

So, this will be my last newsletter ~ a bumper one,

because I wanted to include all sorts of items from previous newsletters. My grateful thanks to Tricia, who used to edit the newsletter, add in photographs and produce a professional layout, and who has offered to do that one more time. She told me that the maximum number of pages I could have was 44 (rather than the usual 36), but when I gave her all that I wanted to include, she told me that the booklet would be at least 100 pages long ~ even without the photos! I don't believe that ~ I think she must have been exaggerating. However, I have had to trim, rather ruthlessly, what I would like to have said.

But first, here is our news since the June newsletter:

Dennis, our Lead Therapist, celebrated a significant birthday in June, so we helped him do that. Ted presented him with a gift as well as his thanks for Dennis' much appreciated help at our centre. He has recruited most of our 17 therapists. Marvellous man!

We were all moved by the musical tribute to Dennis, performed by Hester's lovely daughters. They sang 'Song Bird' and a beautiful arrangement of 'Somewhere over the Rainbow'.



Downton Abbey Annual Tea Party, 7th August 2013 ~ Barbara H



On a lovely summer's afternoon in August, visitors to Scotsdales Garden Centre could be forgiven for thinking that some of the visitors in the car park were a little overdressed for a visit to the Garden Centre ~albeit not just any Garden Centre!

The occasion ~ Downton Abbey had come to Cambridge Cancer Help Centre. Ann, Duchess of Downton and her Trusty household had to abandon the grand hall at the Abbey (due to the overrun of restoration work being carried out at the hall!) and hold their Annual Tea Party at the David Rayner Building. The Duchess and her trusty household had invited their much valued volunteers to tea as a means of expressing their thanks for their hard work during the year.

Guests, all looking extremely smart and elegant: gentlemen in blazers and boaters and ladies in glamorous outfits, bling and hats were welcomed by the Duchess herself and offered a glass of Pimms served by her household. The hall looked wonderful, tables beautifully laid with fine bone china, flowers adorned candelabras and each table was named after a member of the Downton family.

Her guests seated, The Duchess then took her seat and all were served by household staff with a delicious selection of crudités, sandwiches, homemade scones (with jam and cream) delicious cakes and an endless supply of freshly brewed tea.

The Duchess was asked to cut the amazing “Downton Abbey” cake which Mr Bates (alias Stuart Bartram) had created in his spare time away from his normal daily duties.

Amidst an atmosphere of pleasant conversation, and joviality Stuart

Bartram invited guests to participate in a light hearted quiz. Nothing too taxing- just knowledge of The Duchesses' Family History was all that was required. Gracious to the end the winning team members were applauded by the other less fortunate guests.

Alas the carriages arrived, and The Duchess and her Trusty household bid a fond farewell to their most valued and much appreciate guests.

Thank you all for all you give to The Centre.

Breakfast Club ~

Our President is Helmut. (Pam always called him 'Helmet') We are a varied group. The men are supposed to wear pink shirts because we read somewhere that only real men will wear pink shirts. Helmut was well known at work for coveting one particular car parking space. One day he was outraged because someone else was using it. He passed on his frustration to his colleagues. I am told they eventually produced a notice which said 'Parking Only For Germans'. They gave it to him on his retirement and it now reposes on his shed door! But, if you want to join us for breakfast you can enjoy conversations about Fred's red sheets (bought from Ikea), Brian's lost sunglasses and who lost Brian's sunglasses ~ and other divertissements, plus cementing Anglo-German relations. Do join us at 9.30am at Scotsdales restaurant on Saturdays, whatever the weather. We have our own 'reserved' table.

Roy has learnt to dive ~ with only one fully working arm and one fully working leg ~ he has been taking lessons and training hard. He will raise money via sponsorship for us and Different Strokes ~ probably in the New Year.

Joy Harding ~ David P

To us at the Centre, Joy was a quiet, kind and generous person who was always more concerned for other people than herself. Joy was regarded as being quite a lady in her own right and was seen by many to be a very elegant and graceful person.



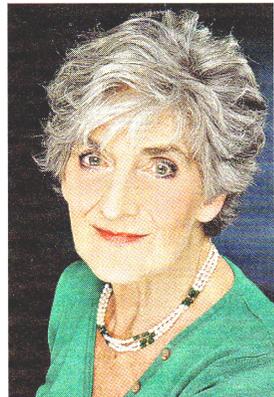
Above all, Joy loved coming to the Cambridge Cancer Help Centre for the companionship, support and help that it provided and for the many new friendships she was able to make.

The Centre was where I first met Joy and it has been a pleasure to know her, even though it was only for a relatively short period of time. Joy was a lovely person and she will be sadly missed by all who knew her.

Editor's note – unfortunately this tribute to Joy could not be included in the June newsletter.

Pat Pilkington, MBE ~

co-founder of **Penny Brohn Cancer Care** died in August. I know that everyone at our Centre who attended courses at Penny Brohn will be very saddened to know this. Pat made a very strong impression on everyone who met her. I remember that when our Centre had financial difficulties about 18 years ago, Pat was my mentor. We had long telephone chats about the best way forward. And, of course, Pat spent a whole day here giving a talk about 'the Meaning of Life for Me'.





Sadly, Dave's wife

Betty Pither also died recently ~

Betty and her husband David were regular visitors to our Centre ~ and in Betty's latter weeks the tea team cosseted her with drinks and even encouraged her to dunk biscuits, all in an attempt to tempt her appetite! We used to say to Dave ~ would it be a good idea to get ...(got it he would say)...have you thought of buying....(got it he would say)...have you asked the GP for...(yes, he would say, got it) ~ so in the end we knew

there weren't any suggestions we could make that he hadn't already thought of. We hope that Betty's daughter Alison, and David will return to see us sooner rather than later. They said they will. We look forward to that very much.

Our thanks to Betty's family & friends
for their generous donation of £1,088 in memory of Betty.

Veronica Kirthuingha ~

Veronica hadn't been coming to the Centre very long. I know she loved the therapies here and was also a regular attender at the Camazons group run by Annie Thantry. And she enjoyed Janet and Judy's Hope group, where she met other people from this Centre. She is much missed by the people who got to know her well.

Penny's Coach Outings ~ Penny

If you enjoy our trips we organise for members, please keep your eye on the notice board at the Centre and take a form for the appropriate outing. When you have completed all the boxes, please leave the form with payment in the box in the office. If you pay cash you will be given a receipt. Your name will be added to the passenger list on the notice board. If the coach is full we have a waiting list in operation. If you cannot join the trip, please let me know as soon as possible so that we can offer the place to someone else ~ or decide if we need to cancel the trip. We have one more trip after Orwell this year; we are going to Norwich for the day on 21st November.

If you have suggestions for future outings please jot them down and leave in the 'outings box' and watch the notice board!



An unfamiliar view of an almost-deserted A14 as we cruised down the River Orwell on the Orwell Lady on our way to Felixstow and Harwich.

Thank you Penny for organising such an interesting day out.

I recently went to Ireland for the weekend with my son Jason. During a visit to Blarney Castle we were waiting in a long line of people going up the Castle steps to kiss the blarney stone when a strong American voice came from behind us. "Is there an elevator?" the elderly American lady said. "No, I don't think so" replied her husband. This castle must be over eight hundred years old." It made a lot of people smile. **Pat B**

Spider Plants

You may have noticed that we have a proliferation of spider plants at our Centre. I was telling Inge that that was because I read that they battle benzene, formaldehyde, carbon monoxide and xylene, a solvent used in the leather, rubber and printing industries. So our spider plants help people who have breathing problems. Inge was saying that we have a couple more plants in our Centre that have similar effects. Near our front entrance we have a weeping fig which can also filter out pollutants that typically accompany carpeting and furniture such as formaldehyde, benzene and trichloroethylene. Caring for a ficus can be tricky, but once you get the watering and light conditions right, they will last a long time. We also have the Peace lily ~ shade and weekly watering are all the peace lily needs to survive and produce blooms. It topped NASA's list for removing all three of the most common VOCs ~ formaldehyde, benzene and trichloroethylene. It can also combat toluene and xylene.

Personal Care Policy

Please be aware that our Coordinator and volunteers are not able to offer personal care to members, except in an emergency. If loss of memory gives cause for concern we cannot monitor the movements of those affected, therefore anyone needing such assistance will be expected to come to the Centre accompanied by a carer who is capable of attending to any personal needs and to remain with the person at all times. This Centre offers complementary therapies and counselling, but cannot offer medical care or treatment advice. Therefore we regret that we are not able to help with personal care such as toileting, moving or lifting. In the case of an emergency, help will of course be offered, but the personal care of vulnerable members must remain the responsibility of their carer.

Chemo pump + Chocolate cup cakes ~

Toni A

Shortly after being diagnosed with cancers, a friend gave me a book 'living beyond limits' by David Spiegel MD, and this provided such a valuable strategy for this challenging time. He says "a combination of mind, medicine + compassionate human support can help patients to alleviate pains + essentially take control of their circumstances"!

I had no idea of how much love, empathy and understanding I was going to find at the centre. The thought of going to a centre where people were experiencing cancer for themselves or living with people with cancer and people who have lost someone to cancer, I thought it would be a sad and depressing place and that it wouldn't give me much hope for the future but actually was the complete opposite!! I never leave the centre feeling "that was heavy", I always leave with a smile and hope. It's a serene place full of life, support and hugs and where people are understanding, non-judgmental and don't think they know what is best for you. They welcomed me with open arms and will continue to be my aftercare support.

After a brief visit I met the lovely Ann who welcomed me to the centre. My second visit fell on the evening of my first chemo session, it was the night of the Centre's Christmas party. I arrived fully equipped with chemo pump, cupcakes (and my daughter who had the same initial thoughts about the centre, which were soon changed because we were greeted by a lovely bunch of green elves!) The evening was filled with hope, fun and laughter (especially the antics in the panto).

"Cancer can mean...dealing with things as they happen, take each day as it comes, to live in the moment, and to take control of the situation."

"Cancer doesn't always mean death; it can mean life enhancement, positive thinking and hope".

An African Adventure ~ On 5th October, Stuart and his

son will set off on a charity cycling trip (Unite & Bike Against Cancer) to Tanzania to raise money for our Centre. At one of our trustees' meetings he was describing that there will be people around with firearms in case of danger from wild animals. So we had an image of a perspiring Stuart riding his bike, with all the animals peering through the undergrowth planning their strategic attack for their dinner. Bob said "it will be like meals on wheels" and we all fell about! As one would!

If you care to sponsor them, the forms are at the Centre. Or contact www.justgiving.com/stuart-bartram/



Stuart ~ We wish you and your son an exciting journey
~ and a safe return

Ikea ~ when your knees don't bend in the same flexible way they did when you were a young thing – and you are in Annie's minibus on a trip to Ikea ~ and you cannot comfortably step in or out of the minibus, it is comforting to have the assistance of someone who in the past used to fling young damsels over his shoulder and whisk them down the ladder away from the burning building and who now happens to be one of the centre's trustees – but you'd think he could improve on an actual shove into the minibus or an attempted fling over the shoulder to help getting out of the minibus ~ not to mention the hysteria throughout these procedures. Laughing so much that there isn't any breath left. Stuart always says he will not take us to Ikea again, but he always does and gets us there, and home, safely. **We all think he is marvellous.**

Kate Lucy Grubb

We never met Kate but we met her Mum when she called in to the Centre after meeting the funeral director. Her Mum said she wanted donations in Kate's memory to go to the Teenage Cancer Trust and our Centre. A short time later we received a donation of **£1,577**. How marvellous of Kate's family and friends to donate such a grand amount to our Centre.

Kate's Mum writes:

Kate had been in remission for just over 6 years when on 7 March 2013 it was confirmed that her cancer, Hodgkins lymphoma, had returned for a third time. Kate's immune system was around 5% as in 2006 she had a stem cell transplant. With her positive, happy personality she said oh well I have done this twice before, here we go again. Kate started her treatment, and apart from a few side effects as usual, all was going well. Kate phoned on Saturday 18 May to say that her oncologist has just been in and after 2 treatments of this new toxin her tumour, which was the size of a grapefruit was now a tangerine. We were all crying with joy.

Went to bed and next morning there was no answer from Kate's mobile. As the day unfolded it came to light that in the night sepsis had set in and Kate was rushed to ICU at Addenbrookes and was now on a life support machine. I tried to book a flight as I live in Hong Kong. No flights until Monday. Phoning before boarding the plane I was told to keep my fingers crossed that she would still be there when I landed. I arrived at ICU to find Kate on a ventilator with machines and tubes everywhere. In the next days it was a roller coaster going from critical to an improvement. She had every antibiotic they could find or think of but they said it was the worst sepsis they had seen in over 2 years. After 11 days they asked my permission to remove the life support. Kate went to sleep 16.55 Thursday 30 May 2013.

Kate was a beautiful, courageous person. Thoughtful, positive, intelligent and always thinking of others and what she could do for them and how they were feeling. She also had the most infectious giggle. Whilst working full time Kate became a voluntary blood runner for Addenbrookes, Papworth and Peterborough hospitals as she wished to give something back. Her favourite book was Nelson Mandela's 'The Long Walk to Freedom' as she said it inspired her. Kate had been



planning for 2 years to fly to Greece on 5 July, have her birthday on 7 July, then marry on the beach 12 July. Kate went to sleep thinking she was still going to achieve all of this as she had no idea what was happening when the sepsis took over. Lovely for Kate. We are lost with heavy hearts thinking what should have been.

Lemons ~ given to me by Carole G.
The suggestion is that you can use a whole lemon without waste. Freeze it, and once frozen, get your grater and shred the whole

Stand Up To Cancer (SU2C)

Cancer Research UK

'Human Chain', Friday 18th Oct at 12 noon.

We are going to make a 'Human Chain' to link the two Cambridge Cancer Research UK Stores (Burleigh Street and Regent Street, via Parkers Piece)
Each person will be asked to donate **£1** for Stand Up To Cancer 2013
Please let me know if you will be there. Thanks, Ann

lemon (no need to peel it) and sprinkle it on top of your foods. Sprinkle it in to your whisky, wine, vegetable salad, ice cream, soup, noodles, spaghetti sauce, rice, sushi, and fish dishes. Said to have many health benefits.

Liz

has voluntarily cleaned our Centre since we moved in. When I arrived at 7.15 she would have the kettle on and be surrounded by mops for the toilets, mops for the floors, vacuum cleaner, various cleaning agents, feather duster and her music. We would have moments of Liz teaching Carol and me line dancing, and we enjoyed the best music from the sixties, seventies and eighties. To my absolute **despair** Liz decided to stop cleaning, and despite much pleading, coaxing and persuasion I was unable to change her mind. Annie Thantry (your prospective new coordinator) wrote to me to say how much she enjoyed arriving here in the morning on Liz's cleaning days to two welcoming faces, cup of real coffee and a blast of Tina Turner et al!



So although Liz is remaining on the tea bar, we had no option but to say an official thank you and goodbye to her as our valued cleaner. We know she liked her well-deserved present and flowers.

Highly recommended to us

American Institute of Cancer Research

(www.aicr.org) described as 'a source of information you can trust'.

Bren and John....then on the same day, in the afternoon, we celebrated Bren and John's wedding, which had taken place shortly before. They walked into the Centre through some arches decorated with pink and blue balloons and plants loaned to us by Scotsdales. They had generously asked their wedding guests to give donations to the Centre rather than buying presents. They later wrote to us to say they sent many thanks to all who shared their wonderful day and gave their wedding donations to the Centre. What amazed me, as it always does, is the variety of delicious food you all produced for the celebration at the Centre. Without any suggestions about what to provide, you all seem to always somehow know what to bring to the table.

We managed to send Bren and John off from the Centre with their car covered with balloons. John kept saying the decorated car wasn't their car! But it was!



Thank you **Bren & John**
for the donation of **£200** given
in lieu of wedding gifts

Of course this isn't the first marriage resulting from people meeting each other at our Centre. Ingrid and Tony were our first! They met at Stockwell Street in June 1998. Their friendship blossomed during the Centre weekend in Sheringham in October 1998.

Later, Ingrid said, "After coming back from a wonderful honeymoon in Paris, exactly two years to the day since I was diagnosed as having breast cancer, I reflect and think how wonderfully life has turned out for me.

My thanks to the Cambridge Cancer Help Centre, because if I hadn't gone along to them after having a really black day in 1997, things would never have turned out the way they did."

Your Health, Your Life, Take Control

Exciting news! A new self-management programme is coming to the Centre in the New Year.

The Chronic Disease Self-Management Course (CDSMC) is a course for anybody who lives with a long-term health condition such as pain, depression, diabetes, cancer, Parkinson's disease and heart disease to name just a few. The aim of the course is to help you to improve your health and wellbeing by learning new skills to manage your condition on a daily basis within a friendly supportive group, at your own pace. To support the course you will receive an easy to follow course reference book which is yours to keep and use.

These courses are free to attend and run over six weekly sessions with each session lasting for two and a half hours with a break for refreshments. The courses will be run by Janet and Judy who both have had cancer.

The tutors have been trained by the Expert Patients Programme Community Interest Company. The dates of the courses are:

10 February-17 March 2014, 2 June-7 July 2014, from 10am to 12.30pm

If you would like to get your name down on a list for one of these courses please either contact Janet on 07866331782, Judy or Ann at the Centre. Alternatively, email Janet at colin.hickman@homecall.co.uk.

Acupuncture

Banni and Valentina offer six consecutive weekly sessions at the Centre. If you would like to participate, please telephone 07952 568 966. As with all our therapists, there is no charge but a donation to the Centre would be appreciated. Other therapies here include relaxation, healing, hypnotherapy, EFT, massage, chiroprody (once every three months), Dorn Method, Massage, Indian Head Massage, counselling. Appointments for massage and reflexology only once a month, please. This is so we can fit everyone in.

Macmillan HOPE course

The HOPE course is for people affected by cancer. Get support and share experiences at this seven week course for people living with cancer. The present Macmillan HOPE course runs from 1 October to 12 November, 2013 at the Centre. Timings: 1.30-4.00pm

The Dietician is also booked to give the participants of this course a talk on 29 October.

If you would like to find out more or attend this or future courses, please contact the following: Janet on 07866331782, Vanessa on 07544506074 or Ann at the Centre. Email: hope.cambridge@mail.com. We look forward to hearing from you.

Other groups who meet here:

Lymphoma Support Group,. Contact Alison 07917 227068

Brain Tumour Group – contact support@braintumouruk.org.uk or call 0845 4500 386

Cambridge Kidney Cancer Support Group call Karen Burnet on 01223 348448

Myeloma support group – contact Anne Fleming 01223 503322 email Annie.fleming@ntlworld.com

MDS UK – (myelodysplastic syndromes) - first contact phone 0207 733 7558, subsequent contact 99ha1520@gmail.com

Cambridge Melanoma Support Group Vicky McMorran, 01223 348156

Very many thanks to the following for their donations ~

Black Cat café, Mill Road

Dorothy and Joe Borley

Dore Sadler

Terry Wardle

Maureen Hardingham

In memory of Joy Harding

Sawston Friday Singers £494 (I was invited by Robin, who plays the guitar to us, to talk to that group.)

David Heaney £500

Gwydir Street party (Terri and Jethro from the Cambridge Blue). They have raised money for us for years (including the donations given to them at their wedding) from the days when they were at the Carlton Arms

Sawston W.I. £30

Lichfield-Neville Roads Action Group £75

Acorn Support Group, St Neots £30

Alma Cullen £50

'Cancer Fighters' by Tony B is in our library

Here is an extract:

On Wednesday, Christina persuaded me that we should visit the Cambridge Cancer Help Centre. They offer all kinds of support for both people with cancer and carers. We received a very warm greeting and we got to talk to Ann, who is the Centre coordinator. Ann is someone with excellent listening skills (which you might think is easy, but having been trained myself, I know it takes concentration and effort). At first, Christina did the talking (it was ever thus!), because she knew that I might be reluctant to 'open up' as I am by nature a very private person (you wouldn't think so if you have been following these circulars).

While we were there, we joined a 'relaxation' group. I had never done anything like that before, but we both found it both rewarding and interesting. They played a tape with swirly background music and a bloke with a very calming voice talking to you through the process. At one point we had to imagine we were on a beach, listening to the waves, and after the session I told Christina that I had taken myself off to Kaikoura on the West coast of New Zealand. She had chosen the west coast herself, so we both had a trip back to NZ for a few minutes. Needless to say, in the deepest point of the session, Christina's mobile phone gave a little whistle when a text arrived. I bet everyone loved that!

One thing Christina and I have always said is that we can't stand the terms 'cancer sufferer' and 'cancer victim' Last night in bed, I thought about that and decided I was a 'cancer fighter', which I think has a far more positive ring to it and also sums up my overall approach.

Library ~ Anne Pitman & Joyce Newby were our librarians for some years but have now relinquished the post ~ many thanks to them both. And thank you to **Wendy**, who has recently taken over. **Barbie** will join her when she feels well enough ~ and will be responsible for keeping the Macmillan publications in order.

Looking back ~

The ethos of CCHC was established in the very early days and has continued to guide us ever since.

In one of Marilyn's earliest newsletters in June 1990, she wrote: 'LIFELINE' is the new name for our newsletters. The good news we bring, as a group, is the knowledge that we are not alone. There is a great difference between fighting cancer as an individual without support and fighting cancer with a supportive group of friends who are dealing with similar problems.

Many people feel reluctant to join a group and many have come to their first meeting at the centre in a state of apprehension, wondering what on earth it will be like to be with other people with cancer. Fortunately, for most of us, it has been an open door to a new way of looking at life ~ and death.

Simple open-hearted interaction with others is something which is not usually achieved in normal social intercourse, and it is this openness with each other which is so healing. Meeting each other without judgement and without preconceptions, we accept each other as we are and we are able to be completely ourselves.

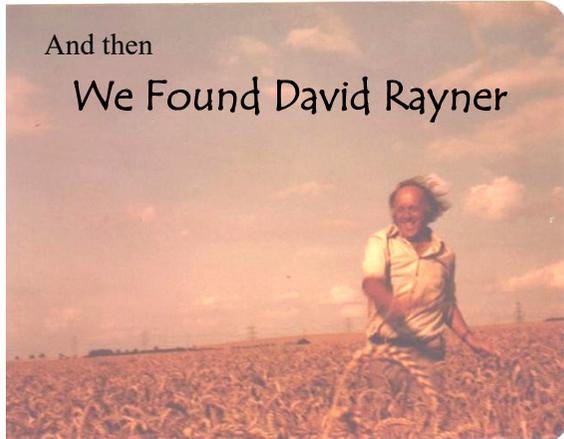
Perhaps the most important thing about the centre is that it instils in us the idea that we can help ourselves. Most of the ways we find to help ourselves are simple, but some require effort. This self-help gives us control of our lives again.

One of the ways we can begin to achieve this is by being prepared to help each other, which is what we are doing in our group.

In 1993, when I became the Director of CCHC, we had two rooms over the offices of Redmayne, Arnold & Harris at Duke's Court. A year later we moved to 10/11 Tredgold Lane.

In August 1995 we moved to 1A Stockwell Street, occupying the hall behind Mill Road Baptist Church for many happy years until the Church announced that the site was to be redeveloped.

In July 2007 we moved all our belongings into store at Scotsdales and held our meetings in the Sunflower Room until the splendid David Rayner Building was completed in the spring of 2008.



Viv, one of our trustees at the time, sent this letter to the members of the Planning Committee:
Dear Mr Barrett,

Could I ask you to pass on to the members of the Planning Committee the gratitude of the Cambridge Cancer Help Centre for the decision that was taken in their favour against the advice of the officers to build a new centre at Scotsdale's Garden Centre. The decision was a triumph for local democracy and humanity and has been universally applauded. You will know from the many letters that you received prior to the decision being taken how significant this will be for so many inhabitants of the district suffering from so many different forms of cancer to be in the therapeutic environment at Scotsdales. The site has now been cleared and it is hoped the building may be completed by Christmas.

Thanks to you. A dream coming true.

What man will look at me now?

“What man will look at me now with only one breast?” said this young pretty single mum to the hospital doctor. He, bless him, said, that any man who wouldn’t was not worth bothering about ~ he’d be the wrong man anyway.

May

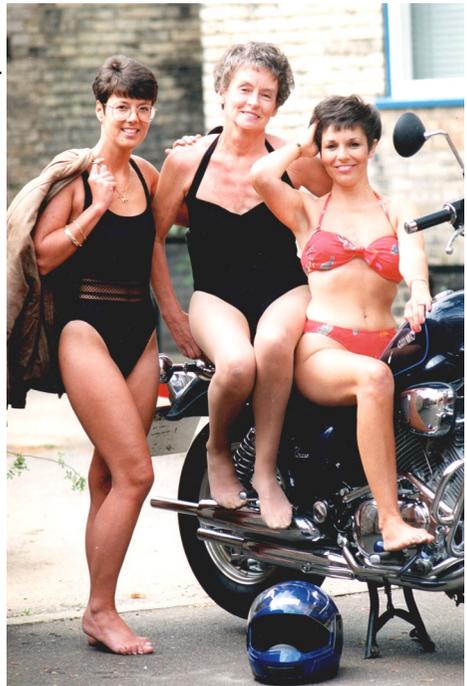
2003

And that reminded me about the

Fashion Show held at the Guildhall in 1995 ~

a joint affair between Breast Cancer Care and our Centre. Lots of ‘us’ were models and all had had mastectomies or had got breast cancer. The amazing thing was that although the models hadn’t done anything like this in their lives, the Breast Cancer Care organisers of the fashion show were professionals, and as a result the Show didn’t appear to be amateurish, but instead, extremely professional.

One of the hairdressers, who was giving his services free of charge, said to me, with wet eyes, as we watched the rehearsals, “I just can’t bear this”. He wasn’t referring to the standard of modelling but to the marvellous women who with one breast or none, young and not so young, were persuaded to stand up there, in a crowded Guildhall with standing room only, in the spotlight in their underwear, swim wear, evening dresses, summer dresses. They’d never done anything like it before and one of



Debbie, Audrey & Karen

them said to me early on that Day, “I can’t do this. I don’t want to do this now ~ I know I have rehearsed for three days but I can’t do it.” But she did it because the lovely, very young Debbie, minus both breasts, said “you just follow me Mary ~ you’ll be alright”. And she was alright. And someone said to the energetic lady who was choreographing the show ~ “I can’t appear up here in a bikini ~ everyone will see the gap where my breast was.” “No they won’t” said the energetic lady emphatically ~ “not when I’ve finished with you.” And, of course, they didn’t. They saw instead such amazing “look, I am here, and don’t anyone put me down because I’m minus a bit of flesh”. And that was when Sexist Bill made his presence known with the wolf-whistles as the women, with their enormous presence, walked down that catwalk. Not allowed now, I suppose (the wolf-whistling I mean) but he said it just needed to be done and thank God he did it because those women brought the house down. And perhaps they hadn’t had any wolf-whistles for some time. So perhaps we all need a wolf-whistle or two from time to time.

Three men were bragging about how they had given their new wives duties.

Terry had married a woman from America and bragged that he had told his wife she needed to do all the dishes and housework. He said that it took a couple of days but on the third day he came home to a clean house and the dishes were all washed and put away.

Jimmy had married a woman from Canada. He bragged that he had given his wife orders that she was to do all the cleaning, dishes, and the cooking. He told them that the first day he didn’t see any results, but the next day it was better. By the third day, his house was clean, the dishes were done, and he had a huge dinner on the table.

The third man had married a British girl. He boasted that he told her that her duties were to keep the house cleaned, dishes washed, laundry and ironing twice a week, lawns mowed, windows cleaned and hot meals on the table for every meal. He said the first day he didn’t see anything, the second day he didn’t see anything, but by the third day most of the swelling had gone down and he could see a little out of his left eye, just enough to fix himself a bite to eat, load the dishwasher, and call a handyman.

July 2009

Stockwell Street memories

Glyn, who, when we moved into our beloved Stockwell Street premises, painted 18 doors white ~ a change from dark brown. Brenda D helped with the painting and she and Ros managed the 'Goods for Sale' table. Alan Story has been a tea person from early Stockwell Street days.

Judith cooked a large curry at home and brought it to the centre for some celebration or other. Any excuse for a celebration has always been the order of the Centre day. We had smashing parties at Stockwell Street and our first Christmas lunch was for about 25 people. We bought jacket potatoes from the café down the road, a couple of people had cooked turkeys, and the highlight of the lunch was Nic's speech when he toasted the Centre and the people in it ~ the Centre meant a lot to him and his wife Mo.

The Church Hall had big cracks in the walls ~ you could see the daylight ~ large spiders would scuttle across the floor, but we had a cosy feel to the place ~ comfy sofas and chairs and pink lamps! Our therapies took place behind curtained-off corners. We had only three authorised parking spaces, in a street filled to capacity with residents' parking, and I know that some people couldn't face turning up and having to hunt for a parking space.

Fifty of us gathered at one of the Christmas Parties, entertained by the carol singers from Girton Church, led by Barbara Johnson. We had some remarkable fancy dress...Margot in flapper gear, Ingrid as a spectacular nurse, Fran in a large furry animal suit, me (responding to the Sheringham lots title for me of 'leader') ~ wearing a black, dangly wig, hippie sandals, tee-shirt bearing hastily-applied emulsion paint which said 'I'm the Leader, man...yeah!' plus Veronica's cross and beads. People who knew me well didn't know it was me, so I kept taking off the wig and saying "it's me, it's me!" We had oodles of good food, Margot's fruit punch, and tremendous loving company.

The 'Sheringham lot' refers to a group of us who used to take over a large house for a weekend in the summer. We cooked large breakfasts and had lots of fun.

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. *April 2004*

Heard at the Centre 2010:

As long as there are
more smiles than tears
you're winning.

Police role-plays

So I screeched at Sgt Gordon Murray, as instructed to do by Chris, Charlie, Steve, Malcolm, Cheryl and Janie who were in charge of the role-plays. But it can't have done any harm because the next day Gordon phoned to establish we were a registered charity and he and Geoff offered the Centre lots of goodies, obtained by them from the use of their police petrol vouchers. Had got into the role-plays by persuasion of my friend and next door neighbour, Kay, who told me it was a good thing!

At some stage Fran and Tony joined me in becoming flouters of the law. I found myself in a small place with heavy locks and a window you couldn't see out of. And I'm pretty sure I detected more than a modicum of delight in the detective constable who was enjoying showing me where to go. So, left on my own, awaiting developments, someone who looked a lot like Tony, and who was, I have to say, aided and abetted by the D.C., took my photograph by pointing his camera through a conveniently placed hole in the door. This role-play took three days. Best of all was pitting your wits against experienced police officers (I always lost) and using body language to indicate your guilt even though you were lying like crazy. We were so impressed with the training we saw carried out by the Police Trainers ~ everyone getting the same training from the same team. We did the role-playing for several years and when asked my age, during the interviews, I always took ten years off!

At our Centre we have lots of items provided by the police, initially the Traffic Police (Gordon Murray and Geoff Bye) who gave us the green relaxer chairs you see in the therapy rooms ~ plus mugs, CD players ... endless list.

I am reminded of something I read in Big Issue some years ago by an ex-pat saying what he missed about England: *I miss the NHS, an incorrupt police force and democracy.*

And in "Big Issue" I read a letter which says that *policemen and women are the principal defenders of our rights. Mostly, the writer says, against violence and theft. Even people who look down on them are going to pick up the phone and call them when there is trouble. The writer goes on to say we should support them and admire them because, at the end of the day, someone has to do the job.*

October 2002

The Holiday I did and did not want

Brenda Downham wrote this article for our Spring 1999 newsletter. In it she describes re-visiting the Isle of Wight with her husband, 16 years after they had spent a holiday there with all their children and their young grandchildren. During those 16 years Brenda lost three of her children to cancer. One of them, David, was 17 when he died, and each Christmas Brenda remembers how, as a tiny boy, David would stand quietly and bright-eyed, and stare up at their little tree.

I think this is the reason why, every year since coming to our Centre, Brenda has liked to decorate our own little Centre tree.

'Connectedness' again

Barefoot Doctor, in the Observer Magazine, tells us that he killed a bee. He wished he hadn't but there were circumstances surrounding this, which he does explain. (Read the article, it is in the Centres library.) Anyway, the deed was done and he regretted it. That he had crushed the bee, as if it were no more than a piece of fluff, rather than a living creature. So he said he spoke to its spirit and prayed that by releasing it from its mortal coil it would find rebirth as a higher life form, but he still saw it as a murder of a living thing. Because, he says for the sake of his tortured soul, and those of everyone thus afflicted, and assumes that is most of us, he says we should take a moment to consciously feel the '*connectedness*' (my quotes and italics) between us and all other living things.

He goes on to say that two big, fat bees just came to him
to say they understood.

July 2002

Goodbye to the Old Place ~ Sheila B

The last day of July was the last day of the home of the Centre in Stockwell Street. Of course we had to have a little ritual to close this phase and forty-seven people turned up for the occasion.

The room was organised for everyone to sit in a circle and in the middle was a table bearing two candles. One, very burnt down, symbolizing the old time, the other a large impressive one sitting in a garland of flowers for the future. They were lit and then Brighid, one of the therapists, regaled us with a story of Etheldreda of Ely. This was followed by Judith, a long-time member of the Centre, asking each of us to tell of their most important moment, or what the Centre meant to them.

It was interesting what each of us came up with, but mostly it transpired that the friendliness of the place, led by Ann and her volunteers, was uppermost. Plus the sharing of problems and the listening that always goes on. One cheeky man said he came because it was the only place he could get a cup of tea for 20p!

I think it is quite unique that the atmosphere of the Centre is happy and relaxed, considering what we are suffering from. It was inspiring as well to hear the therapists say that they get something back from us, since we receive so very much from them.

The candles were blown out and they will be carried to the new venue. Then it was time to eat ~ always a pleasant time with our pot-luck meals, as we all like to bring something special.

No doubt some of us were feeling misty-eyed and a little nostalgic at the thought of leaving the old place. However, it's time to move on from our slightly scruffy but comfortable venue to the especially built new one. It's such a relief to have a permanent site and, pristine as it will be, I'm sure the ambience from our old one will be carried over. *Oct 2007*

Brighid very cleverly found a most appropriate story for our final meeting at Stockwell Street. She led us through some of the many twists and turns in the life of Etheldreda who, in the first century AD, established a

nunnery in the Fens. For many years Etheldreda had dreamed of building a special home for nuns in the area, but buildings cost a great deal of money and initially none was forthcoming.

And then one day a benefactor amazingly appeared
and her vision became a reality!

Some reflections before I left Stockwell Street for the last time

Everyone had left. Collected the phone, biscuits and Sid's sugar, checked the mail and spent two minutes or so in the big room by myself, thinking about my friend Joan who told us about the room at 1A Stockwell Street just before it became vacant (*and who, a couple of years ago, died because of a brain tumour*), the Minister, Gordon who used to whistle his way down the corridor into the Centre, ask me to remove a splinter from his finger, tell me not to worry about taking up more than three car parking spaces and ask me if I had found Jesus yet. I thought about David Wilson, Brian, Fiona, Keith, Olga, Rita, Dan, Ron..... and then purposefully walked, almost skipped, out of the Centre, very happy to be moving on to the building David Rayner was planning to create for us. Then went to Snakatak, to have lunch there in the way that lots of us used to do. Our lunches once a week in Topkapi and Snakatak were always hilarious occasions.

A Gentleman

Sheila told us that her son Richard held the door open at a newsagents for a woman leaving the shop. Her response was, “you don’t have to hold the door open for me”. And he retorted “I will hold the door open for who I bloody well like”. Those of us who heard about this were very impressed. In fact we almost let out a cheer. Marvellous man.

The Painting Group ~ Pat B

When Ann first asked me to 'Do a bit of painting' with people at the Cancer Centre, my confidence was still low and I was very nervous about it. Would anyone be interested? This was in October 2008 and initially two or three people came along to give it a try. Soon the group grew so quickly that Ann bought two new tables to make more space for everyone.

Initially on coming along most people said, "I can't draw" or "I haven't painted since I was at school", but happily they tried some back-to-basic colour-wheels ~ and they were hooked. They have surprised themselves and delighted family and friends with the results they have achieved.

There is a lovely atmosphere around the Art table ~ whether it is lively or quiet it gives me a real sense of enjoyment to see people so absorbed with their drawing and painting (so much so that I sometimes forget to drink my tea!)

One special story from one of the painters was that she answered a knock on her front door and a young man produced a portfolio and proceeded to show her his paintings to sell. "No thank you", she said, "you see I'm an artist myself". This was someone who only a few weeks before said she couldn't draw or paint. I love painting and it is a real joy to hear how much the group enjoy it too.

Feb 2009

From time to time we've had small art groups, the most successful previous one being Fiona's group at Stockwell Street. Sadly Fiona died at the age of 38. She was a wonderful inspiration to us all and still smiles across at the Art Group from her photograph in the corner.

When 'Pat's Painters' started, Fiona's mother, Barbara, sent us £1,000 from Fiona's legacy ~ a posthumous donation to buy art materials ~ and some more tables!

At the same time that we lost Fiona we also lost Keith, who was the same age.

Keith Harris ~ that young, energetic, gentlemanly, enthusiastic, kind teacher (and trustee at our Centre) died just before Christmas. I went to see him at Bury St Edmund's hospice and sat with him while Clarissa (they married one year ago) gave him his lunch. He held my hand for an hour and a half. After lunch he was sleepy. I massaged and stroked his feet until he went to sleep. It was time for me to go home. "Give him a kiss", said Clarissa. So I did, as he slept.

11 November 2009

At the 11th hour on the 11th day of the 11th month, Stephen Brookes led us into a two minute silence. He spoke about remembering the dead from all the wars, and about the value of their sacrifice. He experienced some very tough times in Burma during the Second World War, when at the age of 11 he suddenly 'became a man' after all the adult males in his family were lost to the War.



Things

There are worse things than having behaved foolishly in public.

There are worse things than these miniature betrayals,
committed or endured or suspected; there are worse things
than not being able to sleep for thinking about them.

It is 5am. All the worst things come stalking in
and stand icily about the bed looking worse and worse ~ and worse

June 2008 Fleur Adcock (1934-

Sometimes I lie awake at night, and I ask, "Where have I gone wrong?"
Then a voice says to me, "This is going to take more than one night."

Chernobyl

80 miles north of Kiev in the Northern Ukraine is a town that prior to 1986, no-one had heard of. Then on the 26 April 1986 the No 4 reactor at the Chernobyl nuclear power station in the northern Ukraine, overheated, exploded, then went in to melt-down.

The world's worst nuclear accident released 190 tons of highly radioactive waste material into the atmosphere exposing the people of Chernobyl to radioactivity 90 times greater than that from the explosion of the Hiroshima atomic bomb. It will be another 24,000 years before the land is safe and the children no longer suffer.

A group of parents in Melbourn, Cambs, bring over a group of children every year. They look after them extremely well, arranging for them to see doctors and dentists. They also arrange lots of treats for the youngsters, who are now aged 9/10. So they visited Annie's 'Different Strokes' group and were taken on a boat trip and then came to the Centre for lunch. Crisps and ice cream were the favourites of the day. Lots of people helped, particularly Wendy and Penny. Wendy made every child a beautiful cloth bag into which went the 'goodies' shopped for by Penny. The tea team worked hard to keep the food coming ~ food lots of you kindly provided.

The children gave a concert before they departed for home to Belarus and one of the interpreters said:

*There are people whose lives are so special
Whose friendship and love mean so much
And somehow you know
That wherever you go
in thought you will never lose touch.*

Parents, their children and we (interpreters) want to say a Big Thank You to those who organized this trip for us, who helped us during this month, to those who hosted our children, took care of them and gave all their love to those children.

We hope, looking at you, our children will become more grateful, kind and polite and will treat other people the way they were treated here in England. We are happy that you teach our children to stay humane in our competitive world.

Our concert is just a tiny thing that we can give you back for all your endless love, kindness, care and patience. We hope you will enjoy it and have a good time!

*We appreciate everything you've done for us and are still doing.
You are always welcome guests in Belarus!
Thank you very much! With love, Ira*

Oct 2010

We've enjoyed entertaining the children each summer since then.

Happiness, is, I suspect,
'the first weekend sick-free' when you are
the Mum of a young lad who has had 8
chemo sessions with 18 to go.

A four year
next door
was an

June 2000

old child's
neighbour
elderly

gentleman who had recently lost his wife. Upon seeing the man cry, the little boy went into the old gentleman's garden, climbed on to his lap, and just sat there. When his mother asked what he had said to the neighbour, the little boy said "nothing, I just helped him to cry".

February 2009

**To know that even one life has breathed easier because you have lived
~ this is to have succeeded.** (*Ralph Waldo Emerson*)

These words were read at **Ros Nightingale's** funeral in the spring of 2011.

Many people at the Centre will always remember Ros. Because she knew how to listen ... and she knew what to say. Ros made lots of lives "breathe easier". She is, without a doubt, absolutely irreplaceable.

Why Parents Drink ~

The boss wondered why one of his most valued employees was absent one day but had not phoned in sick. Needing to have an urgent problem with one of the main computers resolved, he dialled the employee's home phone number and was greeted with a child's whisper. "Hello"

"Is your daddy home?" he asked.

"Yes" whispered the small voice

"May I talk with him?"

The child whispered "No".

Surprised and wanting to talk with an adult, the boss asked, "Is your Mummy there?"

"Yes"

"May I talk with her?"

Again the small voice whispered, "No".

Hoping there was somebody with whom he could leave a message, the boss asked, "Is anybody else there?"

"Yes" whispered the child, "a policeman".

Wondering what a cop would be doing at his employee's home the boss asked

"May I speak with the policeman?"

"No, he's busy" whispered the child.

"Busy doing what?"

"Talking to Daddy and Mummy and the Fireman" came the whispered answer

Growing more worried as he heard a loud noise in the background through the earpiece on the phone, the boss asked "What is that noise?"

"A helicopter" answered the whispering voice.

"What is going on there?" demanded the boss, now truly apprehensive. Again, whispering, the child answered, "The search team just landed a helicopter".

Alarmed, concerned and a little frustrated the boss asked, "What are they searching for?"

Still whispering, the young voice replied with a muffled giggle...

"ME."

Oct 2008

One Day in July 2010 ~ Alan & Jane

“What you now have was once among the things you only hoped for”

Epicurus 341 - 270 BC

We had heard rumours about a new building in the grounds of a garden centre which we occasionally visit. One day when we went there to buy plants, we read some leaflets describing the purpose of the building and the work of the Cambridge Cancer Help Centre, and as I was having treatment for cancer at the time we thought it might be of interest to take a look around without stopping, let alone going inside and possibly being a nuisance to busy people. We have all heard of people doing something out of character which results in having unexpected consequences ~ well that is what happened to us that memorable day.

As we approached the CCHC we were delighted by the beautiful garden, the flowers, lawns, trees, the lovely little summer house and the peaceful atmosphere, despite the busy road nearby.

We stood outside the open doors of the main entrance and took a tentative look inside, and were greeted by two charming ladies who invited us in. We had a lovely long chat and were given cups of tea and were made to feel quite at home. We could not believe our good fortune, and as luck would have it, the Centre was open the next day, so we visited again the next day, after I had finished my daily cancer treatment ~ and now we come whenever we can.

We do not think that the welcoming and smiling organisers and their volunteers will ever know the difference they make to the lives of cancer sufferers and their families by creating the atmosphere which is quite unique, supportive, happy, restful and welcoming, all of which is enhanced by the lovely surroundings and furnishings of the Centre.

We always drive home reluctantly, but with a smile on our faces, looking forward to future visits.

We are so grateful.

Marathons:

Many people have cycled, run marathons and climbed hills and mountains for us over the years. Here are just a few of them:

Andy Filler (Margot's son) climbed Mont Blanc in July 2008. He described it as "a very worthwhile and satisfying experience, heightened by the knowledge that I was raising funds for a good cause".

We were so very sad to hear that Andy was killed in a paragliding accident in Marrakesh some time later.

Ian Chadwick (John Lewis Service Building) raised £12,207 single-handedly from sponsorship for his Three Peaks' Challenge. Amazing feat ~ in memory of his wife Joy. He was driven from mountain to mountain by Ian Bloomquest and other John Lewis colleagues.

Paul Burbridge, with tremendous determination, ran the London Marathon when he was quite ill. The vicar who spoke at his funeral some time later said, "Paul was visibly ill but fantastically alive". Paul was, indeed, 'Living with Cancer', which is the name of the course he attended.

Mark Howe ran many marathons for us - London, Inverness and the North Pole, where they were running on ice that was 6-12 feet deep on the surface of 12,000 feet of Arctic Ocean in temperatures of minus 40 degrees. They used GPRS to locate the North Pole precisely, ran along it and put their different flags from all over the world onto the ice at the end of the marathon. And they all played football on the ice. Mark's flag bore the good wishes and signatures of his colleagues, the police and all of us at the Centre. Mark also knew that polar bears could run the mile in 4 minutes but he said "they won't catch me"~ and thankfully they didn't!

When Mark returned home we got him to run down the Scotsdales drive, wearing his arctic gear and waving the Union Jack. We had also borrowed a polar bear suit, which one of our trustees put on and then sprang out behind Mark and chased him down the driveway!

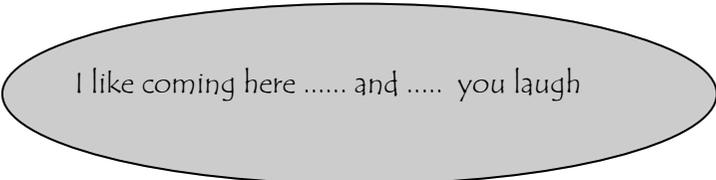
Other types of marathons have also taken place at our Centre. Tricia always said that compiling & designing 'Looking at the Stars' was her marathon. Then there's Fran, a significant presence in the background, who's quietly supported the CCHC as a Trustee since Marilyn's small group began. And not least, David Wilson, who guided the Trustees through good times and difficult times, taking on all three roles of Chair, Hon Treasurer and Hon Sec for many years until he became too ill to continue. Sadly he died shortly before our move to Scotsdales.

But now we have other personalities
to take the organisation into the future.

There are so many more memorable people and stories that I'd like to have included in my final newsletter, but sadly there's no more room. We could have created a whole newsletter exclusively for jokes that have appeared over the years. And I'd love to have been able to tell you what happened when I sat on Tony's knee ~ and how we got Ron's leg into a car ~ and then mine. But you'll just have to use your imagination!

Perhaps Tricia wasn't exaggerating after all when she said that the newsletter would be over 100 pages long if she printed all that I'd originally included (fitting things into limited spaces is not one of my strengths ~ but that's another story!) Tricia reckons that I have no idea about numbers ~ in ANY of their forms! How can she say such a thing when I'm VERY good at adding up the number of visitors to the Centre for my monthly reports to the Trustees! What shall we do with her? ~ she doesn't know what she's talking about.

*Overheard at the Centre:
Feb 2011*



I like coming here and you laugh



Christmas Fair ~ Pam's Craft Group

5th & 6th November ~ 10am-3pm

We miss Pam, of course. Her Craft Group want to continue calling the group 'Pam's Craft Group'. Pam's husband, Jimmy, sent us this letter:

I write this letter to thank you all for your kind words from your heart. I hope to see you all very soon to say thank you all. I'm sorry this is a short letter but your words won't be short to me. I will remember your card when I am low in spirits. God Bless the Centre. Jim PS Pam loved the Centre

Pam's grand-daughter Sophie

sent us one of her own paintings to put in a therapy room and Dennis will place it in one of the rooms in which Pam so enjoyed the therapies.

Betty Shields ~

Tricia's friend, and a supporter of CCHC for many years died suddenly a few weeks ago. Betty ran a quilting group of her own and had made several quilted cushions for our Craft Group to sell at their Christmas Fair. Betty had also dressed a doll which she wanted us to raffle. We've called the doll 'Elizabeth'

Raffle tickets for Elizabeth are

5 for £1

They are already on sale at the Centre



Tributes to Ann ~ compiled by Tricia

Following the AGM in March 2013, when Ann announced that she would be retiring at the end of this year, she received many messages of support. There's no room to include them all, but here are just a few of them:

Ann ~ how to silence a room full of people in two seconds. The shocked and tear stained faces around the room says it all Ann, just how much you are loved and part of our lives. A decision to step down after twenty years of total commitment must have given you many sleepless nights but as always a truly unselfish step on your part again thinking of others.

The person that takes over, welcoming with that warm smile at the door, putting on that famous kettle, handing out tissues, giving that much needed reassurance we all need from time to time, listening to ideas even when rubbish and still looking enthusiastic at the end, computer skills, sorting grievances without being biased, Lifeline, etc. etc. etc. I'm sure will do a good job ~ you have set the stage.

CCHC, an organisation set within a great building to offer support, care and love to those in need. The unique caring atmosphere was not created over-night, it takes years of dedication and a certain person, that's you Ann. So many people have been given a new lease of life and hope through meeting you. Now it's Ann Dingley's time to be put first, enjoy every day, just like you taught us.

From just one of your many fans that think **you're a very special person.**

Maggie S x

Dear Ann, I was so sorry to hear about your pending retirement although everything moves on in life.

You have done an amazing job over the years, helping and caring in such a special way to so many people. You will, I know, be greatly missed. Many best wishes for a happy healthy retirement.

Kind regards,. Angela Chisholm (therapist at Arthur Rank)

Dear Ann, I was stunned to hear of your intention to retire at Christmas. I felt I had discovered heaven here on earth when I joined the team at CCHC. You are such a ray of sunshine and every day I come to the centre is made extra special by your warmth. You will be a very hard act to follow and will be sorely missed by everyone. I only wish I had retired a year earlier so that I could have spent more time working with you. I know that you will stay with us until Christmas but time flies and I will dread that time. Thank you for the sheer joy you bring to each day and in making my transition into retirement so much easier to cope with.

With Fondest Love, Annie

Hi Ann just wanted to say how sad I was to hear that you'll be retiring at the end of the year -it just won't be the same without you! I remember my very first visit to the centre over two years ago. I wasn't sure what to expect but you made me feel very welcome and gave me lots of very useful information and introduced me to lots of lovely people. With your help and the complementary therapies I received at the centre I was able to return to work 3 months later, a more positive person. A very big thank you to you for making the CCHC what it is today – a haven for some very special people. Very best wishes Debbie x

Dear Ann, I know that you must be terribly sad to be leaving your active involvement with the day to day working of the Centre but you can be proud of the way that your work has helped to create such a wonderful place, full of love and caring and understanding where people may find not only compassion but also help in finding the strength and confidence to enable them to enjoy a reasonable quality of life.

I am very proud to be a supporter, and also very pleased to have known you, albeit at a distance. I wish you every happiness for your future, which I am sure will continue to be very active and I hope, fulfilling. With best wishes Mike Driscoll

Dear Ann,

I am sorry to hear that you are stepping down as the Centre's coordinator. It was clear to us on our visit how well liked and respected you are and for the good work you have done over the years.

I have given out various awards in my ten years of Stagecoach, however yours was the most deserving.

I wish you a long and happy retirement and hope you enjoy a well deserved rest. Yours sincerely - Andy Campbell

After presenting her 'Unsung Hero Award', and at Ann's invitation, Andy Campbell, the Managing Director of Stagecoach, subsequently visited our Centre to find out more about how it operates. He was so impressed that he immediately opened his wallet and asked to become a Member.

And finally, Viv speaks for many of us when she says:

Dear, dear Ann You deserve now to take time out for yourself. You will come right back at me and say how much you have got back from the amazing people at the Centre. **You** have been the amazing person who has made The Whole Centre happen, live and continue to prosper, with your light touch. **You dismiss your contribution as unlocking the premises and putting on the kettle, but you are the one who sees the person on their own, who effects the networking, who validates the individual, by yourself standing back and letting the credit go to others. I know, as I have experienced it, you unlock potential.**

What a gift. What a woman.

Thank you on behalf of everybody who has been privileged to know you.

With our love Viv and Fred

Welcome to Annie & Ann

Our new Coordinator is **Annie Thantry** and our Assistant Coordinator is **Ann Cox** ~ wouldn't you know that one of the requirements in the interviewing process was to be called Ann!

Annie Thantry says:

When Ann D asks you a favour you simply cannot say no and that is how she has succeeded where others would have failed at the first hurdle.

This time the request was for a brief overview of my past experience for the newsletter. Sorry, no skeletons in the cupboard, but it did make me sit and ponder over the future. I realised how my delight in accepting the joint role of coordinator is tinged with sadness because it signifies the departure of a very special person who cannot be replicated by any stretch of the imagination. Ann has worked tirelessly to make CCHC what it is today and I cannot say she will be a hard act to follow because the word 'act' is an inappropriate use of language to describe someone who exudes a natural warmth and generosity of spirit. I recognise now that although I am both sad and also a little daunted by the challenges ahead I am sure that we will all work together to build on the strong foundations that Ann has laid and that we will continue to make her proud.

I have worked in the field of cancer care for seventeen years, initially in both hospices and hospitals as a complementary therapist and later as a counsellor and coordinator for complementary therapies at Wallace Cancer Care. I have been fortunate enough to attend training sessions for my continual professional development at a leading cancer specialist hospital in the north and have forged a good support network with others working in the same field.

Some of you will already be aware that I am currently working at CCHC as a volunteer offering sessions for women to help overcome the issues of poor body image and low self esteem. I also facilitate a local support group for female cancer patients, called 'The Camazons'.

The passion I have for this work is driven by personal experience

of nursing both of my parents through their cancer journeys and wanting to put something back in gratitude for all the much needed support I received during that difficult time.

No man is an island and I am delighted to be back working with Ann Cox again and I hear from Ann D that all of you make a huge contribution to the smooth running of the Centre. I just hope Ann D will share her recipe for the potion that makes it so hard to say “no”.

Ann Cox says:

After holding the position of Practice Manager with the Potton Medical Practice, I took on the role of General Manager at Cambridge Doctors on Call, the out-of-hours’ GP Service (1995-2007).

I then took a year off to complete a Diploma Course in Holistic Therapy which had always been of great interest to me, and on applying to become a volunteer therapist at Wallace Cancer Care, I was offered the position of Operations Manager to manage the day-to-day operations of the Centre. I worked closely with Annie Thantry, who was Complementary Care Coordinator at Wallace, to develop the complementary and counselling therapies and establish new group programmes on a very limited budget.

I am very much looking forward to working again with Annie and we will work hard to offer a supportive and caring environment for users of the Centre. In particular I feel very privileged to be asked to be part of the CCHC continuity.

Ann’s leaving is a very significant event which inevitably will have an unsettling effect on everyone associated with CCHC. Annie and I realise that it will be impossible to fill Ann’s shoes, but we will do our very best to continue her wonderful work and build on the excellent reputation of CCHC as a highly trusted organisation in Cambridge.

December dates for your diary:

Christmas Lunch 3rd December ~ sorry to say we cannot accommodate everyone, so the lunch is reserved for regular users of our Centre. I'm also sorry you cannot bring your husbands, wives, partners or friends. (Unless, of course, they are regular users of the Centre.)

The cost will be **£5**. Tickets available in November.

Please bring a present for Father Christmas' sack. Presents should cost around £3 ~ there are many suitable gifts available in Scotsdales. And we will be entertained by the children singing to us straight after lunch.

Christmas Party 12 December 7pm ~ bring friends and family...and food to share. But please do not bring sausage rolls or mince pies! We will have a pantomime and other jollities! Please let us have a photograph of yourself at some young age ~ we will exhibit them and try to guess who is who! There may well be a prize for the person who gets most right! *(Please bring your photos a s a p as we'll need to mount them ~ I'm afraid it will be too late if you bring them on the night)*

Very many thanks to John Lewis,

Waitrose & The Police

who for many years have supported our Centre in a variety of ways. I also hope they will be able to help serve our Christmas lunch again this year. Angela is all prepared for the lunch and the Party!

Rachel Moloney

We have just heard that Rachel died last night (1 Oct). Despite her illness, she still found the time and inclination to welcome someone who was new to the Centre. Rachel was one of life's lovely people. One did not have to think whether you liked her or not, there was a natural, heartfelt reaction to her. She loved caring for others, especially children. She dealt with her serious illness in a calm, quiet way.



People here are saying that she was a great friend and although people are not surprised to hear about her death it is still a shock that has sort of knocked us for six. She was a lovely young woman and part of the group that got on so well together when they visited Penny Brohn Cancer Care. Never forget you Rachel.

Richard & Bernard

Unfortunately Bernard feels unable to continue helping with the garden and the wheelbarrow and pots. Such a shame. We have been very fortunate that we have two retired gardeners at our centre. Richard will, of course, continue to tend the flower beds at the side and back of the DRB ~ flower beds that were planted using a donation from Peter Durrant in memory of his lovely wife Sarah.

Very many thanks to **Richard**, whose **Yoga classes** continue to flourish: they have raised in excess of **£4,000** for our Centre over the last few years.

CRUK Thank you for putting all your unwanted clothes and shoes in the CRUK box. During the past 18 months your donations have raised over **£7,600** for their charity.

I'm glad that one of our Centre's biggest strengths is its independence. We do what we want to do and we do it in our own way. We have strong, reliable trustees who seriously take into account what is the right way for our Centre to proceed. But our Centre has fuzzy edges ~ we tend to do what seems to be right without having hard and fast rules which could get in the way of letting us offer what we offer. Another strength comes from the people who use the Centre. Someone who comes to our Centre said "it's an extension of our families".

If anyone would like my home phone number/email address, please ask ~ when I have left, ask Barbara for the details. I'll still be a member of the Centre, of course, continuing to pay my subscription and will call in from time to time, but not for a few weeks. And I'll still be at Breakfast Club.

Much love to everyone ~ what an adventure the last 20 years have been ~ and you are the heroes and the heroines! Without all of you, and the tea team and therapists, this Centre would be meaningless.

I wish you all well ~ and I know that you will do your best to look after Annie and Ann, our new coordinators.

Ann x x x



PS Someone recently wrote this about our Centre:

This place is unique with its serene atmosphere. The only place you can fear the worst in the morning and be laughing about it by lunchtime ~ arrive in floods of tears and leave with pain in your sides from laughing so much.