

Christmas Party ~

on Monday December 13th starting at 7 p.m.

Please bring friends, family and food to share
(but no alcohol)

and a Christmas tree present costing no more than £2.

Christmas Carols with Dorothea & Nicholas at 7.45 pm,

supper at 8.30 pm.

Entertainment at 9.30 pm.

We may require some help please, during late Monday afternoon,
decorating the Centre and the tree (*and undecorating the Centre
and the tree before we go home that evening!*)

Please let us know if you will be joining
us at the Party.

Bring floor cushions.



“Like a Bad Lover,

the consultant radiologist spends about 15 seconds on my left breast (*before heading for the tumourous right side*)...” ~ so writes Dina Rabinovitch in the Guardian. She goes on to describe the process of mammogram, scan and biopsy. They also find an affected lymph node. Her husband sits in the waiting area “pale and tense and almost unable to speak”. It cost, under private medicine, £1,547.50 and includes a night’s stay in hospital.

Dina points out that there are two kinds of press concerning mammograms. She says the first hails it as a saviour because it’s able to detect cancerous cells in breasts two years before a doctor or self-examination would find anything. The other version, she goes on to say, is that mammography is big business; it’s expensive, so it makes money for its producers, and that money would be better spent on researching the causes of cancer.

Dina’s column appears fortnightly but I should think I’ll end reporting on it now because so many people at the Centre have experienced all of this and more, but if you want to know more you can contact d-rabinovitch@yahoo.co.uk

Caroline is off to study acupuncture in London. So this means we won't be able to enjoy her relaxation/meditation sessions or her healing. We'll miss her lots and wish her well and feel sure her new career will be successful.

So ~ **Jane writes**....We are trying to find a reflexologist who would be willing to come in on Wednesday mornings. Until then there will be two therapists, offering 6 appointments so please come along and book a session with them. Otherwise we sit around and eat too many biscuits!

The Visualisation/Relaxation group will continue to run each week at 12.15 and will be guided by Mandy or myself on alternate weeks. We look forward to seeing you there.

Jane also writes.....

News from the Hive!

Alex, my son, has always wanted to keep bees. He is the only person I know who takes a French stick, hollows out the middle and refills it with honey! Two years ago he came in from school and announced that he was going to make a hive for his Design and Technology GCSE course work, so I realised that he was serious.

That spring we started a three month beginners' course with the Cambridgeshire Beekeepers' Association, learning how to be responsible beekeepers, and have gone to regular monthly meetings ever since, some of which have been 'hands on' at the CBA apiary at Wandlebury. The CBA offer a 'Try a Hive' scheme. You go along, build a hive, take it home and wait for somebody to give you a swarm or nucleus of bees. Our bees arrived in May 2003 and we've never looked back. If you would like to buy any of Alex's honey, Ann has some at the Centre but be quick...Alex is thinking of doing a bakery course!

*The honey costs £2.50 and is superb.
Phone your order through and we
will keep it until you can collect it ~ Ann*



Cambridgeshire Bobby Scheme

Three ‘bobby’ vans cover Cambridgeshire and their job is to repair minor damage done to property as a result of burglary, and improve home security by installing new locks, peep holes, door chains and other security devices. This service is totally FREE. There is no charge for time or materials. The service is available to victims of burglary (*age 60 plus*), potential victims of burglars (*60 plus*) and ‘vulnerable’ potential burglary victims, e.g. those who are disabled and living in high crime areas.
Telephone 07866 602100

This service is funded by the Community Fund, Cambs Police Authority, Budget Insurance, Marks & Spencer, Cambridge City Council, private donations, supported by Cambridgeshire Constabulary, Victim Support Scheme, Age Concern, Help the Aged and Neighbourhood Watch

A Little (or a lot) of What You Fancy

~ from Judith


It’s amazing what some people do for pleasure but hey! Whatever turns you on. So what is my little passion? What is it that seduces me away from hearth, home and creature comforts?.....Walking. Now I’m not talking here of the gentle stroll along the river bank to a quiet pub, a swift half and back home to the armchair. Oh no, I’m talking BIG stuff. The longer and harder the better. My friends say I’m like a woman on a mission the moment rucksack and back make contact. Also have to say that few, having experienced my passion, come back for more!

So as few of you will have experienced such heights I’m going to give you an insight into my walking world. This year, the Cotswold Way, 100 miles of hills, dales, woods, streams and pastures stretching from Chipping Camden in the north to the wonderful city of Bath. Apart from being surrounded by the sheer beauty of the English countryside there is something almost meditative about the rhythm of footfalls as you tramp across this green and pleasant land; that is until you unwittingly trample over a hornets’ nest! Now imagine the scene, day two, the sun is shining, there is a gentle breeze, the field is full of the scent of sweet flowering clover, all is well with the world when I’m crudely brought back from my hedonistic state by the droning of an army on the war path. Suddenly the air is full of very angry stinging machines intent on killing whatever has just ruined their day. Needless to say it was me and there was no forgiveness in their hearts. Now I’m the first to recognise when I’m staring defeat in the face, so with arms, map, hat and rucksack flapping and doing a pretty good impersonation of an Olympic sprinter I did manage to escape, but not before they had vented their wrath, about twenty times, on any bit exposed. The next day my legs looked

rather like they'd been dipped in boiling oil and felt pretty much the same but a course of Piriton and some anaesthetic cream put me back on track. Have to say the rest of the walk was uneventful in terms of the unexpected.

I met with so many other fellow walkers along the way. We would share information sometimes, eat and talk together, touch each others lives for that brief space in time and that is what walking is for me. A connection with simple pleasures, with nature, people and life. It satisfies some need in me for self-sufficiency, an ability to navigate this land under my own steam, reliant on my own choices and decisions.

Now what, if anything has this to do with the Centre, not a lot really other than if you have a passion, go for it. Our lives are for living and enjoying, and I believe creating as much happiness as you can for yourself and others is the elixir of life. I think there should be a 'Passion Bubble' put up at the Centre, then we could all see what others are up to! Might get some better ideas! Meanwhile, the next planned walk is Sheringham to Thetford (*ninety miles*) if anyone wants the experience of a lifetime.

Parking at the Centre  ~ our contract with the Church allows us three parking spaces only. However, there has been a lot of give and take about this. There are some days in the week when we aren't there at all and other times when we take up all of the spaces. Our landlords are happy for this arrangement to continue but they do point out that the Church members have priority, so if, when you arrive at the Centre, there is some available street parking, please use it if possible ~ especially if you have no problem with walking, and feel well enough to do so.

The Centre needs, please...a microwave oven. The one given to us by Heather and Malcolm has given us good service but now needs replacing.

The Web that connects ~ Tricia

Walking through Cambridge City Centre recently I was reminded yet again of the 'inter-connectedness of things'.

A young woman, clutching her waist and doubled up as if in pain, was walking slowly towards me. She was so pre-occupied in her agony that I stopped and asked if she needed help. She smiled slightly and looked a little embarrassed. "We don't really have anything to complain about do we?", she said, and pointing behind her she continued, "I've just walked past that girl ~ the one with the white top".

The 'girl' by this time was some distance from us and I didn't immediately pick her out in the crowd, but when the young woman directed my gaze I could see, even from where we stood, that 'the girl' had a horribly deformed face.

"We don't though, do we ~ we don't have anything to complain about really do we?", she repeated.

I was left reflecting, not so much on the disfigurement but on how the pain of 'the girl' had manifested itself so strikingly in this young passer-by.

*Can I see another's woe,
And not be in sorrow too?
Can I see another's grief,
And not seek for kind relief?
William Blake*



Drop Gown and Lie Down

Jan told me about a chapter in 'Chicken Soup for the Surviving Soul' where a young woman tells how she went into the usual room, again, for her treatment ~ a room where there were a few people milling about ~ not unusual so she thought better get on with this, dropped off the gown and proceeded to lie down on the usual couch until one of the men said, "hang on a minute, we are just the decorators come in to measure up before we give an estimate"!

'Chicken Soup for the Surviving Soul' by Jack Canfield, Mark Victor Hansen, Patty Aubery and Nancy Mitchell, publisher Health Communications Inc. ISBN 1-55874-402-9

Never Give Up

In the same book we are told that Sir Winston Churchill took three years getting through eighth grade because he had trouble learning English. So ironic, it says,

that he was asked to address Oxford University's commencement exercises. It says he arrived with his usual props ~ a cigar, a cane and a top hat. As Churchill approached the podium, the crowd rose in appreciative applause. It seems he settled the crowd, with his unmatched dignity, and stood confidently before everyone. He removed the cigar and carefully placed the top hat on the podium. Churchill gazed at his waiting audience. He shouted, with authority, "never give up". He waited several seconds and then rose to his toes and repeated "Never give up!" His words thundered in their ears.

There was a deafening silence as Churchill reached for his hat and cigar, steadied himself with his cane and left the platform. His address was finished. Which reminds me

THANK GOD I'VE GOT CANCER I heard someday say as we watched Annie (*who hasn't got cancer*) attempt to walk across the room. Her attempt was successful but seemed to us onlookers that just watching what appeared to be a painful, complicated process was the best we could do.

Annie recently wrote this for us:-

I am just looking at this keyboard and wondering if at last I will be able to write. I am hoping that I'm good enough to be able to thank all of you for inviting me in, as I am not one of you.

I will tell you about myself, what happened to me, my miraculous escape from death and what it meant to me. I was born with an aneurism ~ a weakness of one of the blood vessels in my brain ~ and on November 21st 2003 the blood vessel burst, which could have been fatal. That is the last day I recall until Christmas. I sort of remember Christmas to February, but it's still a bit hazy, and now my memory is slowly improving.

The aneurism made reading, writing, talking and moving around impossible because my right side was totally kaput. I had no feeling all the way down its length, but it's trying to come back, ssslllloooowwwllllyyyy!!!! My brain has to find ways to make connections and it is doing that gradually, with a lot of support from my family and friends, so that now I can type this ~ even if it does take three days. All in all it is still quite something to remember the time of day, let alone think about how I am feeling.

Well that is it for now, my brain is seizing up, so thank you once again for listening.

So that also reminds me...that in this Chicken Soup book it advises ~ connect early on with others who have been through the same experience ~ find out about patient support groups. So please tell your friends about us ~ tell the person sitting next to you in the hospital clinic, bring along anyone who has or has had cancer or their families or carers. What is available at our Centre for someone who is experiencing or has experienced cancer is also available to their carers and families and

friends.

PROSTEX ~ for men

In “Nature’s Best” catalogue I saw a product, Prostex, recommended as high potency saw palmetto. The article tells us that 20 years ago it was discovered that the saw palmetto berries were full of active substances which were studied by health researchers and it has become a top selling herb in the US and Europe.

Telephone 01892 552117 for catalogue and more information.

Sid’s collection tins ~

Sid, bless him, once got £3,000 for our Centre, when the Railwaymen’s Social Club closed down ~ now in the line of duty for us he visits lots of pubs and other places including:

He	The Elm Tree	Tram Shed Depot	has
	Champion of the Thames	The Fountain	
	Live and Let Live	The Burleigh Arms	
	The White Swan	The Corner House	
	The Locomotive	Dobblers Inn	
	The Rose and Crown	Alexandra Arms	
	Clarendon Arms	Bird in Hand	
	Free Press	Kingston Arms	
	Duke of Argyle	Gianni	

brought in **£452.97** in approximately one year.



Liz O'Hanrahan .. 'a good thing'

Tricia phoned me to say that she thought Liz had died in an accident while riding her motorbike ~ this lovely young woman and mother of whom we were especially fond. So we didn't want to believe it. And I woke up during the night thinking about it and desperately wanting it to be untrue. But it wasn't. At Liz's funeral the priest described what happened to Liz, and all of us, as tragic, sudden and unexpected. He said it was as if a light went out. Liz's brother Jon told us that Liz created ripples and made waves. She had to go **her** way, not the easy way. She followed her own intuition. Jon went on to say that Liz was incredibly exciting ~ a person to be around. She had fought against depression, with the help of medication (*legal and illegal*), and that and her friends and family pulled her through the darker times. **He said she was sparky, spiky, outrageous, tough, vulnerable, helplessly romantic, nutty and incredibly talented and that we must remember her as a good thing.**

I am sure that Liz knew we very much cared about her. Oh, if only

May the road rise with you,
May the wind be always at your back,
May the Sun shine warm upon your face,
May the rain fall soft upon your fields,
And until we meet again,
May God hold you in the hollow of His hand.

Irish saying ~ sent to me by Tricia when the time was right for me

Testicular Cancer (1)

Adrian's Story ~ Feel the Force

(from our book 'Looking at the Stars' ISBN 0-9545603-0-2)

The film 'Star Wars' and cancer are two subjects that are stored in opposing corners of my mind's virtual library. I would have previously been unlikely to think about these subjects on any given day, let alone simultaneously ~ the juxtaposition of frivolous light entertainment and soul crushing illness never having occurred. A few months ago though, my brain coughed and spluttered briefly into action to present me with a personal analogy that was, to me, striking.

The film 'Star Wars' features futuristic gladiators called Jedi knights. These people are born with what is called 'The Force' within them: it is in some ways their spirit. The Force is powerful and must be nurtured by the carrier, and it also takes years to learn to use it to its maximum potential. These knights are respected and they fight for what is just, but unfortunately some of those blessed with the Force veer to the 'Dark Side'. This is the same Force but it is evil and as strong as the good, and the unwary can easily be drawn into it.

Immediately after my diagnosis of testicular cancer I had no feelings of a Force. Later, after weeks of anxiety, I still had no Force. Months after, when the stress was making life a chore, and enjoyment of anything was difficult, my Force started to grow. Slowly but steadily I was sinking to what I now think of as the Dark Side. As my worry continued, the power of the Force grew as it fed off my turmoil, its gravity increasing and unavoidable.

My ever-supportive wife suggested that the Cancer Help Centre at Cambridge could be worth contacting. That was a good call. From my first visit I felt a fresh hope, and on subsequent visits this feeling increased. My Force was still strong, but it was changing: it was starting to polarize to the positive side.

At just over two years following my diagnosis I feel that I control my Force. I can have fun, be constructive, think of the future and lead a life even better than 'normal'. Armed with the Force, obstacles are not so great. The present can be enjoyed.

I have sensed a Force in the inspiring helpers at the Centre, many of whom have had cancer themselves, and I hope that my Force may become as strong as theirs one day.

Testicular Cancer (2)

In 'Life Health' in the Observer magazine, we are told that you can ignore it, deny it, or brave it out, but men need to change their attitudes to illness, writes Jo Carlowe. It seems that a 'typical' way of behaving by some men is that they ignore the first signs, leaving it, hoping it would get better or go away. But if you spot a problem and you leave it this can decrease your chances of a full recovery. It seems that men seek medical help far too late. The Orchid Cancer Appeal distributes the '*Know Your Balls ~ Check Them Out*' video. It is distributed to schools because boys need to learn all about what to do in these circumstances.

Lymphoma

The Centre has been given a gift of a video about lymphoma by Richard. It is in the

Centre's library.

Is this a cure for Cancer ~ CARCTOL

In the Daily Express on Sept 28th 2004 there appeared an article headed *'Is This a Cure for Cancer?'*

Professor Michael Baum, Emeritus Professor of Surgery and visiting Professor of Medical Humanities at University College, London says "patients are being told there's a cure on offer when there's no evidence to support the claim". Professor Robert Souhami, executive director of policy and communication at Cancer Research UK states "there is not a shred of scientific or clinical foundation to support these claims. None of the herbal ingredients, or the combination, has been subjected to any appropriate validation."

Dr Rosy Daniel, medical director of Health Creation and the one-time Medical Director at the Bristol Cancer Help Centre, and known to many of us, says "over four years, documented by histology and CT scans, I have been thrilled to witness the remission of several cases of serious cancer in those on Carctol who are having no other medical treatment". She goes on to say that she was not prepared for the angry reaction of the press and scientific community to her hopeful announcement. She points out that she is a scientist with a first class physiology degree and was reporting a significant observation that needs researching. In this newspaper article it is reported that her message has been heard and responded to positively by Dr Maurice Slevin, who is a leading UK oncologist and chairman of the charity Cancer BACUP. Rosy goes on to say that Dr Slevin said he was fascinated by the news about Carctol and that "oncologists and patients alike don't care whether a treatment for cancer is conventional or alternative. The only criteria is whether it is effective." He has also offered to independently review the Carctol cases.

One of Dr Daniels' patients says she was diagnosed with ovarian cancer four years ago. It was very advanced ~ her stomach had swollen up as though she had a watermelon inside and she had secondaries in her liver. It was inoperable and there was little doctors could do for her. She was treated with Carctol by Dr Daniels. She followed a strict diet and noticed that the lump in her tummy began to reduce. She is now in remission and her blood counts are good. Her lump continues to shrink and she considers herself to be a well woman.

So, having read all this.....I went to **Peter Durrant** who wrote the following:-

Are there alternatives.....?

Dr. Daniel's 'miracle cure' was the headline in the Guardian recently drawing attention to her support for Carctol which seems to be "a blend of naturally occurring Indian herbs" produced by international Ayurvedic expert Dr. Nandlal

Tiwari. The article also led to criticisms of Dr. Daniel's views being based on her no longer being the medical director of the Bristol Cancer Centre and also because of Carctol's lack of clinical trials, although Dr. Daniel would argue, in an anecdotal sense, that people should be given "a choice between chemo or herbal medicine". There is also the problem of how you actually get hold of Carctol because it needs a prescription and can cost approximately £90 per month depending on the dosage required.

Our information has been obtained largely via the internet although it has also led us to consider other herbal remedies. It has also become apparent that it is extremely difficult to obtain a second opinion from a medical practitioner; not least perhaps because of their lack of knowledge about possible alternatives. But there is an advice line around on 0117 973 6052 based in Bristol where Cankut Herbs Ltd is sold. There is also a website available on www.newlifeayurvedicherbs.co.uk

So it's a tricky path but, on the other hand, it's difficult to disagree with comments from the herbalists we have recently met that "over the years our bodies have accumulated a vast array of various toxic heavy metals and carcinogens capable of creating all types of illnesses and disease from the common cold to cancer." It's also common sense that as much as we might all respect the NHS, which is full of caring and helping people, it is very difficult to obtain a measured opinion about alternatives.

Sarah and Peter Durrant would welcome other people's comments and experiences on 01223 262759 and/or humberstone@pop3.poptel.org.uk

A month's supply of Carctol costs around £90. Information about the herbal mixture is available from Health Creation on 0845 009 3366.

Enid Bradshaw

I remember some of us walking along Sheringham beach with Enid several years ago. She wasn't feeling all that marvellous, due to her treatment but she was determined to face the weather ~ and all that nature had brought to her ~ with determination.

I also remember vividly the day at the Centre, several years ago, when six new people arrived, just about all at once and just about as we opened. All were concerned and desperately worried about either relatives or themselves and one was in very obvious distress. So I, being on my own, was dashing around, making the teas and trying to talk appropriately to everyone and thinking I wasn't making a very good job of it when in walked Enid. And with her help, all became well because Enid was automatically doing what was needed, and that proved to me that our system of allowing people who have cancer to help other people who have cancer was the perfect model for what goes on in our Centre.

Geoff, her husband, said Enid had soldiered on from the beginning of the cancer onset. And that was obvious to all of us. Our love to Geoff and their family ~ we hope he will keep coming to the Centre. *(He says he will do just that.)*



Wage War/Wipe Out



Agent Lemon is the title of an article in the Observer Magazine, by Lucy Siegle, on the Ethical Living, 'Life' page. It tells us that contemporary cleaners feature persistent chemicals which don't break down in the environment and bio-accumulative substances that build up in body tissues. She says that next time you zero in on a spill or stain, forget the chemical detergent because vinegar, citrus and soda give you a cleaner bill of health. She says that the nation's favourite products, made by powerful transnational companies with strong links to the chemical industry, don't just do the job ~ they 'wage war' and 'wipe out' 'lingering' germs and bacteria. A typical antibacterial agent is triclosan, which, according to Friends of the Earth, has been detected as a contaminant in human breast milk and in fish. Conventional floor cleaners, whose solvents, petroleum distillates and pine oils have been linked with developmental defects. Plug-in air fresheners provide unremitting exposure to a cocktail of chemicals including formaldehyde and phenol, linked to respiratory disease.

Lucy Siegle goes on to say that simple, natural ingredients can handle all chores. Vinegar (*the white wine variety is the least smelly*) can tackle grease and provide a mild disinfectant. Lemon juice is a good general cleaner and alternative to bleach. Tea tree oil is a natural disinfectant, particularly good for banishing mould. But the king of natural cleaners, she says, is bicarbonate of soda. Mixed with water, it dissolves dirt and grease, used dry it removes carpet stains and cleans surfaces. She says that if cleaning out the shower with half a lemon seems beyond the pale, choose from an increasing range of biodegradable plant and mineral based cleaners. This article tells us that Ecover's links to Group Four Security, accused of rough handling of anti-road protesters at Twyford Down in 1993, means the brand is still eschewed by some ethical shoppers but there are other suppliers such as Bio-D, Green People and Clear Spring (www.greenshop.co.uk has a good range online), all of which use simple, basic ingredients. Lucy Siegle concludes by reminding us that cleaning up is not rocket science but nor should it be chemical warfare. The article is in the Centre's library.

Chemicals to Avoid - Parabens

From Karen W

Never heard of it? Well the chances are you'll find this particular ingredient in most of your cosmetics and toiletries. This synthetic chemical is in 99% of all cosmetics, shampoos, lotions, deodorants and even baby wipes.

Parabens is, however, highly toxic. It can cause rashes and other allergic reactions and it has been linked to asthma and eczema. Research has found that Parabens has a weak oestrogenic effect on the body, and it has been found in breast tumour samples.

So you might be wondering why on earth it's ever used. Its role is as a preservative to extend the shelf life of products by inhibiting microbial growth. Parabens stops all enzyme activity with everything it contacts. So it also inactivates many of the other ingredients in your products such as plant extracts.

Disturbingly, because Parabens can penetrate the skin easily, it is absorbed into the blood system and is stored in the organs and fatty tissues. Here Parabens sits in the cells continuing to inhibit important enzyme functions which may create cell abnormalities.

Today up to 300 different synthetic chemicals can be detected in our bodies that were entirely absent from our grandparents'. Some of these chemicals have been linked with cancers and we simply do not know the effect of many others. It is this bio-accumulation of chemicals and their long term effects on our health that we should be concerned about.

Hormone balance is critical for our good health and until we know more, it makes sense that we take care to minimise our exposure to such chemicals ~ particularly those we know to have a hormone disrupting effect such as Parabens.

We can easily replace those products with chemical-free 'green' versions to protect the future health of our children and families. If it seems like a huge job, why not consider starting by replacing products that have a long-term contact with your skin and would give you the biggest Parabens exposure, such as body and hand creams and lotions?

Parabens has many different names and you may see it on labels as methyl-parabens, propyl-parabens, butyl or ethyl parabens or even methyl-parahydroxybenzoic acid.

I am a Clinical Kinesiologist and work with a range of therapies such as nutrition, Craniosacral therapy and flower remedies to help keep my clients in the very best of health. In my Practice, I often find toxins such as chemicals, toxic metals and pesticides to be at the root cause of health problems.

I have developed a monthly newsletter and website to keep all my clients well informed of health issues and news. I also offer discounted chemical-free

toiletries such as Dr Hauschka, Weleda and Barefoot Botanicals to help support a healthy lifestyle.

I would like to invite all readers to visit my site. You are welcome to sign up to my monthly newsletter and also to take advantage of my ongoing products offer. My product pages available via www.purebalance.co.uk are all parabens free.



These are from a book called **‘Disorder in the Court’**, and are things people actually said in court, word for word, taken down and now published by court reporters ~ who had the torment of staying calm while these exchanges were actually taking place.

Q: What gear were you in at the moment of the impact?

A: *Gucci sweats and Reeboks.*

Q: This myasthenia gravis, does it affect your memory at all?

A: *Yes.*

Q: And in what ways does it affect your memory?

A: *I forget.*

Q: You forget. Can you give us an example of something that you've forgotten?

Q: How old is your son, the one living with you?

A: *Thirty-eight or thirty-five, I can't remember which.*

Q: How long has he lived with you?

A: *Forty-five years.*

Q: What was the first thing your husband said to you when he woke up that morning?

A: *He said, "Where am I, Cathy?"*

Q: And why did that upset you?

A: *My name is Susan.*

Q: Is your appearance here this morning pursuant to a deposition notice which I sent to your attorney?

A: *No, this is how I dress when I go to work.*

Q: Doctor, how many autopsies have you performed on dead people?

A: All my autopsies are performed on dead people.

Q: Do you recall the time that you examined the body?

A: The autopsy started around 8:30 p.m.

Q: And Mr. Dennington was dead at the time?

A: No, he was sitting on the table wondering why I was doing an autopsy.

Q: Doctor, before you performed the autopsy, did you check for a pulse?

A: No.

Q: Did you check for blood pressure?

A: No.

Q: Did you check for breathing?

A: No.

Q: So, then it is possible that the patient was alive when you began the autopsy?

A: No.

Q: How can you be so sure, Doctor?

A: Because his brain was sitting on my desk in a jar.

Q: But could the patient have still been alive, nevertheless?

A: Yes, it is possible that he could have been alive and practising law somewhere.

Bristol Cancer Help Centre

A few years ago about 12 of us from the Centre spent a week at the Bristol Cancer Help Centre. What a brilliant time we had. Ate well, had fun and healing and other therapies, sneaked out to café for coffee and Judith made it very well throughout the week without eating meat. (To her surprise.) Give it a try. Bristol Cancer Help Centre runs residential courses for people with cancer and their supporters.

*Information about this is available from their **new helpline number 0845 1232310** or www.bristolcancerhelp.org. They also have a Bursary Fund.*

Motorway Anxiety Disorder ~

The RAC say the symptoms displaying MAD are sweating, raised blood pressure and cramp. The AA say they have found that women need 15.5 hours more tuition to pass their tests than men. The main reason they fail? Reversing. That's what it says in the Observer magazine on the Life page and it is written in red so it must be true. And we have a driving instructor who visits our Centre so I shall ask him to confirm. And I might ask a traffic police officer to respond as well. And in "*Why Men Don't Listen and Women Can't Read Maps*" by Allan and Barbara Pease, publisher Orion, ISBN 0-75284-619-1 (it's in the Centre's library) it says "overall, women are safer drivers than men". But, it also says, "women have more accidents but their insurance payouts are lower because it involved more bumps and scrapes. Most high payout claims and total write-offs involve male drivers with too much testosterone on the pedal." And also, still with the Observer magazine, their 'Breaking news' tells us that the most dangerous drivers on our roads are, according to a recent survey, BMW owners who are perceived as the most reckless, followed swiftly by Ford and Vauxhall. The safest? They say "Saab, of course, and, er, Hyundai".

So I did get the following from

Paul Stubbings ~ Casualty Reduction Officer at Cambridgeshire Constabulary

Women's speeding offences have risen by four percentage points in the past five years yet still constitute only 17% of the total according to Home Office figures.

Women are far less likely to have high-speed collisions resulting in death. Crashes killed 238 women driver in 2002, compared with 907 men. This may be due to the fact that women get less fun out of risk taking and young male drivers in particular are high-risk takers and are involved in an increasing number of collisions. Research shows that nearly two thirds of men drive cars with an engine bigger than 1.6 litres with 60% of women driving smaller less powerful cars. Less powerful vehicles combined with the less risk-taking factor clearly demonstrates that women drivers are safer drivers compared to men.

In the past ten years the proportion of men with licences has remained at 81%, but that of women increased from 49 to 61%. However the proportion of all motoring offences committed by women in the past five years has risen by only one percentage point to 12%. A survey found that 82% of women approved of speed cameras, compared with 68% of men; 45% of women believed that motorway speed limits should never be broken, compared with 30% of men. Inappropriate speed is the main cause in a third of all deaths and serious injuries on the road and again it is male drivers who commit, and are found guilty by the courts, of the vast majority of serious driving offences such as dangerous driving or death by dangerous driving.

Parking appears to be the only area of driving in which women have a poorer record. This is reflected in the insurance claims made in 2002 which showed that women were twice as likely to have a collision in a car park, were 23% more likely to hit a stationary car and 15% more likely to reverse into another car.

Many women drivers express concern when having to complete a difficult parking manoeuvre and will find a space that is easier to negotiate the vehicle into. This may be related to the fact that men appear to have a better sense of spatial awareness and therefore can judge distances better. It could be that men appear to have high levels of confidence when driving although there is a fine line between confidence and over-confidence which can often lead to mistakes being made and collisions occurring.

Male drivers have more to achieve in terms of safer driving but whether you are a male or female we all have a responsibility to drive within our capabilities and with consideration and care toward other road users.

Thank you Paul ~ I mean, I'm not setting up a war between male and female drivers ~ just reporting on what I have read. But then Charlie sent me the following ~ in which you may detect a hint of outrageous bias!

Where's Sleaford? ~ from Charlie

I will now paint you a picture of domestic bliss. I am at home watching the football, my son is in the bath and daughter in her room and I couldn't hear her music above the television. It was just after half time and the phone rang and I thought why now in the middle of the game.

The voice on the other end (*and I will change their names to protect the incompetent, dozy and daft*) says "Hi, it's Sharon. How do you get to Sleaford?"

This in itself is a reasonable question as long as you know where the person is at the time of asking. And as I could hear the sound of a high revving car engine in the background I thought damn it I shall miss the rest of the game. This could take some time!

"Where are you?" was my innocent question "Somewhere on the A1 towards Grantham." My sigh could be heard for miles because I knew these intrepid explorers had left from Cottenham to go on their journey. "Have you got a map?" was the next, I thought, sensible question. "Of course not, it's at home where we took it out of the car to check the way". Now I know readers I could now put in a cheap jibe about women, maps and directions but as there was no map it prevents me doing that. I then asked exactly where they were to be told "on the A1 going north but not quite at Grantham". I know that to get to Sleaford you need the A15 out of Peterborough. "Didn't you follow the A15 from

Peterborough?” I enquired, not expecting a sensible answer. “Of course we went that way but the signs didn’t say Sleaford so we got back on the A1.” I was now beginning to think that I could miss next week’s game as well because although I was too scared to comment at the time the signs on the A1 south all say London but the road still goes to Welwyn Garden City! I’ll ring you back, I said, but make sure you don’t go past Grantham!

I went to my car where, quite unusually, I keep my map book in case, you’ve guessed it, I am ever lost in my car. I got the page open and then rang back. Sharon answered and the engine was still screaming, possibly in pain for being made to go the scenic route. “Listen carefully”, I said, “when you get to Grantham follow the A52 towards Boston and along that road about ten miles is the A15 to Sleaford. Do you know where in Sleaford you need to be?” The answer did perplex me slightly, well.... no... completely, “Oh we don’t want Sleaford we want a village outside of the town called Langtoft.” Now my basic geography of the area deduced that this village is in fact a lot nearer to Peterborough than Sleaford ~ in fact about five miles outside of Peterborough. So I imparted my knowledge to be met with silence. A feat you might think impossible, as there were two ladies in the car. But it was only temporary. “So why are you telling us to go to Sleaford then!” Another sigh passed from my lips as I realised the whole episode was my fault! I then gave the directions back along the A15 towards Peterborough and the village they required. I then put the phone down and returned to the after-match analysis.

Some considerable time later I received a phone call from Sharon saying they had found the address they were looking for, after a phone call to the house to find out where it was and had successfully picked up Deb’s son only two and a half hours late, quite good considering. They then decided to take the shortcut home via the A15, A1 and A14 and the whole return journey took well over 40 minutes!!!

Now there is also an ironic twist to this tale of adventure and map reading excellence because the key to this story is that the partner of the driver had left their car to be used as they didn’t want too many miles putting on it!!

Partner’s journey round trip of Cottenham to Langtoft totalled 144 miles. So you can see a successful exercise by Deb’s partner in keeping the mileage down on his car.

Now a word to the wise: If you know that Debbie and Sharon are going on a trip in the future either ~

Ring them beforehand to ensure the map is in the car and turned to face the direction of travel.

Do not answer your phone an hour after they have left!

PS ~

Mileage from Cottenham to Langtoft & return ,you’ve guessed it, is **84 MILES**

A little guessing game! ~ from Steve

Dear reader,

As you may be well aware by now, certain members of your Centre have for some time helped out the local police training department with some of their practical training scenarios. This usually involves in 'role playing' vicious criminals and helpless witnesses to hideous crimes. They do this so that my colleagues and I can train officers in the subtle art of interviewing and statement-taking.

They also 'act out' various scenes that are videoed, and then shown to the new police officers to watch, so they can make a statement from it. This gentle art necessitates the officers recording in the written form exact descriptions of the people in the video.

So it is with this in mind, I invite you all to play a little game with me and simply write the name of your Centre member against the quote below, who best fits the descriptions given by the last lot of Cambridgeshire's finest!

When asked to describe the person in the video they replied: (*All quotes are true!! Honest!!*)

"Scruffy"

"18 years of age"

"Dyed blonde hair"

"Slim"

"Sturdy"

"Villainous looking"

"Shifty"

Have you guessed who they are talking about yet??

Berlin Marathon ~ from Beth

I decided to run the 2004 Berlin marathon following my first marathon experience in New York in 2003 ~ there is something strangely rewarding about pushing your body to the limit and achieving what I previously thought to be an unobtainable goal. There is also the added incentive of a slap up feast at the end

The day itself was great ~ having seen the weather forecast the night before promising heavy rain all day, I was slightly nervous as I had only packed a small pair of shorts and a running vest. In the event, it was overcast but the rain held off, which I was immensely grateful for.

The half way point was tough, feeling quite tired and still knowing I still had the same distance left to run. The last kilometre was by far the hardest though ~ there was a point where I thought I could see the finish line but when I got there, it was just a colourful inflatable over the road and I still had another 700 metres to go before the Brandenburg Gate ~ I think that was someone's (*very unfunny*) idea of a joke!

I wanted to run for the Cambridge Cancer Help Centre as its a charity my mum has been supporting and supported by over the last few years. I have visited the Centre a few times and have always been met with a very warm welcome and a friendly, positive atmosphere. The Centre is like a large family, accepting everyone and offering whatever form of support is needed. A great cause ~ keep it up!

Thanks to ~

Ros Hembry for the most marvellous Bosch dishwasher she has given to our Centre. John and Ros collected it and transported it to us and John installed it in a trice.

Robert Sayle gave us three most marvellous CD players (*and with remote controls to add to Jane's excitement when we unpacked them!*)

You Are What You Eat by Dr Gillian McKeith

The author says many things ~ including poo certainly once a day, perhaps twice a day. If you eat dead, lifeless food, your body will be lifeless. If you eat vital, vibrant foods with lots of fresh fruits and veggies, you will be full of life force and vitality. She says that's the way it works, it is that simple.

Loose and runny stools, or thin, shreddy stools ~ she has the answer to both. She also gives a Sexy Food List ~ there are 63 food items on it. Apparently most shops were out of pumpkin seeds (*no doubt because they are capable of increasing libido!*)

Dr McKeith is a nutritionist and she offers solutions to many health problems. She also writes about the macrobiotic diet, claiming that someone who was given two weeks to live, with every bone in her body riddled with cancer, she could barely walk, talk, breathe, sit or stand. A friend decided to feed her an esoteric diet called 'macrobiotic'. This incorporated, we are told, natural vegetarian foods like brown rice, green vegetables, seeds, seaweeds, beans and lots of soy or 'miso' soups. Within one month the woman 'Elaine' began to regain strength; within two months she felt like she was no longer ill. Her cancer disappeared in full.

The book sells at £12.99 but I have seen it on sale for £9.99 in Borders and possibly less in Waitrose. It's also in our Centre's library (ISBN 0-718-14765-0).

What a Ride... *from Jenny, Viv's daughter*



Life should not be a journey to the grave with the intention of arriving safely in an attractive and well preserved body, but rather to skid in sideways, Champagne in one hand ~ strawberries in the other, body thoroughly used up, totally worn out and screaming woohoo! ~

What a Ride!

Hold Hands and Stick Together

*'All I Really Need To Know I Learned At Kindergarten' by Robert Fulghum
from Suzanne*

All I really need to know about how to live and what to do and how to be I learned in kindergarten. Wisdom was not at the top of the graduate-school mountain, but there in the sandpile at Sunday School.

These are the things I learned:

Share everything. Play fair. Don't hit people.

Put things back where you found them. Clean up your own mess.

Don't take things that aren't yours. Say sorry when you hurt somebody.

Wash your hands before you eat. Flush.

Warm cookies and cold milk are good for you.

Live a balanced life ~ learn some and think some and draw and paint and sing and dance and play and work some everyday.

Take a nap every afternoon.

When you go out in to the world, watch out for traffic, hold hands, and stick together.

Be aware of wonder. Remember the little seed in the styrofoam cup: The roots go down and the plant goes up and nobody really knows how or why, but we are all like that.

Goldfish and hamsters and white mice and even little seeds in styrofoam cups ~ they all die. So do we.

And then remember the Dick and Jane books and the first word you learned ~ the biggest word of all LOOK.

Everything you need to know is in there somewhere: the Golden Rule and love and basic sanitation; ecology and politics and equality and sane living

And it is still true, no matter how old you are ~ when you go out into the world, it is best to *hold hands and stick together*.

Department of Health advert from the Guardian

~ Vív

Before you visit Europe, visit your Post Office.

Travelling to Europe this winter? Make sure you pack a new E111 form.

As a UK resident, you're entitled to free, or reduced cost, state healthcare when you visit a European Union country ~ but only if you have a new completed E111 form with you. Pick one up for free from your nearest Post Office along with the booklet 'Health Advice for Travellers'.

Because of recent changes to European law, this new form now replaces the old one. The old form will not be valid after 31st December 2004. This new form is issued on an individual instead of a family basis. However you only need to complete one application form to receive E111s for you, your partner and your children. Your new E111 will be valid until 31st December 2005.

Later, in 2005, the European Health Insurance Card (EHIC) will replace the E111. To apply for an EHIC now, just tick the box on the E111 application form. Your EHIC will automatically be sent to you during the second half of 2005.

Travel Insurance

'Giving the seriously ill the Freedom to see the world', was a heading in the Cambridge News business section. It tells us that a holiday abroad can be just the thing for someone living with a life-threatening illness, but getting travel insurance has been a nightmare until now.

If you would like to pursue this, contact Freedom Travel Insurance, a new company within the NW Brown Group in Cambridge. Also each premium paid results in a donation to charity. Talk to Terry Green by phoning 0870 774 3760. Freedom has developed partnerships with primary care trusts and hospital trusts, including Papworth and Addenbrooke's. The company has a fleet of air ambulances at its disposal and reckons it can offer the best peace of mind for clients. Because travel insurance has taken off to such an extent, Terry is now looking at offering life cover.

Robin also found, in the 'Money Telegraph' an article about insurers who are failing to pay when patients need it most. Harriet Meyer writes that thousands of cancer patients are being let down by leading medical insurers who are using opaque definitions in their policies to wriggle out of paying for treatment, a leading cancer charity (BACUP) claimed this week. CancerBACUP asked 14 P I providers how they measured up, but only eight replied. Of those eight ~ AXA PPP healthcare, Norwich Union, Standard Life, Bupa, Clinicare, CS Healthcare, Legal and General and Western Provident Association ~ only Bupa covers ongoing cancer treatment, said Cancer BACUP. More worryingly the charity found that some insurers' sales staff were often providing misleading information to consumers about the level of cover on offer when they bought policies over the telephone.

*For lots more further information do read the two newspaper cuttings which are in the Centre's library. Also in our library is a variety of information gathered together by **David Wilson**. Each folder contains many newspaper cuttings about cancer related subjects.*

Turbulence

The Observer magazine (*Neil Spencer*) tells me that my planet Jupiter is about to change sign and a short spell of turbulence in my life is signalled. So he says I need to whirl that fabled sword of truth above my head as I step into battle. So I am taking on BT who sent a very pleasant engineer to fix my phone and within five minutes he told me my phone was O.K. It seems it was my computer which was at fault. Fine. Then in came the phone bill with £55 added to it for time he spent.

I am **not** paying it.

So expect turbulence!



*He deserves paradise who can make
his companions laugh.*

The Koran ~ from Fiona's 'Little Book of Inspiration'



Mexican Pepe the Bandit ~ Ros N

It was in August that I first noticed it ~ what appeared to be a funny caterpillar creeping across my lovely neighbour Alan's face and, lo and behold, a similar one on his friend Andy. Gradually they turned into real 'Mexican Pepe the Bandit' moustaches and I was informed that they had decided to grow this facial hair and have it shaved off to raise money for our Centre.

The ceremonial shaving took place at a special Mexican weekend in October and they have raised **£787** from their fellow caravaners from the Mid-Anglia Centre of the Caravan Club.

Ros and I went along to Witchford to receive their cheque ~ such marvellous generosity to our Centre. Rather than putting the money into the pot we plan to buy something we need.

Caring for Christmas-flowering Pot Plants

~ *Richard*

Many people will buy or receive one or more of the popular pot plants over the Christmas period. A few basic rules will help maintain their beauty. Most pot plants last longer if kept cool, at 10-15 degrees C (50-60F), but avoid chills at night, most common if plants are displayed on windowsills. Water plants by standing the pot in a few centimetres of water, remove and allow to drain before replacing the pot in it's holder.

Cyclamen persicum hybrids will bloom for several months and can be kept to flower in future years. Buy a plant with plenty of buds showing under the foliage. Choose a brightly lit position away from direct sunlight and heat sources. Remove spent flowers by twisting the stem and giving a sharp pull to avoid leaving part stems behind. Reduce watering as plant becomes dormant for the summer. As new growth appears, replace the top few centimetres of compost and resume regular watering.

Euphorbia pulcherrima (*poinsettia*). Keep your poinsettia in bright conditions out of direct sunlight and water well once the surface of the compost begins to dry out. Avoid chills and draughts; of all the Christmas pot plants, poinsettias enjoy warmth more than most and are the best choice in homes with central heating. I have seen them growing in the botanical gardens in Kandy enjoying the heat and moisture. Although they are usually disappointing the second season, plenats can be kept by hard pruning and repotting in April, and growing them in a cool, light place through summer.

Solanum capsicastrum (*winter cherry*) produces white flowers which are followed by inedible fruits which ripen to orange or red. Choose a cool, bright situation on a sunny windowsill. Avoid a dry atmosphere or over-watering. After the berries have passed their best, prime stems back by half and reduce watering so that the compost is almost dry. In April re-pot and from May begin feeding with a high potash liquid feed. This year I put my winter cherry in the greenhouse all summer, which it so enjoyed. It is covered with flowers and green berries are forming so it should be a lovely sight for Christmas this year.



Meditation for Health ~ from Mandy

Part I – ‘Awakening’

A course to aid your journey of self-discovery, and awareness of full potential. Encouraging good health by raising vitality and energy levels.

Why take time out from our busy and hectic lives to spend time practising meditation techniques?

Every day we scatter our energy, allow our minds to hear constant chatter, opinions and rules that we come to believe to be the ‘truth’. We try to live our lives as others expect us to and this all leads to a feeling of ‘something missing’ and ‘losing ourselves’, leading eventually to a loss of vital energy affecting us on all levels.

Many techniques exist to realign our energy, to bring our thoughts into present time, helping us to become aware of our thoughts, aware of our minds, our bodies and our energy.

The ‘Meditation for Health’ course has been developed for both beginners and the more experienced ‘meditators’.

The course enables the participants to receive encouragement and support, to begin and sustain their own daily practice of meditation.

The benefits of meditation are immense and continuous, leading to a calmer, more balanced approach to life. Relaxation of the mind and body, enables sleep to become more beneficial, improving health. Concentration is practised which in turn aids our minds to become more efficient. A flow of energy is established that we can assess, adjust and learn to work with.

During the first part of Meditation for Health ~ ‘Awakening’, you will learn different types of meditation techniques, such as mantras, imagery and guided visualisation, focussing on the development of mindfulness, working with the breath and physical healing.

*“Meditation is nothing but coming back home, just to
have a little rest inside.”
Osho (1931-1990)*

Course Information

The classes, will be held at the 'Cambridge Cancer Help Centre',
and run fortnightly from Wednesday 19th January 2005 to
Wednesday 16th March 2005 inclusive.

Time 1-30 pm to 3-30 pm

The total cost of the course is £25 payable to the
'Cambridge Cancer Help Centre'.

Concessions are available, please ask Ann.



Looking at the Stars ~ from Tricia

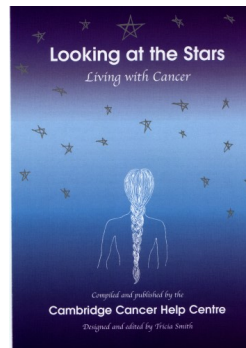
It is now a whole year since we launched our Centre Book. During that time we have sold over 260 copies, which have added over £2,000 to our Centre funds.

Our thanks to all of you who have bought copies of 'Looking at the Stars' and encouraged your friends to buy them too ~ please carry on the good work.

*We recently received our first order from
www.cambridgecancerhelp.org ~ our own website.*

Special Christmas Offer ~

Between now and Christmas we are offering '**Looking at the Stars**' for only **£5** a copy, so if you're looking for a stocking-filler, look no further ~ just contact Ann or Tricia at the Centre.



Summer Number Quiz

Our Congratulations to Brigid for returning a correctly completed solution to our quiz within hours of receiving our July Newsletter.

How many of these were **you** able to solve?

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| 3 Blind Mice | 101 Dalmatians |
| 7 Deadly Sins | 1066 Battle of Hastings |
| 39 Steps (John Buchan) | 7 Year Itch |
| 50 Years ~ Golden Wedding Anniversary | 1 Hump on a Dromedary |
| 24 Blackbirds Baked in a Pie | 28 Days in a Lunar Month |
| 3 Men in a Boat | 7 Colours of the Rainbow |
| 1,000 Years in a Millennium | 212 Boiling Point of Water (Fahrenheit) |
| 13 Cards in a Suit | 5 Lines in a Limerick |
| 3 Sides in a Triangle | 1973 Britain Joins the European Economic Community |
| 9 Lives of a Cat | 7 Pillars of Wisdom |
| 21 Spots on a die | 3 Primary Colours |
| 1 Horn on a Unicorn | 100 Tiles on a Scrabble Board |
| 1912 Year S S Titanic Sank | |
| 10 Green Bottles Hanging on the Wall | |
| 150 Psalms in the Holy Bible | |

*Jack's Christmas cards
are now on sale at the Centre.*



We have the usual small cards plus the
larger cards which cost £1.50 for 5 cards.

We have lots of Christmas cards which will see us through another couple of years so won't need any more for the time being after Christmas this year, thank you. But Margot and her team will still welcome blank, birthday, get-well and Easter cards, please.

Therapies ~ Jane writes

Important Message From The Therapists.

To bring us in line with forthcoming National Occupational Standards, in the New Year we will be asking you to sign a Code of Care/Treatment and Therapy consent form, so that we can continue to give you our best possible care and support.

There are several therapists at the Centre, offering different types of healing, reflexology and head massage, and each therapist puts their name in the diary with the times of appointments. To book with a particular therapist, just write your name by the date and time that you require. Alternatively, you can make a booking by phone during Centre opening hours. We endeavour to run on time, so if you are late, after 10 minutes we will assume that there has been a problem, and treat it as a cancellation and we may offer the space to somebody else in need. Please phone and let Ann know if you are unable to keep an appointment as there are often more people wanting sessions than there are spaces available. We appreciate your patience and understanding.

If you haven't booked in advance, please check in the diary on your arrival for available appointments.

The therapies are very popular so unfortunately, for the time being, can we ask you to only book one session per day so that as many people as possible can benefit. If you would like more than one session on the same day, please put your name on the standby list and we will fit you in if we can. Bear in mind that Wednesdays tend to be less fully booked than Tuesdays.

All the therapists give their services voluntarily and have family and other commitments outside the Centre. Consequently, they may be unable to attend at short notice. We endeavour, when we know in advance of an absence, to find a replacement, but there may be some occasions when we are unable to do so. The therapists do not make a charge, but a donation to the Centre is very much appreciated. A collection box is provided next to the diary.

Some of the therapists will do home visits but may make a personal charge for this or ask for a donation for the Centre.

Please speak directly to Margot if you would like hand massage. If there is anything else that you would like to know, please ask Jane or Ann.

“If you are frightened you can’t do anything”

I watched ‘The Real Charlotte Grays’ on TV. The programme was about four women telling the stories of their undercover operations in Occupied France during the Second World War. And one of the women said “if you are frightened you can’t do anything” and I thought of all the people at our Centre who are frightened. And yet they still smile and do things. This woman went on to say that “personal, private courage” is required to cope at such times. And we see that all the time at our Centre. If you feel like telling us how you cope even though you are frightened, please tell me and we’ll put it in the newsletter.

Overheard at the Centre

“I’m glad I’ve had cancer because if I hadn’t I wouldn’t
have met all these lovely people.”

and

“This is my home.”

I hope you have a Peaceful Christmas and New Year Much love (and a little bit of my heart) Ann



Joke from Thailand son’s golfing mate David, phoned through
from the bar of one of the Golf Clubs in Thailand.

*Tommy Cooper said he had a most fantastic dream where he ate the biggest
marshmallow in the world.*

When he woke up the pillow had gone.

Wanted:

Dolls’ House furniture ~ please contact me ~ I’ll either pay you or the Centre
or both

Tel 01223 871893 anndingley@beeb.net

*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.*
