with the laws of that land, or even the guilt or innocence of the condemned. What has always interested me is how such tragic situations change lives. In that respect Sam's writing is my inspiration.

When I first read his letter, many years ago now, I was immediately struck by the similarities which governed our lives. We both live under the threat of the death sentence, he from the State me from cancer, two seemingly very different positions, certainly different living conditions and yet the outcome for us both was so similar. Our priorities, values, aspirations, goals all had a radical shake up. The threat of not living the 'three score years and ten' seems to have a profound effect upon our psyche whether that be living in the 'Hell' of Death Row or here on earth.

But I am free, I can try and do the best I can each day, I can try and bring laughter, joy, love and happiness to those around me. Sam's task must be a hundredfold more difficult and for trying he has my admiration. So when I read his piece, as I often do, I'm thankful that I have that freedom and glad my loss was not my liberty

Sometimes it takes losing something in order to find it

Love to you all Judith

A Glimpse of Death Row ~ from Suzanne

Ann's request that I should write something about my connection with Lifelines (*good name!*) which provides penfriends for prisoners on Death Row in the U.S., has sent me down memory lane . . .

It all began by chance back in October 1987 when Jan Arriens, a friend of mine, watched a BBC documentary that was to change literally thousands of lives. Called 'Fourteen Days in May' it followed the final days of a young man on Death Row in Mississippi. Though widely believed to be innocent of the crime for which he'd been sentenced to death, because he was poor, uneducated and black Edward had stood little chance of being fairly heard at any stage of the process. Yet by the end of the filming the producer himself was so moved that he stepped in front of the camera to say an emotional farewell to Edward, whose gentle spirit had made a great impression on him - and the crew refused to cut this spontaneous response to the injustice they were all witnessing. A few years later the prison governor himself, who presided over that execution, and been deeply disturbed by it, was to change his view on capital punishment.

Meanwhile back in Cambridge Jan had decided he had to do something, so he wrote to three other prisoners in the film and asked if there was any way of easing their plight. All three replied, saying how much they appreciated letters from the outside world. Many prisoners had literally no-one to support them. Jan then persuaded just two of us initially to join him and we each wrote to one of the three.

I had mixed feelings about it, to say the least. On the one hand I wasn't sure I could cope with the pain of someone who'd committed a terrible crime (or was possibly innocent) and was facing execution. My father had just died, very suddenly, and I had enough grief of my own. On the other hand I greatly admired Jan's practical response. I'd always been passionately opposed to the death penalty, on the grounds that life is sacred and it's not for anyone, including the state, to play God and cold-bloodedly kill another human being . . .

And so I started to write to Leo. He too was poor and black, his father had become violent and abusive following a brain tumour, and Leo soon became caught up in drugs and serious crime. Then he was implicated in a murder for which his co-defendant successfully blamed Leo, thus escaping the death penalty himself. For Leo, as for many others on Death Row, his 8 years there were the only period of stability he had known. He used that time to learn. He reflected deeply on life and love, his mistakes, his remorse, his fears, his hopes for his daughter. His letters revealed an intelligent, thoughtful, sensitive person who given a chance could have lived very differently. Instead, despite the strenuous efforts of Clive Stafford-Smith (the Cambridgeshire lawyer who has devoted his life to defending those on Death Row, because he believes that only if you are poor, black, uneducated, or mentally retarded are you likely to end up there in the first place) and despite hundreds of letters seeking clemency on the grounds that his original trial had been shown to be unfair, after four stays of execution Leo was finally put to death in the gas chamber on June 21, 1989, aged 37.

By a strange coincidence my reliable watch had stopped that morning at 6.30 am. That was 12.30 am in Mississippi, the exact time that Leo died.

I was profoundly shocked by the experience as at that stage I did believe that justice would be done and Leo would be reprieved. I decided I couldn't face going through that again and I wouldn't write to another prisoner. However Jan was to have other ideas . . .

By now Lifelines was growing fast, from its beginnings at a local garden party, involving local Quakers and members of Amnesty International. *(This was reported by local journalist Marilyn Thomas who went on to write 'Life on Death Row' which documented the injustices of the legal system and the cruelties of the prison regime in Mississippi through the experiences of those most closely involved).* The demand for pen-friends from prisoners was already huge, and among them was a Cuban, who spoke very little English. As Jan knew I spoke

Spanish there was little chance of my escaping, and a short time later I started writing to Lazaro. His dyslexic Spanish took a bit of getting used to but fifteen years on we're still writing. It's a much less intense correspondence than with Leo, partly due to their different temperaments and abilities but also because Lazaro came off Death Row five years ago following a successful appeal. He's still waiting however to be granted parole - and hoping this might just be the year his mother will arrive from Cuba to visit him . . .

By the 90's Lifelines was able to offer a pen-friend to all 2500 prisoners then on Death Row in America. Two national conferences a year were established and a quarterly newsletter with letters, articles, drawings and poetry from prisoners as well as the UK correspondents. In 1991 Jan compiled and edited a collection of such writings in 'Welcome to Hell' which was so well-received that a second edition was brought out in 1997. This carried a forward by Sister Helen Prejean whose own book was made into the film 'Dead Man Walking' (*the phrase used when someone is being moved from the death cell to the execution chamber*). All royalties from 'Welcome to Hell' have gone to help the legal teams, including volunteers from this country, who work on the appeals of those on Death Row who have no resources. Up to a third of these prisoners ultimately have the death penalty withdrawn, usually after many years of appeals, which illustrates how unsafe many of the convictions are.

Over the years there have been countless articles, radio interviews and TV programmes, mostly positive, featuring the work of Lifelines, but any organisation that grows as fast as this one is going to encounter some problems along the way. From early on we've had a system of co-ordinators to support all those writing to a particular state, and several of us have acted as telephone counsellors for those wanting further help. There have inevitably been some misunderstandings on both sides of the correspondence and a steep learning curve for all involved. A few pen-friends initially chose to send quite large sums of money, no doubt with the best intentions, but this caused friction between prisoners and put other writers under pressure. Some correspondents just didn't get on. A more complex and pervasive issue has been that of romantic liaisons. Given the negative experiences of relationships in the early lives of so many of the prisoners it was entirely understandable that the offer of friendship from mostly female correspondents might be misconstrued. Most writers, once this issue had been flagged up, were able to communicate their understanding of the prisoner's feelings while also making it clear that friendship meant something different. However for a few of the writers romance was what they wanted and this has caused considerable heartache in some quarters, and differences of opinion which at times have attracted the spotlight of the media.

Lifelines however has not been deflected from its original purpose. It proclaims our common humanity: we are all worth more than our worst action, and we all hope for mercy. It continues to shine a light into some of the darkest places and reveal not monsters but people like us, warts and all. There are now hundreds of

prisoners, whether guilty or innocent, whose sense of utter worthlessness, despair and abandonment have been diminished, and in some cases transformed, by the friendship and steadfast support of their fellow human beings.

Many of you, with your personal experience of 'Death Row', will know just what a difference that can make.

Thanks to Glyn and John ~

they no sooner walk in the door than I've found a job
or two or three for them ~ which they tackle
with marvellous willingness..



Fund-raising

Many thanks to **Gill, Eileen and Jack** for organising another fund-raising experience at Addenbrooke's Hospital where they raised **£386.40** for us. And special thanks to **Glyn, David B, Ken, Brenda, Hazel H, Margot, Ingrid and Edna** for helping to man the stall throughout the day. And to **Steve and Charlie** and others at Cambridgeshire Constabulary who sent us some really good tombola prizes.

There are two more stalls coming up ~ another one at Addenbrooke's in September and the Arbury Carnival so if you can find us any tombola or raffle prizes that would be great.

BBC Radio Cambridgeshire

Mark Williamson, producer at BBC Radio Cambridgeshire telephoned and asked me to go along and be interviewed by Andy Harper about the Centre's search for new premises. Here is what we said ~

We understand that the Centre's premises are being demolished in approximately a year's time. Tell us something about the Centre in Stockwell Street.

We are actually renting premises from the Baptist Church and they are going to be redeveloping the land on which our Centre is. It is a drop in centre for people who have got cancer, or had cancer and also for their friends, their carers and their families

And how long has it been going?

It has been going since a Cambridge lady, Marilyn Barnes, started it in 1986 when she had cancer and she felt what she wanted to do was talk to other people who had cancer. I think that is the biggest strength we offer. It is somewhere to go to talk to other people who have had cancer or have got cancer.

What sort of numbers of people use it on a regular basis?

Marilyn started it with one, two, three people and gradually built it up and we have now got approximately 250 members who come to the Centre. We open as a drop in centre two mornings a week but other things on at other times. We offer counselling and healing so we want to develop it and open five days a week again as we did before we ran out of money about six years ago.

You mention money ~ how is it financed?

Well, we raise money in all sorts of ways. No one gives us money. We have to have fund-raising stalls and we also ask people if they would like to give us a subscription, which starts at £5 a year. If anyone can't afford that £5, and quite often if you have got cancer and you cannot work it can be hard to find £5, nothing changes. You still get everything the Centre offers. The only thing you can't do is vote at the A.G.M.

My first thought is that this is absolutely dreadful because so many of our us are going to have cancer at some stage. I lost both of my parents to the disease and know what people go through. Isn't this something which should be financed by well, you always say 'the government', but you know what I mean, or the Health Authority. It's obviously a need.

In the past people from the Health Authority have been to the Centre and said "this is brilliant, we ought to find you money" but there are so many demands on their money and I suppose every charity would say 'the government' or 'they' should be funding us so we have to do it ourselves. But the problem is we would love to buy property. We have been trying to do that since 1986 but we have nowhere near enough money to buy anywhere in Cambridge so at the moment we are only renting. That is difficult to find in a place like Cambridge.

But you mention a place like Cambridge and the big fear is that little organisations which have been going perhaps from the 60s and 70s, and in your case over ten years, they disappear never to return, and there is such a need and yet here we are almost being swamped under a sort of plethora of shoe shops and coffee shops. You are helping about 250 people and that means there is that number of people at least suffering with this dreadful disease, in this city. And that's just the tip of the iceberg.

Yes, you are absolutely right..... and their families also. When someone gets a cancer diagnosis they are devastated and after a while they may start to protect their families. But what they can do is come along to our Centre and talk to someone there who has got or has had cancer. We are passionate about the Centre. I cannot believe it will close but unless someone comes up with some property for us yes, the situation is desperate, we don't know where we will go from here.

What about your present landlords, the Baptist Church, is there no possibility that they can find a way round this because you imagine they probably haven't done this with a light heart?

No, they have themselves to think about and their own finances and probably if we were the landlords we would be doing the same thing. They appreciate our situation but we have to find somewhere else. So we are looking for someone now who may be able to make a suggestion and we ask them to contact you or contact us.

I mean your demands aren't great are they. You want two mornings a week at the moment but obviously you want to do other things. There must be very basic facilities because people suffering from cancer need certain facilities.

Yes but we do need sole use of the place because lots of things go on there other than those two mornings a week and we have personal things about people at our Centre. We have photographs of people so if someone else uses the premises we have to take the photographs down. We do need sole use of the premises.

In other words you don't want to be sharing with a playgroup.

Well, we love playgroups but they are not right for our Centre.

What about the hospital facilities. Firstly is there anything like this at Addenbrooke's or other hospitals in our county? Secondly, the possibility of a room there?

There isn't anything like us at the hospital although Addenbrooke's are planning to open a small information centre ~ the Mary Wallace Centre ~ quite soon and that is brilliant. We have wanted that to happen for a long, long time but also people who come to our Centre, if you discuss with them the possibility of us perhaps going to Addenbrooke's (although that has never been suggested) they don't want to go there. They have been there for the chemotherapy, the radio therapy, the operation and they don't want to go back. They think the doctors and nurses are great but there is a time when they just want ordinary people who

have had cancer. And the biggest thing we offer at our Centre is, if you can imagine you have had that diagnosis, well, what you want to do isyou want to go and talk to somebody who has been through it and that is what we offer in an extremely informal way. It is not a miserable place. I think you should come and see us one Tuesday morning. People don't look ill. They look perfectly well and we have a lot of fun there. There are times for tears but in all we do lots of social things, we have lots of fun and there is someone to talk to.,

If you get nowhere does that mean it's all over?

Well, I can't bear... I won't even think that. I am extremely optimistic . So I think someone out there, who perhaps has got cancer themselves or has someone in their family who has the disease will come up trumps for us, through you.

It is a little while down the road, so if anyone listening who thinks they may be able to help, you have a little while to think about it and as I said at the beginning, one third of us will end up with cancer and even if you don't end up with it you will be touched by people who have so if you can in any way help and you think maybe, just maybe, then the thing to do is talk to Ann and discuss what their needs are. please phone us on 08459252000

I understand the Centre has produced a book.

Yes, we were thinking that if someone gets the diagnosis what do they do next, so lots of people at our Centre have written chapters in the book to say how they coped with it or are coping with it at the moment. It has just gone into some shops: Browne's off Mill Road, Borders, Heffers and the Bridge Street Health Food shop

'Looking at the Stars' costs £7.95 It is a beautiful book ~ it's one of those books people don't buy until they need to, yes, but I promise you if you pick it up you won't want to put it down. It also has illustrations. The title came about like this ~ Fiona Benham was doing some Art at the Centre and after she went home I found her drawing. It's caption was 'looking at the stars'. It comes from Oscar Wilde who said "we may all be in the gutter, but some of us are looking at the stars". The publisher is our Centre ~ the Cambridge Cancer Help Centre.

Well, obviously we wish you well with this. Mark says we will try to get down to the Centre one morning and have another chat with you. It doesn't bear thinking about, the fact that this could be the end of the road and I wish you success ~ it means so much to so many people.

When I go into Scotsdales to have coffee, I think just look at all the space here ~ perhaps I should find him and ask if he can spare a bit for us. It doesn't matter where it is as long as it is based in Cambridge and has access to public transport and somewhere to park.

Great to talk to you ~ hope you all keep up the good work.



The Mary Wallace Cancer Support Centre in the Concourse at Addenbrooke's Hospital

On Monday May 10th a new Cancer Support Centre is opening in the Concourse at Addenbrooke's Hospital. The Centre, funded by the independent charity The Mary Wallace Foundation, is open to anyone affected by cancer ~ patients, carers, family members and friends. Pat Westcott, a former specialist nurse in the Oncology Unit, and a specially trained team of volunteers, will staff the Centre. Anyone touched by cancer can drop in to consult the information library, talk about their anxieties and fears over a cup of tea, use the Internet to locate websites recommended for people with concerns about cancer, or simply pass time between appointments. The volunteers are trained to listen, offer compassionate support, and guide people to relevant sources of help, support and information. Pat and her team will be working closely with the staff of the Oncology Centre, Macmillan and Arthur Rank House. The Centre will be open from 10.0am – 4.0pm weekdays and it is hoped that these hours can be extended in the future.

Telephone: 01223 596379 Email: info@marywallacecentre.org.uk

The Carlton Arms
in Carlton Way, Cambridge
held a fund-raising evening for us and
raised £500 for our Centre

Jethro and Terri tell us that Food is served there on
Monday 12 noon - 2 pm
Tuesday-Friday 12 noon-2 pm and 6 pm-9 pm
Sat 12 noon - 9 pm

Sunday Lunch is served from 12 noon-3 pm
Seniors Lunch is available on Wednesday 12-2 pm at only £3.95
New Spring Menu is now available

They serve beers straight from the cask, regular beers are Adnams Bitter and Timothy Taylor Landlord. There are usually a couple of guest beers too!

The Lounge Bar is completely no smoking and children are welcome in the Lounge Bar.

The Public Bar has two pool tables, a dartboard and skittles table
The Lounge Bar is also available to hire for private functions at any time of day

Sixteen of us went there for lunch recently ~ lovely food and we know that Jethro and Terri will make you extremely welcome

Tel 01223 355717 www.thecarltonarms.co.uk



Sid's Retired Railwaymen
sent us a donation of **£22.00**. Bless'em!

Bastille Night ~ we will all remember those delightful evenings we spent with Keith Harris. Sadly they cannot be repeated. But now we have an opportunity to try some singing.

IF YOU CAN TALK , YOU CAN SING!

An evening of singing led by Rowena Whitehead

7 July at 7.30 pm at the Centre

The truth of this Zimbabwean proverb is that everyone can sing; In the UK, few of us believe it!

During this relaxing and stimulating evening, we will explore our voices focussing on relaxation, breath and vocal support and enjoy sharing our voices singing some simple a cappella songs from different world traditions.

No previous singing experience is required; only-in-the-bath singers and unconfident singers are particularly welcome - and everything will be taught by ear; relaxation and enjoyment guaranteed.

PLEASE BRING FOOD TO SHARE

And add your name to the list at the Centre

Rowena Whitehead is a singer and natural voice practitioner and director of Talking in Tune, the Cambridge Community Music Project. She is known throughout the UK and beyond for her engaging relaxed approach to enabling people of all ages and abilities to reconnect with and celebrate their singing voices. In addition to leading singing workshops for people of all ages and abilities and teaching individuals, she is a visiting voice lecturer at Homerton College, and teaches voice on the Music Therapy MA course at Anglia Polytechnic University.

Rowena Whitehead: talkingintune@ntlworld.com

The Harlows/London marathon

Last year, my brother John ran the London Marathon for the Centre. This year it's my turn and on the 18th April I will be running my first (*and probably last!*) Marathon. Although I now live and work in London, I grew up in Cambridgeshire and wanted to run for a local charity. John and my family have visited the Centre several times, and all were incredibly impressed with the friendliness and enthusiasm of everyone they met. I am confident that the money raised will be put to very good use.

Jane Harlow

Sponsor form enclosed with the newsletter. Please support Jane and then we can look forward to welcoming her and her family at the Centre, after the marathon ~ with chocolate cake!

Jokes from Thailand son

A white horse walks into a pub and asks for a pint of lager.

The barman looks at him and says,

"Ere, we've got a whisky named after you"

The white horse looks confused and says,

"What Dobbin?"

Q. What's green and looks like a bucket?

A. *A green bucket*

I bought some HP sauce the other day (*said Tommy Cooper*)

It will cost me sixpence a week for two years

Much love Ann xxx

PS What was it...voice deserts... tongue struck silent ... delicate fire?
Well, well, well ..

The views expressed in articles in our newsletters, and the products that are referred to, are not necessarily endorsed by the Cambridge Cancer Help Centre.
