

# The New Cambridge Cancer Help Centre



You may remember that in a previous newsletter I mentioned that I have a Buddha on my mantelpiece. I sit on my sofa and he looks at me, eyes almost closed and not much of a smile on his face. His right hand is raised, palm outwards, his left hand is open and its palm outstretched. Apparently the meaning of these hand positions is 'have no fear ~ your wish will be granted'. During the three years of us searching for new premises I'd sometimes look at him cynically, and disbelievingly think to myself, "Oh Yeah"!

Well, funny thing is that when I was at Scotsdales Garden Centre towards the end of last year ~ long before David Rayner's application went to the planners ~ I noticed three rows of **smiling** buddhas for sale. Taken aback, and stopping suddenly, I paced out the rows, stood in the middle, turned round and walked in a straight line across the car park. Another funny thing is that the **walk took me exactly to the entrance to the site of the new Centre**. Amazed and speechless, I turned round to look at them across the car park. They were still smiling knowingly. And then they seemed to be smiling at me even more as they saw my incredulous amazement. I walked back to face them and can almost swear they were chuckling amongst themselves!



# Planning Permission

I'm sure most of our readers will have gleaned that, subject to Government 'rubber-stamping', David Rayner will be able to start building our new Centre. Our thanks go to David Rayner, Charlie Nightingale, chairman of the Shelford Parish Council, Andie Harper, Radio Cambridgeshire presenter, his producer Mark Williams, Steve Exley from the Cambridge Crier, and the Planners.

And, of course, the people who phoned into Radio Cambridgeshire supporting the application.

Thank you to all of you who wrote such marvellous letters to the planners to support David Rayner's planning application. There were lots of letters ~ here are just a few of them:

I believe that you are currently studying the above application for planning permission. I could not comment on technical issues because I am no expert, but I thought that, as an individual who benefits enormously from the work The Cambridge Cancer Help Centre does, it was my duty to write to you and, hopefully, contribute to provide an insight in the 'human' side of this application.

I have suffered from a very rare type of cancer for the last 2 years. Getting information was a very difficult task. Through a friend I was introduced to the Centre and, to my surprise, I found far more than the information I was looking for. Ann and her team welcome you with open arms and offer you from a foot massage to professional counselling, from a chat to a place to hide from the world, from a cup of tea to advice about gardening and, most of all, you get to know wonderful people who understand how valuable a smile and a kind word are. And, best of all, you do not need to suffer from cancer to be able to join in. Anyone can go.

It would be fantastic if the Centre was able to move to Scotsdales, not only from the convenience of the location, but also from the parking point of view, and, to be honest, what a wonderful therapy it would be to be able to walk amongst plants and flowers when you are not at your best! (and for free!!).

## Dr Gunn E Grande wrote ~

There is now a considerable research literature showing that support groups can improve cancer patients' psychological and physical quality of life and coping. Fellow patients can provide positive role models, shared understanding and information on coping not similarly available from family, friends or health professionals.

The Cambridge Cancer Help Centre offers such psychological support to patients from people who share similar experiences, facilitated and complemented by support from experienced volunteers. It furthermore provides practical information and advice through its library, volunteers and membership and offers complementary therapies from skilled therapists. This range of support is not readily available to cancer patients elsewhere locally.

The value of the Centre to its members was clearly demonstrated in an independent research study, conducted by myself as part of an MSc in Health Psychology and jointly organised between the General Practice and Primary Care Unit, University of Cambridge, and the Unit of Health Psychology, University College London under the auspices of the University of Cambridge and University College London. This highlighted the importance of the support and friendship through peers, the sense of a safe haven and psychological encouragement that the Centre provided, as well as the value of its complementary therapies, information and advice. Any criticisms of the Centre focused on the need for improved space and premises.



Any visitor to the Centre is struck by its welcoming, friendly and comforting atmosphere. My work with the Centre has convinced me that it offers an important and valuable contribution to the care and support of cancer patients and their families.

**Pam wrote:**

I was diagnosed with cancer in 1988 and have attended this group ever since at all their different locations. They desperately need a permanent centre to carry on with this very vital service. When you are told you have cancer it's absolutely devastating and although your immediate family is very supportive, you need to talk to people who have been there and know what you are going through. You get friendship and psychological support at this Centre.

**And from Gordon Murray ~ a police officer**

Over the past six years I have come to know and make friends with some of these people that use this wonderful charity and make no bones about it when they say "charity" it is in the true meaning of the word,

I offer my support and that of many of my colleagues in trying to assist wherever possible through gifts and donations to those that run this cancer centre, in a small way to assist in allowing the centre to survive. I have seen their hopes raised and then dashed over the past three years as they tried with all their might to secure a place to allow their work to continue. Please make this application a success story and approve the planning so people like Ann Dingley and David Rayner, who are an inspiration to us all, can allow this good work to continue for years to come or until we have a cure for this illness.

**Received a card from Jean, which said,**

Congratulations, Ann, on achieving our goals. Nearly there now. We can look forward with more hope. I hope you will be putting the first spade in when all can begin. With my love and best wishes to all the helpers.

We sent Christmas cards to lots of people, including Charlie Nightingale, thanking him for his help with the planning application. He replied:

Dear All, I must write and thank you all for the wonderful Christmas card I received from you all. To think that you all went to so much trouble to get so many to sign it. I can tell you this made my Christmas.

I plan to have it framed to hang in my study – to remind me that there are so many nice people about. In 2007 you all have something to look forward to – your new Cambridge Cancer Help Centre.

Can I wish you all a very Happy New Year.

Best wishes to you all Cllr Charles Nightingale

## Nutrition News from the Observer magazine

It says that prostate cancer is the most common cancer in men, and the second most common cause of cancer death after lung cancer. It seems that a number of nutritional factors are believed to help protect against prostate cancer, including a good intake of the mineral selenium. Studies suggest that men consuming relatively high levels of selenium have generally lower risk of prostate cancer compared to those who have lower intakes. In the journal *Cancer Epidemiology, Biomarkers and Prevention*, it states that 1,733 Dutch men were assessed for six years. Each year, the selenium level in their bodies was measured. The study found that risk of prostate cancer was 31% lower in men with the highest levels of selenium in their bodies, compared to those with the lowest. Three or four brazil nuts apparently provide 200 mcg of selenium, a daily dose of which, is believed to be very helpful in protecting against prostate cancer.

## Health Tips

They say “cook from scratch”. Prostate tumours ~ eat together tomato and broccoli, scientists think that doing this helps shrink prostate tumours.

To Stay Sharp...Eat your greens. The British Medical Journal quotes a six year study of more than 3,700 people over the age of 65. The results were astounding, those who had between 2.8 and 4 servings of vegetables (*fruit did not have the same effect*) a day had 38-40% less "cognitive decline" than those who ate only 0.9 servings a day.

# Christmas Party

Many thanks to

**David Rayner**

for letting us party at his

Garden Centre (at no charge)

~ even arranged for Santa to call in!



Very many thanks to everyone who helped with a variety of things ~ serving the food, sorting out the washing up, running the tombola stall, making the delicious punch. Thanks to **Dean** for mixing the Supremes and Abba music, aided by **Oscar Wimms** and **Edd Gibbison**. Extra thanks to **David Rayner** and **Dean** for so actively joining in with the ‘entertainment’!

And many thanks to **Daniela** and **Elaine** for their energetic drumming.

At the party we also celebrated **Yvonne and Tony’s** golden wedding and they very kindly told their guests who attended their anniversary party not to give presents but to give money to the Centre. All in all they raised **£540** for us ~ we wish them many more years of happy married life!

## The Tea-making Team

now includes **Alan & Ayako**

~ that’s great, bless them ~

and **Ros, John, Yvonne & Vera**

If you would like to help make the drinks from 10am on Tuesdays and Wednesdays, please let me know.

## Thank you Ken

for all the large recycled cards you make for us all to sign ~ we enjoy receiving them on our birthdays.

**Also thanks to Margot & team**

**(Ros, Vera & Richard)**

for all the cards they make

## Top Garden Centre

The 'Garden News' conducted a nationwide poll to find the best Garden Centre in the country. This award is voted for by the public. In a nationwide poll, a family-run firm held off the challenges of major companies to pick up the prestigious 'Garden Centre of the Year award' ~ the winner? ~

### Scotsdales Garden Centre

News of their success came on the day the Garden Centre won planning permission to build new premises for our Centre. Neil Pope, editor of Garden News, presented the award to David Rayner. David's daughter, Caroline, said that the Cancer Centre project is dear to her father's heart. "It's his way of putting something back into the community" she added.

## New Year's Day walk

On New Year's Day we walked the new Sustran cycle-way from Shelford to Addenbrookes and back. Money raised will be divided between Arthur Rank and our Centre.

Fran and I visited Viv in hospital the day before and, as promised, Viv waved something from the window by her bed. She had promised it would be underwear, but I think she chickened out and waved a scarf instead!

To our delight Annie managed to walk quite a way, just with her stick. To top the morning's activity we lunched at Scotsdales Garden Centre.

Thank you to all those who sponsored us.

### The Royal British Legion Women's Section

are coming to the Centre to tea at 2pm on Wednesday 21st February. Please join us .....and bring home-made CAKES!

They are bringing some of their men members also.

*Sense and Sensibility* ~ cannot resist it whenever it is on television so, as usual I let a tear or two escape at the glorious, simple wedding of Elinor and Marianne to Edward Ferrars and Colonel Brandon. Suffered greatly with Willoughby as he sat on his horse looking into the distance and realising what he had lost.....and then there was “A Christmas Carol” in which it was said, “when happiness shows up, give it a comfortable seat” ~ and that reminded me about ....

## The Christmas Lunch!

We knew that Elke was returning to Cambridge for a few days, after treatment in Germany and Joan had enthusiastically suggested she cook a Christmas lunch at home so that we could welcome Elke. Eventually the plans changed and Joan and Anne offered to bring the Christmas dinner to the Centre. So about 25 of us enjoyed the turkey dinner, after which a heavily disguised Don appeared ~ a ‘surprise visitor’ ~ dispensing presents with goodwill and cheeriness.

Excellent was the meal ~ but looking up I spotted someone in tears. Sad to see this unhappiness on a very jolly occasion I tried to help. “It’s alright”, said the tearful lady, “I am just so happy!”

*She wrote this:*

*Dear Ann*

*What can I say about coming to the Centre? It makes me happy and it makes me cry with happiness. I was so shocked and unhappy after my mastectomy last February and then not doing too well on the chemo for seven months. Being part of a group has helped me so much. I felt very alone and everyone was so kind and listened to me or just let me cry if I needed to. The healing and reflexology have been wonderful and I have made friends who are lovely people. Sitting round the big table for the Christmas dinner on the last Wednesday lunchtime was the high point for me, the next one being the amazing Christmas party at Scotsdales which was full of surprises ~ me sitting on Father Christmas's knee for one. I just feel like a real person when I am at the Centre and I can relax, it is just great. I have learned so much from everyone and I am full of admiration for all of you. Hearing the laughter today when I was having reflexology was such a tonic after a hard day at the office. I did not laugh for a long time last year and I know lots of people there know how it feels.*

*Thank you to everyone at the Centre for being there for me and for us all.*

*Love Christine*

## From Elke

I am sitting here struggling to write something that I actually like and that will



show other people how my experiences over the last year have changed me, helped me, scared me and made me laugh ~ sometimes all at the same time. The emotional roller-coaster that cancer is or can be is difficult to put into words, but I guess this is nothing new to all of you. I don't want to write a 'My story so far' kind of story, but it is difficult to explain things without background information ~ I think this is my fifth go at it!

So I will try to keep it short (ha, fat chance!). I was diagnosed with a small cell tumor in my salivary gland on 18<sup>th</sup> January 2006. One surgery, 4 cycles of chemo and 15 sessions of radiotherapy later things were looking up. I had coped relatively well with all treatments, although the combination of chemo and radiotherapy took its toll and I ended up in hospital dehydrated. Scans before and after treatments showed no spread of the disease. I concentrated on getting better, enjoyed trips home to Germany and to Greece. Enjoyed summer in Cambridge... but then I started to notice a pain in my right hip. It felt like a trapped nerve, but did not shift so I took it to the doctors.

I never thought it was anything sinister but doctors were on the cautious side and did a bone scan. Unfortunately it turned out to be bone cancer! My small cells had spread after all, they had managed to dodge the Cisplatin and Etoposide and took up residence in my bones ~ the little buggers. Well, contrary to the light hearted words, the prognosis is/was not that good. My doctor suggested for me to go back to Germany to be with my family. Phrases like "a few months" flew around various consultations. I cannot even try to put into words how and what I felt in those days. I am 35, young, free, how could this happen to me? I loved living in the UK. It had been my home for 10 years, I did not want to go back to Germany, did not want to be forced to go by some tiny wayward cells, but I was immensely scared and in a lot of pain. So much pain, that I could imagine "a few months" to be true.

Well, that was back in October 2006, now it is mid January 2007. I am back in Germany, back in my childhood home. I was seen by a clinic at Cologne University Clinic and a week after my return started chemotherapy. My doctors in the UK suggested a regime and Germany agreed with it. I also pretty much straight away started with radiotherapy. When I first came back I was eating pain killers like they were smarties (chocolate!!!) and was still in pain. Since early November I have not taken a single pain killer, not even paracetamol. I don't think this is just down to the traditional medicine, but also to all the complementary things I have been doing, not just since coming back here, but also back in Cambridge at the Centre.

And these complementary therapies are what amaze me and fascinate me ~ currently sitting at my desk, looking rather bemusedly at the piles of books I have acquired over the last few months. 'Bach Flowers', 'The healing powers of rocks and minerals', 'Cancer A to Z', 'Homeopathy', 'Life with Cancer', 'Reiki', 'Pilates', the list is long. There is even one on Reincarnation! And I love them all, I want to read them all and learn about them all and pass things on, if I get the

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chance.

I hope I will get the chance. My Reiki therapist in Germany is going to give me a severe telling off if she sees me using the word 'Hope' in this context. She says I should always say "I will" and not just "I hope I will". And what a difference a word makes...

I was sceptical about a lot of the complementary stuff, but now I cannot explain properly how much Reiki has helped me. I found a fantastic natural health place here, the first time I went there I was down and hopeless, I left two hours later with a grin on my face and a skip in my step. And this experience has been repeated many times. I am carrying rocks around with me. My Mum is becoming an expert on herbal remedies. I have visited a cave which is said to have healing powers, and I keep drinking water that flows through the cave. I also find the books by Jane Tomlinson very, very inspirational.

I miss the UK and Cambridge, but I must admit that I am not finding it as hard as I had expected to be back in Germany. Then again, the circumstances are different to what I had ever expected.

I don't know what the future will bring, I don't know how much time I have left, but then who does? The remaining time I have left I want to live to the full. I spent the first two months back here not planning anything just in case I would not be well. I have changed that and am now planning lots of things. Skiing trip has just been booked. Eying up a wellness week in late February. Possible Reiki course in March and maybe a bike marathon in September (told you Jane Tomlinson is inspirational!).

So, have not managed to keep this short and have not really managed to express (in my mind) how cancer has changed me, helped me, scared me and made me laugh, but I guess there will be many more news letters to come, so if you have me again, I will be back!

Elke told her family not to buy her Christmas presents but to put money for the Centre into the hat she was passing around!

Thank, you Elke for such a handsome cheque.

**Cancer Research UK** points out that it is five years since Imperial Cancer Research Fund and The Cancer Research Campaign merged. They suggest there is already much to celebrate in research milestones, advances in treatments and other significant achievements.

Research suggests that around half of all cancers could be prevented by changes to lifestyle. To obtain one of their 'reduce the risk' cards telephone Anushka Patel on 020 7061 9046.

**"Acting Quickly saved my life!"** is the heading to an article on testicular cancer, which points out that treatments for this particular cancer are very effective. The chances of surviving are better than ever before. Professor Nick Lemoine and his team are working to develop a powerful new treatment for pancreatic cancer. If successful it could help people with many other types of cancer too. Speaking from the team's laboratory in the Cancer Research UK Clinical Centre at Barts and The London Hospital, Professor Lemoine says "our work is focused on developing a virus which targets and destroys cancer cells. If successful we should be able to apply this new treatment not just to pancreatic cancer, but also to ovarian, breast, bowel and many other cancers". He tells us that they have modified a virus called adenovirus so that it cannot spread in normal, healthy cells, but is able to multiply within genetically defective cancer cells until it causes them to self destruct. Their research so far suggests that any side effects would be minimal ~ a bit like having a cold. So it is potentially, he says, a powerful and safe treatment. The next stage is to carry out clinical trials.

Findings from **EPIC**, the biggest study of diet and cancer ever undertaken, Cancer Research UK announced that if people with a low level of natural fibre in their diet were to double their intake, then their risk of bowel cancer could be reduced by 40%

In 2004 the latest statistics showed a fall of 12% in the rate of cancer deaths in the UK over the last 30 years. Their funding helped scientists discover that aggressive prostate cancers contain higher levels of a protein called E2F3. This finding could form the basis of a future test to help doctors predict the behaviour of individual prostate cancers, and treatment of the disease more effectively. A European trial, cofunded by Cancer Research UK, showed that giving chemotherapy to people with operable pancreatic cancer who have already been treated with surgery could almost treble survival rates.

A simple test has been developed that, in the future, could help doctors predict how patients will respond to treatment for bladder cancer. Also they say that research showed that screening could reduce bowel cancer rates by up to 80% for people with a family history of the disease.

Reading all this sort of thing makes me realise how very fortunate we are to have the NHS, skilled G.Ps, and organisations like Cancer Research UK.

# Carers into Education

Did you know that the Carers Equal Opportunities Act 2004 recognizes that carers have a right to a life of their own? This means that your Carer's Assessment should take into account whether you wish to work, to take a course or to do any other leisure activities.

Have you ever thought that you'd like to take an evening class or maintain your editing skills, or start learning a new language or restart the GCSE you were doing at college before Mum had her stroke? It's hard enough for anyone to do this, but if you are also caring for someone else at the same time it seems impossible ~ or perhaps not now.

If you are a family carer living in the Eastern Region or the Midlands, and aged 16 or over, then you are eligible to join the Carers into Education project so that you can access National Extension College courses at reduced rates. We offer a range of courses including GCSEs, AS and A2s, vocational subjects such as book-keeping or child-minding, along with creative writing, counselling and study skills.

NEC courses are through distance learning, with no requirement to attend classes, so you can study where and when you choose. Studies can be fitted around caring responsibilities and carers will have the support of a subject tutor and a personal mentor. In addition the NEC will work closely with your Princess Royal Trust Carers' Centre to support you while you study.

Your personal mentor will maintain regular contact with you throughout your course at times and in a format to suit you. You can also contact your mentor if you find your studies are not progressing as you'd hoped and you need a chat. This is additional support to that given by your subject tutor who will also be experienced in working with carers.

Don't miss the opportunity to finish that GCSE never completed, to learn that new language or to start on something new and exciting just for you.

We've already had enrolments from carers of all ages and backgrounds who are embarking on the following courses: GCSE Psychology, GCSE Sociology, Child Protection, A Taste of Counselling, Essential Book-keeping, Basic Latin, Art History and Creative Writing.

*For more details and information please contact:*

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*The Michael Young Centre*

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## From The Observer Health page

written by Claire Phipps who was asked whether organic food really makes a difference to people's health. Part of the answer from Clare Butler Ellis, 'the pesticide expert' was that organic milk has been proven to have 68% more omega -3 fatty acids than normal milk. And that there have been several studies linking pesticides to Parkinson's disease. The Pesticide Action Network (PAN) UK has used government information to create a top 10 list of the worst pesticide foods, and these are the first items Clare would buy organically.

They are flour, potatoes, bread, apples, pears, grapes, strawberries, speciality green beans, tomatoes and cucumber. Also, she adds, be wary of celery, which has the highest pesticide count of all vegetables, and citrus fruits, as there is an extremely high level of pesticides in the peel.

*For more information go to [www.pan-uk-org](http://www.pan-uk-org).*

In answer to the same question Robin McKie, the Science Editor, said that while organic food may have reduced pesticide levels, it is certainly not as free of harmful substances as sometimes claimed. He points out that it is wrong to say that 'standard' food is safer than organic. With one you get pesticide residues, with the other you get fungal toxin residues. He suggests that there is little doubt that organic food should be purchased at stores that sell only the local stuff.

John Barrow, 'the Organic Supplier' writes that the most comprehensive organic directory in the UK is written by the Soil Association. He also suggests that it is always best to use a local company which sells local organic produce ~ your best bet, he says, is a locally grown, local box scheme with certified organic food and home delivery.

*John owns [www.organicdelivery.co.uk](http://www.organicdelivery.co.uk) and is the joint owner of [www.infoodwetrust.com](http://www.infoodwetrust.com) and the online food magazine [www.organicfood.co.uk](http://www.organicfood.co.uk)*

## CEN

tells us that the Safe and Secure campaign, run by Cambridge city Council, is offering free smoke alarms, door chains and other safety kit to residents who own their own home and are either over 60 or have someone with a disability in their household.

*All requests for help should be in by the middle of February. Call 01223 457943.*

# I went to a party ~ from an ex-police officer

I went to a party  
And remembered what you said  
You told me not to drink, Mum  
So I had a sprite instead

I felt proud of myself,  
The way you said I would  
That I didn't drink and drive  
Though some friends said I should

I made a healthy choice  
And your advice to me was right  
The party finally ended  
And the kids drove out of sight

I got into my car  
Sure to get home in one piece  
I never knew what was coming, Mum  
Something I expected least

Now I'm lying on the pavement  
And I hear the policeman say  
The kid that caused this wreck was  
drunk  
Mum, his voice seems far away

My own blood's all around me  
As I try hard not to cry  
I can hear the paramedic say  
This girl is going to die  
I'm sure the guy had no idea  
While he was flying high  
Because he chose to drink and drive

Now I would have to die

So why do people do it, Mum  
Knowing that it ruins lives?  
And now the pain is cutting me  
Like a hundred stabbing knives

Someone should have taught him  
That it's wrong to drink and drive  
Maybe if his parents had  
I'd still be alive

My breath is getting shorter, Mum  
I'm getting really scared  
These are my final moments  
And I'm so unprepared

I wish that you could hold me, Mum  
As I lie here and die  
I wish that I could say  
"I love you, Mum!"  
So I love you... and good-bye.

Madd

(Mothers Against Drunk Drivers)



## The Centre'll 'fix' it! ~ from Tricia

When Joan and Don arrived home from the Centre one Wednesday back in November there was a message on their answer-phone from someone at John Lewis Partnership Card Security asking Joan to ring them. Mystified, Joan went to look for her card but discovered that her wallet was missing from her bag, a wallet that also contained her other cards, driving licence and a considerable sum of money. When she phoned, she was asked if she had attempted to withdraw £200 from a cash-point before 12.30 that lunchtime. She had not. She remembered the young man who had appeared at the Centre at around midday. And she rang the Police.

It had been unusually quiet that Wednesday and no-one had stayed for Relaxation. Ann had decided to walk up to the café to pay the previous day's bill, leaving two people in one of the healing corners and Joan, Don and myself in the main room. No sooner had Ann left than a quiet, insignificant-looking young man walked into the room. He was slim and slightly taller than I am. A woolly hat framed a solemn face of unhealthy pallor. He mumbled something about "volunteer" and "she said to wait". In the momentary pause before asking if he'd like a drink and inviting him to sit down, I wondered what on earth Ann had been thinking of ~ but didn't for a moment doubt that she had invited him in.

The man refused a drink but sat down. And then a strange thing happened. From that point onwards he became invisible. No, I don't mean in the sense of 'now you see it, now you don't'. I just mean that Joan and Don and I completely ignored him and carried on as though he wasn't there. While Ann was out it seemed a good opportunity for Joan and Don to sign Ann's birthday card, so we all three went into my office for what couldn't have been more than a couple of minutes. When I walked back down the steps into the main room the young man was no longer there. I checked the toilets and the kitchen but he was gone. Joan checked the numerous collecting tins ~ but I had already emptied them. None of us thought of Joan's bag which had been on the floor close to the chair where the young man had been sitting.

What simpletons! How could we have been so naïve? The strong peppermint gum that the man was chewing had failed to alert us to the fact that he had something to hide. We had been no wiser than Jemima Puddleduck when not

even the mention of sage and onion stuffing had warned her that the handsome fox's intentions were not entirely honourable!

We had been too trusting. We didn't for one second doubt that Ann had invited him in ~ even though he was so obviously unsuitable to play any role here at our Centre. And how uncharacteristically unsociable the three of us had been. None of us had engaged him in conversation. We invited him to sit down and then we ignored him. We acted as though he wasn't there.

But he had outwitted us all in his quiet way: how he must have laughed: we'd made his day ~ or the contents of Joan's wallet had!

Since then we've all been more conscious of not leaving money around. And several people have thought they've seen 'the man' in Mill Road. John was so convinced that he had seen him that he produced the poster opposite. He assures me that he's drawn a good likeness of the man he saw and hoped we could pass it on to the police to help them with their enquiries. Unfortunately this is **not** the man who came into the Centre!

Although Joan's money has been lost for ever, I did receive this email from her a couple of weeks later:

*Just to let you know that there are some nice people in Cambridge too. This morning a small package came in the post with all but one of my cards in it. Some I hadn't remembered being in the wallet. On the envelope was written 'Found in Cambridge' and my address. No other information. Very kind of someone to send it to me. It had 65p in stamps on it. I wish I had some idea who it was so as to thank them.*

*It was too late to stop any of the replacement cards, but it restores one's faith in human nature ~ not all bad.*



# WANTED DEAD OR ALIVE

Crossing Mill Rd  
between Coop & Snakatak  
locality Wed 22.11.06  
about 13.00 hrs.



Mid twenties  
Pale skinned  
5'8" - 5'9" - 5'10"  
Thin build  
Thin face  
Black woolly hat  
3/4 length  
(dull olive green  
colour)  
Dark brown  
thickish soled  
shoes.

Stance as shown  
Vacant expression

~~Big~~ Dull brown/green  
coloured trs (not jeans)

Aimless ~~look~~ walk - almost  
vagrant - like, but no animal in tow.

INFO FOR ANN.  
OF TRICIA.

## BIG REWARD

PACKET OF  
CRUMPETS FOR  
INFO LEADING TO  
ARREST.

## Consultant's View ~ from Sheila

I read with interest how to reduce bowel cancer in the last "Lifeline", by Professor Wendy Atkin, Director of Cancer Research UK's Colorectal Cancer Unit. I contracted bowel cancer in 1999, having lived what I regarded as a healthy existence. I gave up smoking in 1954 and have been a vegetarian for many years. Added to which I've never been overweight, always having taken lots of exercise: walking, climbing mountains, swimming, cycling and doing a dance keep fit class weekly. Oh yes, and yoga. I must admit to always enjoying a glass of wine but not to excess (unfortunately not really now allowed on the Bristol cancer diet).

The day after my operation the consultant who carried out the surgery on me stood at the bottom of my bed and I asked him why, since I had lived such a lifestyle, I should have bowel cancer. He just looked at me and said, "Sod's law my dear".

## Different Strokes

We sang carols in the Grafton Centre, raising money for Annie's "Different Strokes" group. Cold, very cold, foggy evening and therefore not many people doing late-night shopping. However, £240 was raised. Fran and Vera were two of the Collegium Laureatum choir. George, Annie and I collected the money, throwing in the odd line or two of a favourite carol. It was significant, we concluded, that George, a retired bank manager, raised more money than the rest of us!

**'Walk-In' Nail Cutting Clinic** comes highly recommended by Dorothy. For chiropody/podiatry, you can make an appointment for Monday-Thursday or just walk in for nail cutting on Fridays between 9.30 -11.30am. Go to The Basement Surgery, 20 Chesterton Road, Cambridge". Tel 358431 for information. Nail cutting costs £15.

Ros says ~ “the way to achieve inner peace is to finish all the things you’ve started and never finished.” So, looked around my house to see all the things I’d started and hadn’t finished. And before leaving the house this morning I finished off a bottle of Merlot, a bottle of Zinfandel, a bottle of Bailey’s Irish Cream, a bottle of Kahlua, a packet of Oreos, the remainder of my old Prozac prescription, the rest of the cheesecake, some Doritos and a box of chocolates.

You have no idea how good I feel!

Ayshea, one of our reflexologists can often be seen running along Milton Road! She is doing a half-marathon soon and will raise money for two charities ~ one of which is our Centre. Sponsor forms will be available at the Centre ~ please telephone if you would like me to post one to you.



Elizabeth Kubler Ross wrote in *‘Death is of Vital Importance’* ISBN 0-88268-186-9 that a long time ago people were much more in touch with the issue of death and believed in Heaven and life after death. She says that it is only in the last hundred years perhaps, that fewer and fewer people truly know that life exists after our physical body dies. She suggests that we have made the transition from an age of science and technology and materialism into a new age of genuine and authentic spirituality. She says this does not really mean religiosity but spirituality ~ an awareness that there is some-thing far greater than we are, something that created this universe, created life; that we are an authentic and important and significant part of it, and that we can contribute to its evolution.

# Spirituality and the Age of Aquarius ~ Brighid

Much is written and spoken these days about the dawn of the Age of Aquarius. What does it mean? Simply that astrologers have divided time up into Ages of approximately 2000 years each, and we are leaving the Piscean Age and entering into a new one, the Age of Aquarius. This division has a scientific basis. Each spring we have a vernal equinox, where the path of the sun crosses the celestial equator from south to north. However the earth has a certain wobble on its axis and the position of the vernal equinox relative to the signs of the Zodiac becomes a little earlier each year, taking about 2000 years to move through each sign. There is much argument as to when one ends and another begins, some say we will not reach the Aquarian age for another 300 years, but on a simple level it is said to be the years 2000-4000.

Ancient civilisations were much more interested in Astrology and Astronomy than we are today. The Mayan civilisation of South America peaked about 300-900 AD, and they had a very accurate calendar system which lasted until the Spanish conquest of the 16<sup>th</sup> Century. This calendar predicted the year 2012 as the 'end' of their calendar. For this reason, people believe that this will be a critical year and the true beginning of the Age of Aquarius.

How does this affect us? Each sign of the zodiac has its own characteristics, and that of Aquarius is Humanity, and also scientific enquiry. I, along with many others, believe that we are at the beginning of a new way of structuring our society, a way of living that will be much more spiritual, and where people will be considered before profit. We are living in a time of rapid change, and are finding it hard to keep up with all the new technology.

Open any newspaper today and every page refers to climate change. A growing body of people have been concerned about this for a number of years. Now, suddenly, that body has reached critical mass ~ I think it needs about 8% ~ and the floodgates have opened. The press has taken it up and something will be done ~ it remains to be seen whether it is too late, I think not.

Climate change means far more than a change in the weather. The economy of the West is equally threatened. The present capitalist system is quite unsustainable. It depends on greater and greater consumerism and profit. The earth cannot supply the materials for continuous growth. It does not bring

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happiness, for a false unhappiness has to be created by marketing in order to sell more and more goods. Climate change means that we shall have to find a new economic basis for living, based on co-operation and humanitarian values.

A friend of mine sends me many transcripts of messages channelled by various 'guides' around the world, and they all have the same message. We are in a time of great change, but before it gets better there are a few years of great suffering and turmoil as the old systems fight against the change. Nothing will happen over night, no waving of a magic wand on 01/01/2012. We all have to work towards a world where compassion and harmony rule, and it won't all be a bed of roses.

Subtle energies are engulfing our planet and more people, whether of a religion or not, are beginning to look within themselves for an answer to the meaning of the universe. They are preparing for the New Age with its emphasis on humanity, kindness, truth, spirituality and enlightenment. Subjects that were considered weird a few years ago are now becoming more acceptable ~ vegetarianism, complementary medicine, astrology and telepathy ~ these are all subjects associated with Aquarius. One of the biggest changes is taking place in the field of medicine. While the majority of scientists still reject any New Age ideas without their rigorous proof, there is a growing body who are now publishing papers giving proof that Mind and Body are connected, one affects the other. Experiments are recorded that prove DNA can heal itself according to the 'feelings' of the individual. A medicine based on Energy is being born. Some of the latest research is into the power of Intention. Those of us initiated into Reiki know that one's intention is the central factor in giving Reiki, including absent healing. The practical ways of giving Reiki are immaterial beside one's intention for the highest good.

So the signs of change are there. I find it very exciting, but hard to keep up with. I also believe in reincarnation so hopefully when I come back again the world will be a kinder place.

# The Grumpy Page

Now that Christmas is over, and we've waded our way through the swamp of new presents that our grandchildren have attracted, I feel the need to stand up and be counted! Whatever happened to the good old days when a child would receive one big present from parents, a couple of nice ones from grandparents, and a token present from a younger sibling, instead of the mountains of noisy, highly-coloured, plastic, breakable and highly disposable rubbish that now seem to be the norm?

When I was a child, just after the war (WW2, in case you were wondering), the world was very grey, lacking in treats, and toys were in very short supply, so adults had to refurbish old toys or make new ones from very limited resources. My grandfather made me a very simple rocking elephant for my third birthday, and he and my father joined forces to make a dolls' house for my fifth birthday. Both were splendid ~ and so were the toys!

I can remember my own children spending hours and hours playing happily with a huge cardboard box that a washing machine had been packed in, and exercising their imaginations by using everyday objects as pretend paddles for a pirate ship, telescopes to spot wild animals, cooking make-believe meals and blissfully creating their own world.

Perhaps the 'good old days' are best left in the past on the whole, but I can't help feeling it would be nice to find a happy medium.

*Seen on a T-Shirt ~*

Don't tell me what kind of a day to have.

## Special Poem for Senior Citizens ~ from Wendy

A row of bottles on my shelf  
Caused me to analyse myself.  
One yellow pill I have to pop  
Goes to my heart so it won't stop.  
A little white one that I take  
Goes to my hands so they won't shake.  
The blue ones that I use a lot  
Tell me I'm happy when I'm not.  
The purple pill goes to my brain  
and tells me that I have no pain.  
The capsules tell me not to wheeze  
Or cough or choke or even sneeze.  
The red ones, smallest of them all  
Go to my blood so I won't fall.  
The orange ones, very big and bright  
Prevent my leg cramps in the night.  
Such an array of brilliant pills  
Helping to cure all kinds of ills.  
But what I'd really like to know  
Is what tells each one where to go!

From John ~

I used to be indecisive, but now I'm not so sure.

# Macmillan Cancer Support ~ Living with Cancer Self-Management Programme

## Living with Cancer? Get more out of life!

Please join us on a free six-week programme for people living with cancer run by trained tutors who have had personal experience of cancer themselves.

During the programme participants meet each week for two and a half hours to learn new skills and techniques to manage their illness better.

*When is it?* Friday 20 April – Friday 25 May

*What time?* 10.30 am – 1.00 pm (Tea and coffee included)

*Where is it?* Cambridge Cancer Help Centre

*Cost?* It's free!

*Who can attend?* People living with cancer

*For more information please contact Janet Hickman tel: 07922126508  
or email [colin.hickman@homecall.co.uk](mailto:colin.hickman@homecall.co.uk)*

## The Powerwatch Handbook

*by Alasdair and Jean Philips ISBN 0-7499-2686-4*

All authors' royalties from this book will be donated to Children with Leukaemia." *Two copies have been donated to the Centre by Brighid.*

Alasdair and Jean Philips have researched the effects of electromagnetic fields on health for over 20 years. They set up Powerwatch, an independent organisation with a central role in the EMF and microwave radiation health debate, to provide a range of information and equipment to help the public understand this complex issue and protect themselves against hazards.

### **On the back page of the book it says "Are you Keeping Safe?"**

We live in a world of unseen hazards. Electrical wiring and appliances, overhead power lines, photocopiers, mobiles and cordless telephones, TVs, tube trains and x-ray machines are among the hundreds of everyday items that are now known to give off high levels of electromagnetic fields.



## M.R.C. Cognitive & Brain Science Panel ~ Brain Tumours/Strokes

Our research group is conducting studies dealing with brain functions in a variety of medical conditions. We are writing to ask whether you would be prepared to join a panel of volunteers helping us with this work.

If you agree to help, the first thing we will do is to check details of your medical history in hospital records. Then, for selected participants, we go on to a visit either in your home, or, if you prefer, at one of our participating Research Departments. All that our participants have to do is complete a few simple tests of memory, language, attention and so on. Some are paper-and-pencil tests, or involve working with a simple computer. We pay a small honorarium (£6.00 *per hour*), plus any travel expenses. The session lasts around an hour, and can be scheduled at a time to suit you.

I should like to emphasise that testing is for research purposes only. It is hard to estimate how often a particular person would be contacted to take part in tests. Usually, however, there would be several months between visits. Participation is voluntary, and if at any time you wish to withdraw, of course you are free to do so. In this case no explanation would be asked, and withdrawal will have no effect at all on any treatment you might be receiving. I should also emphasise that all information gathered is kept confidential and seen only within participating research teams in Cambridge. This includes information concerning the tests themselves, and any background information from hospital records, which will never be made public or available outside the research groups.

One final thing. Some volunteers may be asked to attend Addenbrooke's Hospital for a brain scan. Should this be appropriate in your case, we would talk it over fully with you at the time and explain what is involved. Even if you would not like a scan, however, we would still very much appreciate your help with our normal testing.

If you agree to help, and you are selected for further participation after we have checked your hospital records, we will be back in touch at a later date to suggest an appointment. Meanwhile, please do not hesitate to contact us for further information. Our research is entirely dependent on the help of volunteers like yourself, and we very much hope that you will agree to take part. In any case, however, we are grateful for your consideration.

*John Duncan Tel 01223 355294*

## Ros ~ our Social Secretary

When I worked at Robert Sayle there was a Social Secretary, whose sole job was to arrange events for all the people who worked there. That was because the founder, Spedan Lewis, thought it was important that all the staff were able to enjoy cultural activities, such as the theatre, opera, ballet and classical music concerts, at a time when only the well-off could afford to buy tickets. So the Partnership offered to pay half the cost of the tickets. Over the years this was extended to cover evening classes, and sports and other leisure activities.

So it seemed obvious that Ros could do a great job on similar lines ~ she isn't able to pay half the cost but she has taken us to some great places. We have been to Welney, Ikea, the Raptor Centre, St Ives, Ikea, Saffron Walden, Ely, coffee mornings, Ikea, bring and share lunches .....

And while I am writing about Ros, she is one of the people who, when she walks into the Centre, dots an i and crosses a t for me because people like Ros help make the Centre what it is. In fact we are quite a team. All the people who have had cancer or who have cared for someone who has had cancer keep our Centre going, and dot i's and t's because they, perhaps without realising it, support other people who visit us who have experienced cancer in their lives.

And Annie's Different Strokes Group and Anne's Multiple Myeloma group offer the same sort of support ~ we are all in it together.

Tricia, a substantial support to me, and I often reflect on the way the Centre operates and appreciate all the help we get from our 'clientele'. Tricia has cracked being Treasurer of the Centre ~ took her a lot of hard work to find her way through a new system, Peter is our super-efficient Hon Secretary, and Fran, as Chair leads our Trustees, all of whom are dedicated to making our Centre a success. Jane leads our team of therapists, helping it to grow at a rapid rate. *(Can't help reflecting that for years David Wilson kept the Centre going by filling all three posts ~ Chair, Hon Treasurer, Hon Secretary ~ working quietly and tirelessly behind the scenes. How we miss him.)*

The fund-raising team recently held a Quiz Evening at Harston Village Hall. Most of the organising of this event was done by Jane and

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Peter and we raised over £700. Anne F made some marvellous vegetarian food, and Jack's of Sawston provided excellent fish & chips and chicken & chips at a discounted price. Ros ran the Raffle and Chris Hebden crocheted a mat for 'Guess the Number of Stitches'. David B set up and cleared away masses of tables and chairs.

Keith, Dennis and Terry organised the actual quiz, asking the questions ~ they say that the event was one of the best and nicest quizzes they have ever done. And, what's more they rapidly offered to do it again in the future.

## CBS Stationary Supplies

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### BBC Radio Cambridgeshire

Was listening to our friends Andie Harper and Mark Williams on Radio Cambridgeshire and discovering what to do if one finds oneself in a ford or other watery situation. It seems it is important to keep moving, mustn't stop, so keep foot on accelerator. But to keep your speed down you also need to operate the clutch so that you are moving slowly. See, may not be any good at parallel parking but will know what to do in a ford!

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have, for years, provided the Centre with a photocopier. They have lugged various models up and down many flights of stairs and still remained in good humour. When anything goes wrong they quickly send a very nice man to fix it. Now they are offering to give us some office furniture, which they will keep for us until we move into the new Centre at Scotsdales. Tricia and I had fun wandering round their large warehouse with Tim, selecting all sorts of lovely things.

So a Very Big Thank You to Nick & Tim

*Tel 01223 225555*

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We are so very fortunate to have such a 'following' of generous people who want to help our Centre.

## Our thanks to:

Great Shelford Feast who donated £1,850

Cambridge City Football Club who gave us £1,800

The Co-operative Movement who sent us £500

Galloway and Porter gave a large supply of books to Mr Dosangh to sell at a Mill Road event and asked that money raised from their sale be given to the Centre, for the second year running.

We received £150 from them.

Before Christmas the Cambridge Women's Club  
very kindly sent us £150

The Derby Taylor Memorial Trust gave us £100

Richard Bloomfield raised £75 for us on a sponsored cycle ride

&

The Crown and Punchbowl at Horningsea  
raised £50 for us as a result of offering us a percentage from  
the sale of every portion of sausage and mash they sold  
during the Christmas period.

## The Dance of Geometry ~ Tricia

While Ann was busy receiving that amazing cheque from Great Shelford Feast, Judith and I were enjoying being guests of Robert Sayle at 'The Dance of Geometry' at West Road Concert Hall, where BackBeat Percussion Quartet impressed us with their energy, enthusiasm and imaginative use of a surprising variety of percussion instruments.

Thank you Robert Sayle for sponsoring this event in The Cambridge Music Festival and for inviting us to share it with you.

*PS Ann chose me to represent her because she thought I was  
a 'Dance of Geometry' sort of person!*

We receive help from the Police in many ways ~  
they recently gave us

£327 of Argos vouchers as well as

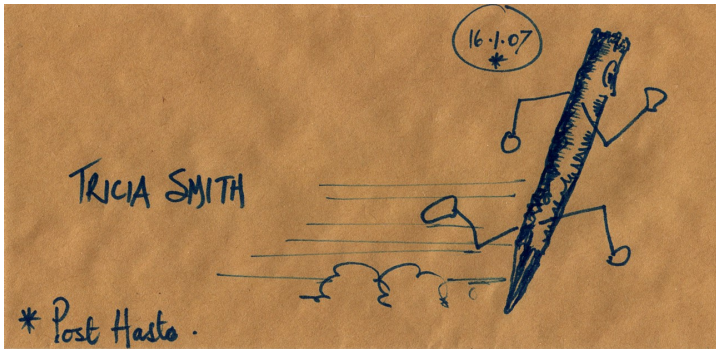
£200 of B & Q vouchers ~ chosen to provide help with  
equipping the kitchen or other parts of the new Centre.

We also received good wishes from Mrs Julie Spence, Chief Constable of Cambridgeshire Constabulary. The collecting tin in the canteen at police headquarters in Huntingdon raises very satisfying amounts for us and recently we collected over £20 from the collecting tin in Thorpe Wood, Peterborough, police station canteen.

### Please note

Our AGM will be held at the Centre  
at midday on Tuesday 13th March  
Please bring food to share for lunch at 1.15 pm.

Tricia found this envelope in her tray ~



And inside it  
was this poem ~

### Ode to a Stranger

You glanced at me across the floor  
The thought came swiftly: "Je t'adore",  
I once said this in youth lovelorn,  
"Shut it yourself", she said with scorn.

*(Awake in the night, the pad beside my bed  
has been used for the first time, due in part  
to it muttering, "Newsletter. Newsletter")*

John

### Sid Sheldrick

celebrates his 80th birthday this month. We all send lots of love  
to him and many thanks for all he does for the Centre xxxx

## Late News

### **SCOTSDALES PROJECT GIVEN GO AHEAD!**

On 6 December 2006, the Planning Committee of South Cambridgeshire District Council approved Scotsdales' application for permission to construct a new Centre on part of the Scotsdales' site. This approval was, however, subject to a review by the Secretary of State under the Green Belt Direction (because part of the proposed new Centre would stand on green belt land) with the possibility that the application might be called in for determination by the Secretary of State. On 1 February we were informed by the Planning Officer in charge of the application that the Secretary of State's department had decided not to call in the application, with the consequence that the approval by South Cambridgeshire is now confirmed.

So we can now look forward to moving to a brand new Centre at Scotsdales, as soon as the design is approved by South Cambridgeshire and construction is completed (the site has already been cleared)!

Peter

## We Never Know the Moment

The cost of rehabilitating a seal after the Exxon Valdez oil spill in Alaska was \$80,000,000. At a special ceremony, amid cheers and applause from onlookers, two of the most expensively saved animals were being released back into the wild.

A minute later, in full view, a killer whale ate them both.

**Steve Peck**, that illustrious police officer who is good in boats, and has done such a lot for the Centre got married on the 1st December 2006, and on 9th January this year became a granddad to an 8lb 3ozs bundle of joy, William Davie, born to his daughter Amy and Nick. I asked to see pictures and all he said was that he eats, sleeps and +++++ ~ so nothing new there then!

*From Thailand Son*

## Notes from The City of Angels

Kids with their hands up ~ a visit to an orphanage.

About 30 minutes North of Bangkok is a very clean, apparently well funded, well-staffed, and obviously well organised school and home for orphaned Thai kids. Any preconceptions disappear on entry as one is greeted by the reception staff, offered cold drinks and free range to wander around.

It's play time, there are three or four groups of kids in different areas, we (my brother and I) find ourselves with one group who appear to be separated from the others. We play with them, lift them up, carry them around on our shoulders: they are delighted.

Many more see and come running over with their hands up to the sky, they stand at your feet and look at you imploringly, desperate to be given a turn. It seems surreal, but it's very real, these are the kids with HIV.

They are happy kids.

*Much love, Ann x*

**PS** Some quite elderly people were sitting around in their residential home, looking at each other and longing for some excitement. One woman held up her clenched fist and said, "If anyone can guess what is inside my hand, they can have sex with me tonight". Silence reigned for a while and then an elderly gentleman replied, "It's an elephant". The woman looked somewhat disappointed and taken aback but suddenly and enthusiastically replied "close enough"!

**PPS** A gentleman was heard to retort crossly, "do you know who I am!?" "No", replied the lady, "but if you ask the receptionist I'm sure she will be able to tell you".