



We are delighted to announce

that our long wait for
new premises for the

Cambridge Cancer Help Centre

is over.

We are now welcoming people to our
spacious new rooms at the

David Rayner Centre

at Scotsdales Garden Centre

on Tuesdays & Wednesdays from 10 am to 4 pm,
on the 1st Thursday of the month from 5.30 - 8 pm
and for therapies (by appointment) on
Thursday mornings from September

Marilyn & the Lotus

~ Tricia



In the late 1980s our founder, Marilyn Barnes, produced the first piece of advertising literature about the newly-formed Cambridge Cancer Help Centre. She approached her friend, Sheila Hadley ~ (*now Sheila Lyne*) and asked her to design a symbol that would reflect the ethos of the group. Sheila came up with two designs ~ a lotus and a bluebell. The lotus was chosen and soon became a very important part of the Centre's image: it remains so today.

The lotus has many associations with peace and harmony, and chimed well with Marilyn's ideas about relaxation and meditation and their importance in the healing process. Rising from the murky depths of the water to flower above its surface, the lotus is the symbol of awakening and perfect fulfilment. "Its long stem is the umbilical cord which holds man to his origins, while its perfect flower represents enlightenment and the purity to which the human soul aspires" *The Illustrated Book of Signs & Symbols* by *Miranda Bruce-Mitford*

The shade of blue, which still appears on our headed notepaper, was also used in the first booklet and, together with the lotus, was chosen for its calming qualities.

The Lotus Trademark

Peter filled in the forms, handed over a significant amount of money and jumped through a series of hoops over a period of several months: now we are the proud owners of the lotus trademark, which means that we can officially use the symbol on products (such as key-rings etc) that we may choose to produce in the future.

And a line of Lotus flowers stretches across the glass doors of the main entrance to our new Centre, and when I counted them I was delighted to discover that there are 24 flowers on the doors and a further 8 on one of the office windows: 8 and its multiples are particularly significant in the land of the lotus!

A new lotus blooms ~ Tricia

In the Autumn of 2003, after eleven years of enjoying a comfortable home in the hall behind the Mill Road Baptist church, we were told that the church was planning to redevelop the site and that we would have to leave Stockwell Street. So started our search for new premises. We lost count of the number of leads we chased: over and over again our hopes were raised, only to be dashed a little while later.

But one fine day in the summer of 2004, a seemingly small event ~ a chance encounter ~ became an auspicious day in the history of the CCHC, enabling a new seed to find fertile soil, grow, and finally blossom. This new seed was set when Ann met David Rayner. Ann wrote about this meeting on page 1 of the July 2006 newsletter ~ here's a reminder of how it happened ~

Some time after we had begun to look for new premises Ann was visiting Scotsdales Garden Centre when she spotted a man she intuitively knew to be the owner. She introduced herself and immediately established a rapport which has grown over the years. Ann told David of our plight, how we'd looked for quite some time for suitable accommodation, and she said how wonderful it would be if he could find a space for us in the therapeutic environment of his Garden Centre. David suggested a couple of solutions that were very generous but not quite 'right'. He thought for a moment then said, "I'm sorry I can't help at the moment ~ but come back to me if you're desperate".

After considering many further premises and finding no satisfactory home for our Centre, Ann finally wrote to David in September 2005, telling him, "I'm desperate".

From that moment the ball started rolling, gathering momentum until it finally emerged as the magnificent David Rayner Centre, which has become the new home of the Cambridge Cancer Help Centre.



Gill Overhill

You'll remember, I'm sure, that Jack Overhill died a few months ago. Shortly after he died Gill said "do you think David Rayner would let all of us meet at the new Centre building after the funeral, for tea"? My mind whirled ~ the inside of the Centre was still a building site with building materials, ladders and suchlike everywhere. The carpets weren't laid, there wasn't any running water, no working toilets However, I asked David Rayner. Of course he didn't say anything other than "well, well, Gill first of all needs to come and see how the place is". Gill did so and said "yes please". But I guess she probably quietly feared that the place just wouldn't look right by the day of the funeral.

Within a few days the carpet was fitted, (over a weekend, by a couple of chaps who were expecting to have the weekend off!) and many of us set to to provide sandwiches, cakes, tables, tablecloths, and lots of vases of flowers. But still no running water, in sinks or toilets!

But, half an hour before we set off to the crematorium Charlie casually but proudly demonstrated the newly supplied running water! Five minutes before we set off to the funeral he said the toilets were working!

A few days later Gill remarked to me that a lot of people who were helping organise the tea party looked tired. However, I was able to assure her that everyone who helped was there because they wanted to be ~ for Jack, for Gill and their family.

Here is the letter Gill wrote to us a few days later.

Dear Ann and all your wonderful helpers,

Despite your protests to the contrary, I cannot thank you enough for all your marvellous efforts and sheer hard work on my behalf, for the lovely reception you all produced after Jack's recent funeral.

I was truly overwhelmed by the warmth and loving friendship shown to me and all my family, from the moment we entered the new home of the CCHC. The general atmosphere and appearance of the hall was so welcoming, with all the tables and chairs set out spaciouly and invitingly, flowers on every table and a super array of appetising food. Many people were very impressed with, and surprised by, the size and attractiveness of the building, and the friendliness of all concerned, and I felt honoured to be the first 'occupant' of such a prestigious venue.

I think I have some idea of all the planning, energy and time spent (not to mention money) behind the scenes to achieve such a successful outcome, and I really appreciate your enormous generosity in every sense of that word.

Jack would have been amazed, and probably embarrassed, by all the attention and high regard in which he was held by his former teaching colleagues

and friends of us both, and my heartfelt thanks go out to you all.

I have received over seventy cards and letters of sympathy, support and kindness, phone calls and visits, which has been a great comfort to me, and my four lovely 'boys' and their families have been marvellous in every way.

Apart from any donations to CCHC in Jack's memory, which I hope will be coming your way, please accept my own small contribution in appreciation of such kindness and generosity given to me and the family at this very sad time.

My love, thanks and best wishes for the future of the Cambridge Cancer Help Centre go to you all ~ from Gill

Very many thanks to David Rayner ~

for letting us use his Sunflower Meeting Room twice a week every week since September 2007 ~ sometimes at considerable inconvenience to himself ~ but always with a smile on his face. He also provided us with a large portacabin in which to store all our furniture and other belongings. Thanks also to all the Scotsdales staff for their kindness ~ they have helped us enormously. Such generosity to our Centre from Scotsdales!

Overheard ~

(by Tricia's neighbour)
concerned elderly
gentleman emerging
with his wife (and a
trolley load of plants)
from SGC to face
a sea of cars



Viv as a Trustee ~ Fran

Many of you will remember an article written by Viv about her feelings when she first came to the Centre, in our old premises in Stockwell Street. She described herself as the “new girl”, but she fitted in so well with the ethos of the Centre that she soon became an essential element of what went on there. After a while it became apparent that she would be an asset on the Committee, and she was approached and invited to become a Trustee.

Her contribution to discussions was always considered and often passionate, helping to bring about the good mix of views that makes a good committee. Even when her family life and health problems weighed heavily on her she made the effort to support the Centre, and very often Fred’s wealth of experience with the Charity Commission would be brought in to help us out with difficult issues.

A couple of years ago Viv offered her resignation as a Trustee because she felt she wasn’t keeping up her commitment to attend meetings. However, since she was still able to communicate by email and to join in discussions between meetings, the Trustees felt that non-attendance would not be a problem. And so she was told that her resignation would not be accepted, and that the Minutes would note that she was ‘on sabbatical’.

Earlier this year Viv tendered her resignation again, and because this time it was in her interest to be released from the duties of being a Trustee, reluctantly it was accepted.

We wish Viv all the best and hope she can enjoy some of the time that she may now have free from commitment to the Centre, although we know that she will never be very far away and she has promised to come in to see us whenever she can.

**Thank you Viv for all the help you’ve given to the Centre
over the years.**

Sid’s Birthday Lunch
~ Tricia

In February a handful of us joined Sid and his family and railwaymen friends for the traditional birthday celebration at 'The Fighting Cocks', Wendens Ambo.

It's always a lively occasion but sadly the year had taken its toll and there were noticeably fewer of Sid's former colleagues gathered to re-live experiences from their working days together. I must admit that I particularly missed the man who in the past has serenaded the ladies with sentimental songs from a bygone era ~ he was in hospital ~ we wish him well.



And a big thank you to Sid's friends who collected
£55 for our Centre
*~ but I'd have liked a song as well ~
some people are never satisfied!*

*Thanks to our new,
cheerful and willing 'tea ladies' ~*

Brenda, Eillen, Kathy, Liz & Margaret

You will meet them, along with our tea-serving old hands, on the tea bar at our new Centre. More tea ladies & gentlemen will join us very soon.

Thanks also to ~ Catherine, Ilanka & Stephen

who manned a fund-raising stall for us just after St George's Day at the Unicorn pub in Trumpington. They and **Tina & Eileen** helped raise more funds for us at the Saturday Market in the Memorial Hall at Great Shelford.

Village Market

Gt Shelford Memorial Hall

Jane Froggatt contacted me and said that due to the generosity of the stall-holders at the market we have been given space to have our own stall to raise money for our Centre. Here are the dates.

July 12th September 6th October 4th December 13th

If you can help run any of these stalls please let me know. You can choose how to raise the money ~ tombola, bric a brac, etc. and will need to find the stock for the stall. We always need more people to help us raise money. If you can help with the stalls at Shelford Village Hall, please tell me. There are always tombola gifts to label, and we always need good quality tombola and raffle prizes. We hope to provide Ros with ample storage space soon in which to keep all the donated tombola and raffle items.

Refreshments will be available all day.

Spring Fair ~ held to raise money for the **Scotsdale's Charitable Foundation**. We raised around **£900**. Many thanks to Jenny, Ros, Judy, Brenda, Damian, Val, Margot, Ilze, Penny, Anne, Catherine, Stephen, Bob, Helen, Gloria, Annie, Ray, Geoff, Pat, John, Lilian, Kath, Sue, Rosina, Ken, Ingrid, Maureen, Dorothy, Joe, Evelyn, Pam, Jim and Matthew. Thanks too to people who brought in home-made cakes for us to sell. Many thanks to the Scotsdale's staff who helped set up our stalls. If I have left anyone off this list ~ sorry, sorry, sorry!

Dear Ann and Friends, thank you to each and every one of you for your kindness in the lovely card you sent me before I went for my tests at Addenbrooke's Hospital. I was truly overwhelmed with all your lovely messages you wrote to me. It made me feel I was not alone in my thoughts on that day, feeling rather anxious. I know that lots of you understood my feelings only too well. I have now received my results and they were clear. I will come to see you all shortly. ~ with love D

Mr Bear ~

a gift to our Centre from Jenny and Peter Blake ~ originally given to them by Orange when they were involved with a homeless youth charity (sadly no longer in existence). The bear was given to them for auctioning. He is delightful, large and coveted by many people at the Cancer Help Centre and Scotsdales Garden Centre. It is thought he was worth about £150 when new. Now well, if you would like to own this bear please come to the Centre, pay your £1, and try to choose his name ~ and perhaps win Mr Bear!



You are driving in a car at a constant speed. On your left side is a valley and on your right side is a fire engine travelling at the same speed as you. In front of you is a galloping pig which is the same size as your car and you cannot overtake it. Behind you is a helicopter flying at ground level. Both the giant pig and the helicopter are also travelling at the same speed as you. What must you do to safely get out of this highly dangerous situation?

Answer ~ get off the children's roundabout.

New Carpet

I have to say that we always knew that someone would spill a cup of tea on the new carpet. So, of course, it came as no surprise when Ros and I were shunting around the furniture. "We must be careful not to spill the coffee on this carpet" said Ros ~ just as we knocked over a half full cup! Actually, you can hardly see the spot! But don't tell anyone!

London Times Obituary of the late Mr. Common Sense

Today we mourn the passing of a beloved old friend, Common Sense, who has been with us for many years. No one knows for sure how old he was, since his birth records were long ago lost in bureaucratic red tape.

He will be remembered as having cultivated such valuable lessons as: knowing when to come in out of the rain; why the early bird gets the worm; Life isn't always fair; and maybe it was my fault.

Common Sense lived by simple, sound financial policies (don't spend more than you can earn) and reliable strategies (adults, not children, are in charge).

His health began to deteriorate rapidly when well-intentioned but overbearing regulations were set in place. Reports of a 6-year-old boy charged with sexual harassment for kissing a classmate; teens suspended from school for using mouthwash after lunch; and a teacher fired for reprimanding an unruly student, only worsened his condition.

Common Sense lost ground when parents attacked teachers for doing the job that they themselves had failed to do in disciplining their unruly children. It declined even further when schools were required to get parental consent to administer sun lotion or an Elastoplast to a student; but could not inform parents when a student became pregnant and wanted to have an abortion.

Common Sense lost the will to live as the Ten Commandments became contraband; churches became businesses; and criminals received better treatment than their victims.

Common Sense took a beating when you couldn't defend yourself from a burglar in your own home and the burglar could sue you for assault.

Common Sense finally gave up the will to live, after a woman failed to realize that a steaming cup of coffee was hot. She spilled a little in her lap, and was promptly awarded a huge settlement.

Common Sense was preceded in death by his parents, Truth and Trust; his wife, Discretion; his daughter, Responsibility; and his son, Reason. He is survived by his 4 stepbrothers:

I Know My Rights
I Want It Now
It's Not My Fault
I'm A Victim

Not many attended his funeral because so few realized he was gone. If you still remember him, pass this on. If not, join the majority and do nothing.'

A man was telling his neighbour, "I just bought a new hearing aid. It cost me £2,000 ~ it's state of the art ~ it's perfect".
"Really" said his neighbour. "What kind is it?"
"Twelve-thirty"

An elderly couple had dinner at another couple's house, and after eating, the wives left the table and went into the kitchen. The two gentlemen were talking, and one said, "last night we went out to a new restaurant and it was really great. I would recommend it very highly." The other man said, "What is the name of the restaurant?"

The first man thought and thought and finally said, "what is the name of that flower you give to someone you love? You know...the one that is red and has thorns."

Do you mean a rose?!

"Yes, that's the one," replied the man. "Rose, he yelled, what's the name of that restaurant we went to last night."

Couple in their nineties are both having problems remembering things. During a check-up the doctor tells them that they're physically okay but they might want to start writing things down to help them remember. Later that night, while watching TV, the old man gets up from his chair. "Want anything while I'm in the kitchen?" he asks.

"Yes, will you get me a bowl of ice cream?"

"Of course"

"Don't you think you should write it down so that you can remember it", she asks.

"No, I can remember it."

"Well, I would like some strawberries too. Maybe you should write it down so that you don't forget it."

"I can remember that ~ you want a bowl of ice-cream with strawberries".

"I'd also like whipped cream. I'm sure you will forget that if you don't write it down", she said.

Irritated he replied "I don't need to write it down. I can remember it. You want a bowl of ice-cream with strawberries and whipped cream. I understand, for goodness sake!" So he toddled off into the kitchen. After about 20 minutes he returned and handed his wife a plate of bacon and eggs.

She stared at the plate for a moment. "But where's my toast?"

John Lewis

I used to be a partner at John Lewis ~ when it was known as Robert Sayle. Such happy times I had there in Staff Training. Went to work for a woman, which I initially (before I knew her) had some concerns about – but she (Pat) was great, and good fun. I met everyone on their first day, did the computerised till training for all the selling staff and enjoyed myself on the shop floor or the warehouse on busy days during clearance and Christmas. It seemed (to me) a bad decision to send me to Radio and TV one afternoon during the Christmas rush but, an admirer of the way John Lewis did things, I went willingly. I did not do well. I remember a customer telling me he wanted a rat. Now, remember this was about 20 years ago so I just assumed my product knowledge was very rusty and, in true JL tradition we were always told that if we didn't know the answer to a customer's question we should just say "I'm sorry I don't know that, but I will find out" So I toddled off to find out and asked a very experienced member of Radio, TV & computer staff....."where will I find a rat for this gentleman?" Experienced person went up to the man and said "do you mean a mouse, Sir". "Yes", said the man.

I got to know Janice who worked in that department and she, and her manager Ian Bloomquist have recently started to help our Centre, along with Sarah Ingram, who we have known for quite a long time. We have had lots of very welcome items from them and Sarah ~ wine glasses, sundae glasses, trays, kitchen tools, microwave ovens, large fridge/freezers ,wicker chairs, a leather armchair (which is always fought over) ~ and many other items. And they have got our wish list on hand to help us with more items. And, outstandingly, Ian and Janice both spent some of their own John Lewis Partnership bonus on some new mugs for us ~ so John Lewis rules, OK!

Anyway, on the day their new store opened I joined the enormous queues at Trumpington Park and Ride. There were three buses waiting to accommodate all the passengers and as I got on to the bus the driver said something like "haven't you all got anywhere better to go"? "**Better to go!**" ~ I said, incredulously ~ "but John Lewis are opening their **new store** today. Where else would you want to be?" Having said that, I couldn't track down Ros or Annie in there ~ but what a marvellous place!

So....Sarah Ingram told us that the Cambridge Cancer Help Centre is their charity of the year! And they are giving us £4,000! So we are busily choosing curtains/blinds from John Lewis.

Waitrose

have also made us their charity of the year and have already given us £2,000. They also intend to stay involved with our Centre for a long time and you may meet them serving tea and cakes at our Centre one afternoon a week. They will also be involved in our Grand Opening (when we've decided a date for that) ~ providing food for the event.

Moving to Scotsdales has brought us much publicity from Radio Cambridgeshire, (Andie Harper and his producer Mark Williamson) the Cambridge News (Steven Exley) and the Cambridge Crier (Laura Morris), and has made us, after our 22 years hard work helping people who have cancer, and their families, better known in this City and community.

Moving into the Centre is involving much jolly hard work. It is taking days/weeks/months to sort out all the boxes which were stored in the portacabin ~ and put there for us by the marvellous ACB Removals and Gordon Murray from Cambridgeshire Constabulary when we moved out of Stockwell Street in August 2007. David Rayner and Charlie Nightingale unloaded all the sofas for us while we were swanning around Ikea, and then John Lewis sent a couple of lovely chaps, John Fromont and Richard Stern to unload another van-load of our belongings.

From Ikea we bought bookcases, armchairs, coffee tables, large cupboards/wardrobes ~ and after they'd been delivered we were very grateful to lots of our Centre members for transforming a pile of boxes into lovely new furniture. Our Centre is such a marvellous place with marvellous people who are part of it. I did mention to David Rayner that perhaps we needed a residential home for when we are all too old to live by ourselves. We could have our own rooms and a meeting place where all of us old friends could talk about the old times. He did appear to consider it! Annie ~ it's not definite ~ calm down!



Motor Neurone Disease Meeting

~ Maureen

I have Motor Neurone Disease and when Cousin Ann asked me if I thought that the local branch of MND would be interested in holding any of our meetings in the new Centre I did not hesitate in asking.

I was quickly in touch with our local branch and it was agreed after various calls and visits to the Centre that the venue would be ideal.

So on Thursday 17th April we held our first meeting and it was extremely successful.

People were absolutely amazed at such a wonderful building. We are now hoping that we can have some informal get-togethers perhaps once a month, where we can meet each other just for a chat.

MND is such a terrible disease so it will be very nice for us to have some of our meetings in a place dedicated to helping people with such awful illnesses.

The Centre offers a very warm and caring atmosphere the minute you walk through the doors. So much care has gone into the building and the furnishing of the Centre that everyone who has been involved has so much to be proud of.

Thank you Ann for thinking of us ~
we are looking forward to our meetings in such wonderful surroundings.

Different Strokes

Annie's 'Different Strokes' group gathered in the Grafton Centre to join the Stroke Association in fundraising for both Annie's group and the Stroke Association. A 'jail' was erected and we were impressed to see Roy and Peter, both of whom have had strokes, sitting inside it ~ with their arms through the bars holding collecting buckets.

Business men and women had been 'arrested' and were hard at work phoning their business acquaintances, trying to raise their 'bail'.



Some of us were rattling buckets at passers-by ~ Jane was dressed up as a pink panther, which was a wow with the kids but she did feel slightly silly standing on street corners waiting for Peter to pick her up and take her home. I was supposed to be the Peter Sellers Pink Panther and was dressed up in raincoat, hat and dark glasses, peering through a magnifying glass and trying to mutter French phrases but all I could remember was open the door, shut the door, sit down and thank you, in French. Someone was heard to ask “why is Ann wearing a raincoat and dark glasses and peering through a magnifying glass but ...what can one do! After that, everyone had lunch and subsequently we learned that **£1,030** was raised for division between the Stroke Association and Annie’s Different Strokes.

Lots of hard work was done that day but in particular by Annie, who recruited her helpers and people who had suffered strokes.

She deserves our congratulations

A neurologist says that if he can get to a stroke victim within 3 hours he can totally reverse the effects of a stroke ...totally. He said the trick was getting a stroke recognised, diagnosed and then getting the patient medically cared for within 3 hours, which is tough.

Recognising a Stroke

Remember the ‘3’ steps, STR.

Sometimes symptoms of a stroke are difficult to identify. Unfortunately, the lack of awareness spells disaster. The stroke victim may suffer severe brain damage when people nearby fail to recognise the symptoms of a stroke. Now doctors say a by-stander can recognise a stroke by asking three simple questions.

S Ask the individual to SMILE

T Ask the person to TALK and speak a simple sentence (coherently)

i e, it is sunny out today

R Ask him or her to RAISE both arms

If he or she has trouble with any one of these tasks, call 999 immediately. Ask the person to stick out his tongue. If the tongue is crooked, if it goes to one side or the other, that is also an indication of a stroke.

The cancer returns ~ someone most of us know well says, “I am not giving up: I shall persevere and beat it”. And I’m sure she will.

Multiple Myeloma Group ~ Anne F

At our March Meeting we had a very interesting talk by Consultant Haematologist Dr Charles Crawley on the latest treatments for Myeloma including Thalidomide.

In April we held our first meeting at the new Centre, 18 attended ~ our best attendance yet!

Our next Meeting is on Wednesday 4th June at 2pm at the CCH Centre.

Each Meeting is held on the first Wednesday of the month normally at 2pm.

*For further information please contact Anne Fleming on 01223 503322
or email annie.fleming@ntlworld.com*



Don't be Ripped Off ~

In a COPE magazine I read that self funding a Care Home place could mean selling a family home to subsidise other residents of that home! The article says that recent research has shown that nearly one in five people have to sell their family home to fund a place in a care home. The study also shows that, until crisis of need arises, people have little awareness of care home charges being far in excess of £30,000 a year.

A recent Commission for Social Care and Inspection (CSCI) report 'A Fair contract With Older People;' found that pensioners forced to sell their homes to pay for care are commonly charged more than fellow residents who are paid for by the local authority. Because councils are able to drive down 'bulk' care home fees, private residents are, in reality, getting the raw deal of subsidising the costs of others!

Up to 70,000 homes are needlessly sold to pay for care each year in the UK, when alternative options are most certainly available. Clearly, it pays to be fully informed of possibilities, before the crisis of care home need arises. Care Directions in association with care funding specialist NHFA provides comprehensive guidance on www.caredirectitons.co.uk/frame_comment_60.htm.

If you would like to join COPE, do talk to Gill Overhill or Jean Russell or me.

VAT breaks for the elderly

Fran read an article by James Salmon in the MoneyMail:News, which pointed out that vulnerable pensioners are missing out on generous new tax breaks worth hundreds of pounds. It seems that anyone over 60 who has difficulty with walking or has chronic health problems which affect their mobility could qualify for a new perk introduced last July, which means they pay less VAT for modifications to their home.

If you would like to know more about how it is possible to shave hundreds of pounds off bills paid to a plumber or builder installing anything from a walk-in shower to hand rails for the stairs – please ask me for the newspaper cutting. You could pay only 5% VAT rather than 17.5% VAT.

The Government says the companies or workmen are responsible for producing the discount and should be aware of the rules. They were announced in the 2007 Budget. However, the Institute of Plumbing says it is unaware of the VAT exemption.

Chronically sick and disabled people, no matter how old, can qualify for VAT exemptions on a range of goods and services, such as medical appliances and alarms. Some organisations, such as Stannah Stairlifts, will automatically discount VAT and get you to show your declaration form when they install the lift. You don't have to be registered as disabled to qualify. You'll need to complete a declaration form to prove you are eligible and show this to your plumber or professional installer. Call the Charities and Disabled Reliefs help line on 08345 302 0203. If you have had modifications to your home in the past three years and have discovered you are eligible for reduced VAT, you can claim it back from the company. Find out how at www.hmrc.gov.uk.

Cambridgeshire Books on Prescription ~

Your GP will give you a prescription form for a recommended book, which you can get from your local library free of charge. The books cover health problems, such as depression, stress, most forms of anxiety and self-esteem, diabetes, asthma and high blood pressure. The books have been chosen by consultant psychologists and medics. Your book prescription will be individually suggested for you by your GP. 'Books on Prescription' is very popular and successful elsewhere in the UK. It may be an alternative or in addition to other treatments and your GP will review the success of your Book Prescription with you

Work, life and cancer ~ Christine

How do I see myself? Definitely someone who works for a living, even when I was having chemotherapy. Not just a cancer victim! However it has not been easy. My employers let me work when I felt up to it and I went home when I didn't and was overcome by fatigue, sometimes with no warning. Fifteen months after radiotherapy I still have confidence issues especially when I meet people at work who do not know me. Do they look at me and realise I have had a mastectomy? Will I start to feel tired during the lunch meeting?

You may laugh but when I have to check most days if my cleavage is too low it is a real issue, especially with summer coming. Last summer did not bother me greatly as the weather was often poor and I covered up but this year I shall try and take a bit more control. I think that is one of the biggest problems with the cancer diagnosis, the feeling of complete loss of control over your life. It is taking me a long time to get it back.

Well, what to do about this? For a start I have had my eyebrows shaped for the first time in my life and am very pleased with it. Such a small thing ~ after they grew back after chemotherapy I recently realised they were thick and unfeminine. I go round looking rather surprised now but it makes me happier.

What about exercise? Putting on weight after chemotherapy seemed impossible but it has happened and it does not make you feel good about yourself. However I swam on Friday for the first time in two and a half years and it was good. I had bought a swim prosthesis and a mastectomy swimsuit which was a bit traumatic but it all worked out well in the end. Yoga next week I hope. Then I want to dance the salsa. You can do it too. It does take a bit of time working up to doing all these things, like arranging holidays, but give your-self the time to do it. Also buying a good mastectomy sports bra has given me more confidence too.

So here's to the future, think of it as a new year, life is for living after all.

When you buy a swimsuit or a bra after a mastectomy, please note that you can ask to pay the reduced price after deducting VAT, and the person at the pay-point should ask you to fill in and sign a claim form. You're entitled to this after a mastectomy and there is always a way for those operating the till to show this VAT reduction. Do not give up or feel embarrassed if the person on the till does not know about the VAT reduction. Persist!

You will remember that *Peter Davison* is undertaking a sponsored bike ride from Lands End to John O'Groats. He left on the 17 May and called in to the Centre on the 22 May before setting off again to complete his journey. He is raising funds for the Brain Tumour Foundation, Addenbrooke's and our Centre

Geoff Nicholas is also doing a cycle ride, probably taking a different route from the one Peter is taking. Here's what Geoff has to say about it ~

End to End ~ Le Jog ~ (or Le Slog!) ~ Geoff Nicholas

At the beginning of 2008 I decided I would like to fulfil a long held ambition to cycle the famous 'E to E' (Lands End to John O'Groats). When mentioning my proposal to a cycling friend he immediately asked if he could join me and then as other members of the CCTC (Cambridge Cyclists Touring Club) heard about the proposed trip, the group quickly grew to a total of six. Our ages range from mid 30's to 70 years and the bad news is that I fall towards the upper end of that range! However, the good news is that one member of our group completed this trip eight years ago which means that we might be relying quite heavily on his previous experience.



Each participant will be funding the complete journey independently and we intend to travel to Lands End by train on 1st June to begin our adventure, which we aim to complete within two weeks.

It occurred to me after making up my mind to attempt the 'E to E' that such an enterprise might be a good way to raise money for charity. My wife Pam is the Information Officer for Age Concern Cambridgeshire and she suggested that the Cambridge Cancer Help Centre would welcome additional financial support. In the course of her work she refers many newly diagnosed patients to this facility and she believes it offers great comfort when individuals learn that they have somewhere locally to turn for help and encouragement.

Therefore, we are hoping for good weather and a prevailing wind for the first two weeks in June. I will provide photographs and a diary to prove completion of the trip, so please, if you know of any organisation which might be willing to offer sponsorship to help us to raise lots of money please ask for a form or pick one up from the entrance to Scotsdales restaurant.

Geoff's sponsor forms are at the Centre. We will ask him to call in to see us either during the ride or at the end of it and when we know when that will be we will let you know.

We are here for you ~ Trícia

On 5 October 2007, the day of the postal strike, I delivered a get-well card to Yvonne. As I drove along in reflective mood, in a little world of my own, supported by the comforting sounds of Classic FM, I was suddenly aware of a tune, struggling to get out. As the tune grew, I switched off the radio to hear more clearly my own inner music. I pulled into Sainsbury's car park and jotted down some notes, and a few words: this was the beginning of the first song I have ever written ~ and I'd like to share it.

The 'thanks to you ~ all of you' at the end is for **every single one of us**: David Rayner and his family & staff, Reg Cullum & Alyson, who designed the building, Charlie Nightingale, the project manager & all the builders & suppliers of materials, Dick Smith, who created a pictorial record of the development of the project, our fundraisers and all those who've given money and goods, our therapists, Marilyn for sowing a tiny seed, Ann for that first meeting with David Rayner, all the Trustees who've worked tirelessly over a very long period of time to bring us to this day ~ and all our Members, past and present, without whom we'd have no reason to exist.

Perhaps the creation of my song also had more than a little to do with the fact that in the middle of September I'd visited my musical family in Hong Kong, and joined them for a very special musical event for young people making their own music. I felt inspired, and I carried that feeling home with me where it spilled over into my own music. I was thrilled when my 14 year old granddaughter, herself a prolific song-writer and a talented performer, encouraged me when I first played my song to her down the telephone line. So my personal thanks for the materialisation of this particular 'thank you' spreads across the globe to embrace others on the far side of the world.

I have a dream that one day we'll create a CD of the song. I have a guitarist, flautist and a variety of voices interested in the project. At the moment there are other more pressing matters. One day I hope that the time will be right ~ but for now, here are the words ~

I delivered my 'get well' wishes to Yvonne, only to discover later that she had already died earlier that day (as reported in the February newsletter).

When your day is dark and drear
And your smiles are few
When you're scared and feeling blue
We are here for you.

With tea and talk
With smiles and tears
And our loving care
To dispel the fears.

Yes we are here
We are always here
We are here for you
Yes we are here for you.

Years ago we had a dream
Of a special place
Where we'd meet to help each other
And be here for you.

We kept our dream
Through shine and showers
Never losing hope
Through the passing hours.

We dared to hope
We dared to dream
And the dream came true
Yes the dream came true.

It's a dream come true
And it's thanks to you
All of you.

Grumpy Page ~ sent to me by a long-standing ‘grumpy’ friend who says that she thinks men are getting their own back with this ~

He (John Nurden) thinks that as a member of an endangered species it is only fair to help the more perplexed of the sexes fight back. He mentions the following ‘Man Rules’ and he points out that it is essential reading for all women, especially so that they can understand why men don’t understand them.

Men are not mind readers

- Toilet seats ~ learn to work them ~ you are a big girl. If it’s up, put it down. We need it up and you need it down. You don’t hear men complaining about you leaving it down.
 - Sunday sports ~ it’s like the full moon or the changing of the tides. Let it be.
 - Crying is blackmail.
 - Ask for what you want. Subtle hints do not work. Strong hints will not work. Obvious hints do not work. Just say it. ‘Yes’ and ‘no’ are perfectly acceptable answers to almost every question.
 - Come to men with a problem only if you want help solving it.
 - Anything we said six months ago is inadmissible in an argument. In fact, he adds, all comments become null and void after seven days.
 - If you think you are fat, you probably are. Don’t ask us.
 - If something we said can be interpreted two ways and one of the ways makes you sad or angry, we meant the other.
 - You can either ask us to do something or tell us how you want it done. Not both. If you already know best how to do something, just do it yourself.
 - Whenever possible, please say whatever you have to say during commercials.
 - Christopher Columbus did not need directions and neither do we.
 - If it itches, it will be scratched. We do that.
 - If we ask what is wrong and you reply “nothing”, we will act as though nothing’s wrong. We know you are lying but it is just not worth the hassle.
 - If you ask a question you don’t want an answer to, expect an answer you don’t want to hear. When we have to go somewhere, absolutely anything you wear is fine. Honestly.
 - Don’t ask us what we’re thinking about unless you are prepared to discuss such topics as football, golf, cars or music.
-

You have enough clothes. You have too many shoes.

Thank you for reading this. We know we will have to sleep on the sofa tonight but us chaps don't mind that. It's like camping.

Dear Sir,

I am writing to thank you for bouncing my cheque with which I endeavoured to pay my plumber last month. By my calculations, three 'nanoseconds' must have elapsed between his presenting the cheque and the arrival in my account of the funds needed to honour it. I refer, of course, to the automatic monthly deposit of my Pension, an arrangement which, I admit, has been in place for only eight years. You are to be commended for seizing that brief window of opportunity, and also for debiting my account £30 by way of penalty for the inconvenience caused to your bank.

My thankfulness springs from the manner in which this incident has caused me to rethink my errant financial ways. I noticed that whereas I personally attend to your telephone calls and letters, when I try to contact you, I am confronted by the impersonal, overcharging, re-recorded, faceless entity which your bank has become. From now on I, like you, choose only to deal with a flesh-and-blood person. My mortgage and loan payments will therefore and hereafter no longer be automatic, but will arrive at your bank by cheque, addressed personally and confidentially to an employee at your bank whom you must nominate. Be aware that it is an offence under the Postal Act for any other person to open such an envelope.

Please find attached an Application Contact Status which I require your chosen employee to complete. I am sorry it runs to eight pages, but in order that I know as much about him or her as your bank knows about me, there is no alternative. Please note that all copies of his or her medical history must be countersigned by a Solicitor, and the mandatory details of his/her financial situation (income, debts, assets and liabilities) must be accompanied by documented proof.

In due course, I will issue your employee with a PIN number which he/she must quote in dealings with me. I regret that it cannot be shorter than 28 digits but, again, I have modelled it on the number of button presses required of me to access my account balance on your phone bank service. As they say, imitation is the sincerest form of flattery.

Let me level the playing field even further. When you call me, press buttons as follows:

1. To make an appointment to see me
 2. To query a missing payment.
 3. To transfer the call to my living room in case I am there.
 4. To transfer the call to my bedroom in case I am sleeping.
 5. To transfer the call to my toilet in case I am attending to nature
 6. To transfer the call to my mobile phone if I am not at home.
 7. To leave a message on my computer (a password to access my computer is required. A password will be communicated to you at a later date to the Authorized Contact.)
 8. To return to the main menu and to listen to options 1 to 8
- To make a general complaint or inquiry, the contact will then be put on hold, pending the attention of my automated answering service. While this may, on occasion, involve a lengthy wait, uplifting music will play for the duration of the call.

Regrettably, but again following your example, I must also levy an establishment fee to cover the setting up of this new arrangement.

May I wish you a happy, if ever so slightly less prosperous, New Year.
Your Humble

An article in the *Independent newspaper* claims that fewer doses of radiation still beat cancer. It seems that 10-year trials showed less radiation delivered in fewer doses is just as effective in preventing the return of the disease. Two trials involving 4,500 women with breast cancer found that reducing the overall dose of radiation by 20% and the number of sessions by 40% cut side effects without increasing cancer recurrence.

Experts warned it was too soon to change practice on the basis of two studies which had followed patients for five to six years. Professor Yarnold accepted the need for longer-term independent research to back his findings, but said the indications were good. There is full coverage of health issues at Independent.co.uk/health

Goods for Sale

Our 'Goods for Sale' table raises over £1,000 a year ~ much to our Treasurer's delight! Maybe this is a good time to remind ourselves that anything not sold within 2 weeks will be given to a charity shop or to Emmaus. If you donate any jewellery to the Centre I usually ask Penny Olesen to look at it first, to establish its worth so that we put a good price on a good jewellery item. We have to stop selling electrical items so please take any of those to charity shops who have the ways and means of testing them before selling them on.

Hello, this is Bill Bradford of Meditherm Ltd, Cambridge.

About 4 years ago, I submitted a short article on breast screening with (DITI) infrared imaging following a talk with you in your previous centre. I just visited with Ann Dingley in your beautiful new building in Shelford and she asked me to provide some further information on the use of DITI. Apart from being a safe, non-invasive, pain and radiation free method of breast screening both pre and post treatment or surgery, it has many varied uses in Pain Management. An alphabetical list of some of the symptoms it can detect is available from Ann.

Infrared imaging is a study of physiology and records the dermal blood flow temperature relating to underlying pathology determined by the central nervous system through the autonomic sympathetic response. All other tests are structural or anatomical. Those pains that 'are in your mind' (psychosomatic) are probably not detectable by anatomical tests but inflammatory conditions, vascular, visceral, varicose, thrombotic, neurological and radicular conditions can often be recorded on screen by DITI, thus providing your healthcare provider with a safe and accurate method to determine the real problem and the causal centre of the pain, referred or actual. For a lot more information, go to www.meditherm.com or call Bill or Wendy 101223 242942. Our clinic is at The Beechwood Clinic, 41 Hills Road.

Rutherford Rotarians ~

invited Fran and me to lunch. They told us that the CCHC was going to be their Charity of the Year, and that following the **Golf Day** during May they hoped to raise substantial funds for our Centre. We explained what goes on at the Centre and also about our good fortune in meeting David Rayner who has created a marvellous building for us.

The Whittlesford Flower Club ~

invited Ros and me to one of their meetings. We described our Centre and the work we do there. And they also decided that the CCHC would be their Charity of the Year.

Thanks to CBS (Winship Road) who have been very kind to us over the years. They have always provided us with a photocopier, charging us only a very small amount for each copy we make. Added to that, when we have any problems they are quick to come and put them right. For our new Centre they've provided a much more sophisticated machine than we've previously had. Guy and Richard delivered it recently, together with other office furniture, and Tim very kindly came to connect the photocopier to our computer. We'll enjoy exploring all the wonders of our new machine once we have everything else in place in our new Office. *Tricia*

Print-out ~

Very many thanks to **Mike & Steve** for continuing to provide us with an excellent service, and for printing a newsletter we can be proud of.

Thanks to Patrick Griffiths, manager of the Swiss Laundry, Cherry Hinton Road for cleaning our sofa covers at half price.

Things

There are worse things than having behaved foolishly in public.

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

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

Fleur Adcock (1934 -



An insomniac, dyslexic agnostic stayed awake all night
wondering if there really is a doG ~ *from John F*

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

It's often difficult for families to come to terms with cancer in a close relative. They are very anxious to support the sick person but at the same time they need support themselves. They are faced with a difficult balance between giving comfort to their sick relative and not adding to their burden by conveying fears of their own. This conversation reflects the dilemma.

Changing roles ~ the mobile phone way ~ anon

Family Mum, you need a mobile phone.

Anon I do? ~ why? ~ who says?

F We do, your family ~ and the reason is that we need to be able to contact you.

A You do ~ why's that?

F Because when you're out walking on your own you need a phone.

A The reason I'm out walking on my own is to give me space and thinking time, not having a mobile phone ringing all the time, expecting me to answer it.

F There's also these hospital appointments you don't tell us about, or you conveniently give us the wrong date. (By the way, Dad can't keep a secret to save his life), so we always know when you're going. We worry all day. We need you to ring us or text us when you've been seen ~ that's not too much to ask, is it? We are also going through this cancer with you.

A Whatever ~ just don't keep ringing at the hospital. I have to switch it off.

F Mum, I have been ringing you and texting you and you're not answering ~ why?

A The phone needs charging.

F Charge it at night ~ aren't you doing that?

A Oh, sorry ~ it needs topping up with cash.

F Mum, why are you being so difficult ~ can't you realise that the cancer affects us too? We love you. What's hurting you is hurting us too.

A I know and I'm sorry ~ changing roles has come hard to me. I was the one who held your hand in the dark when you were small, and when you grew up I was there when you needed me.

F You're still there for us, we know that. But we want to be there for you too, so remember that also. We want to hold **your** hand in the dark.

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. It's 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? 4th – 9th June

What time? 10.00 – 12.30 pm (Includes tea, coffee, light refreshment)

Where is it? Arthur Rank House, Brookfields Hospital CB1 3DF

Cost? It's free!

Who can attend? People living with cancer

*For more information please contact Janet or Judy on 07922 126508
email colin.hickman@homecall.co.uk*

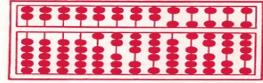
In Icon I read an article written by *Dr Rosy Daniel* ~ known well by lots of people at our Centre, who met Rosy at the Bristol Centre (now the Penny Brohn). She says that her most important learning in recent years is that of sorting out any controversy and confusion about acid and alkaline diets to prevent cancer. To read what she says, do get the Winter edition of the *Icon* magazine from our Centre. If you haven't already picked up the magazine and would like me to send you a copy of it, please let me know.

Fibromyalgia

Has anyone experience of this, coming post-leukemia? If so please contact me ~ there is someone at the Centre who would like your advice

*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.*

Money matters ~ Trícia



On 18 March '08 we held our AGM for the financial year 1 Nov'06 - 31 Oct '07. We'd like to thank the many people who have given so generously during the year and have contributed to our surplus for the year of almost £26,500. At present we have a very healthy balance in our account.

Ann's AGM Report on the following pages talks of 'Joy & Sadness'. The Finances generate a joy and sadness of their own: sadness when the numbers are badly behaved and take some time to coax into acceptable positions ~ and great joy when they slip quietly into their proper places (like a giant Sudoku) and all the columns balance!

Joy also when the results of all our fundraising efforts bear fruit. Since the early days of the CCHC, fundraising has been an important part of our activities. It's been envisaged for over 20 years that one day we would have a permanent centre in which to care for people with cancer. For many years the trustees dreamed of buying a property, but prices have risen so dramatically that this has long ceased to be an achievable goal. Some years ago we turned our attention to raising sufficient funds to secure a long-term Lease which would ensure the continuation of the Centre well into the future. Even finding a building to rent proved difficult and it wasn't until David Rayner offered to help us that a solution was finally in sight.

At first it was hoped that the new building would be constructed and fitted out entirely through public funding and donation. But as previously reported, in spite of the huge generosity on the part of numerous people, there was a significant shortfall in raising the construction costs. At present we are not in a position to keep our Centre open every day of the week: one day we hope to be able to expand our activities. In the mean-

time, rather than have such a wonderful building sitting empty, it makes sense to invite others to share it. So Charlie Nightingale will be responsible for hiring the building out to other charitable organisations

when we are not using it, the proceeds being used to help reduce the financial shortfall.

From Jane

It isn't always easy to find therapists who are willing to give their time and expertise free of charge, but our team is steadily growing and I think that at the Centre we are very fortunate to have such a lovely group of dedicated therapists who have endless amounts of energy and goodwill.

I read recently that to sponsor a complementary therapist per day for a year costs in the region of £3,500. As our opening hours expand, we are intending to offer therapies all day on Tuesdays and Wednesdays, by appointment on Thursday mornings and on the first Thursday evening of the month ~ the equivalent of ten therapists, which means that if we had to pay them for all the work that they do for us, it would cost us about £35,000 a year! And that doesn't take into account the home visits that several of the healers make to people unable or too ill to come into the Centre.

**They are a great team and I'd like to say thank you to them all
for everything that they do for us.**

Please note that our new telephone number is
01223 840105

Ann's AGM Report ~ March 2008:

Cut Above the Rest

At our AGM last year we told ourselves we would hold the 2008 AGM in this new building. So, 22 years after Marilyn Barnes founded this Centre, here we are and I'm sure it won't be too long before we are in here for real.

'Joy and Sadness'

Let's look at the sadness first.

I know of two people who have asked me not to send them newsletters, because they just cannot bear to read about the people who die. These two people have had cancer and just want to be positive. (From time to time I email one of them and we write about the good things that are happening to her and to our Centre.)

Some years ago the trustees and I discussed this issue and it was felt that although most of 'our' people live on a long time following their diagnosis and treatment, a few do not. And we agreed that when someone dies it is right, of course, for us to write about them in our newsletter.

So, talking of death (this is the sadness bit. But perhaps if we listen to what is written about death, perhaps it isn't sad after all).

Elizabeth Kubler Ross wrote 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 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, again, spirituality ~ an awareness that there is something 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.

Obviously the death of someone we knew well is hard to bear. I want to tell you a couple of things that happened to me when two of my family members died. Those particular happenings made me feel better at a time when I felt, and was, distraught.

Exactly at the time I needed it, Tricia sent me this poem written by Bishop Brent:

*And just at the moment when someone at my side says "he is gone",
There are others who are watching him coming,
And other voices take up a glad shout,
"Here he comes!"
and **that** is dying*

In the Special 5 Year Survival issue of 'Icon' (copies of which are available from our Centre) Madeleine Kingsley writes, in an article entitled 'Light at the End', that it is curious that we suppress a mass of information that, however unusual, could offer consolation to the dying and the bereaved. She goes on to say that it also offers, if you are open to the idea, optimism of life beyond the last breath. She continues to write that Dr Peter Fenwick, a London neuro-psychiatrist with a special research interest in Near Death experience, believes that the anecdotes he hears are credible, significant and similar to the numerous unusual experiences he has logged. He also says that one in ten of us will have some such experience to tell, and those who do are not necessarily at all religious.

After my Mum died, I sat in my garden, in the sunshine, upset about my Mum and a letter came to me from someone I briefly met when I worked at Robert Sayle. She wrote a beautiful letter to me and included this written by William Blake:

*He who binds himself to a Joy
Does the winged life destroy;
But he who kisses the Joy as it flies
Lives in Eternity's sunrise.*

So I cried a bit more! ... but then felt better and able to let my Mum 'go'. But I often reflect how fortunate I was that Tricia and Madeleine were able to affect how I felt about the death of people I loved ... and they changed my despair to acceptance.

Having done the sadness, let's move on to the Joy because all of us at this Centre affect how our 'starfish' feel ~ and I will explain what I mean about 'starfish' by repeating, again this year, something Ingrid wrote for one of our newsletters.

*I wonder if you have heard the story of the young man and the starfish.
One day, at early dawn, he was seen walking along the beach picking up stranded starfish and throwing them back into the receding sea. On being asked why he was doing this he said that if he didn't, once the sun came up the stranded starfish would die.*

"But the beach stretches for miles and there must be thousands of stranded starfish" remarked an onlooker. "What difference can you make?"

The young man looked at the starfish in his hand and threw it safely into the water. "It makes a difference to this one", he replied.

So, in simple terms, that's what we all do here ~ we make a difference to each other. So if you have been a stranded starfish, I'm very glad you were thrown back into the sea of this Cambridge Cancer Help Centre.

I'm also very glad that Annie has started her 'Different Strokes' group here. Annie is on a roll! Soon she will have two stroke groups operating at this Centre! And Anne F's Multiple Myeloma group meets here, and some of Annie's and Anne's groups also come along to our Centre to join in with our activities.

When we left Stockwell Street the view was expressed that it was hoped the new Centre would be as welcoming and 'homely' as it was in the last premises. Of course it will be ~ and if it isn't ~ just let me know!

In an old book I read the following ... and I relate it to this new Centre which David Rayner is building for us.

*Nothing is too good to be true
Nothing is too wonderful to happen
Nothing is too good to last*

And then I read about myself!

*I have perfect work
In a perfect way
I [try to] give perfect service
For perfect pay!*

Over the last couple of weeks I have asked some of our members two questions:

What does this Centre mean to you?

What would it be like for you if this Centre didn't exist?

Here are some of the answers:

Everything

The Centre to me is a place of courage and inspiration. I am amazed how brave people are and the love and compassion that is shown to everyone who comes. Laughter and tears are equally received and I have been grateful for the times I have been comforted and encouraged by the folks at the Centre

You are doing wonders for me here

It is a bolt hole

Very friendly and relaxed place ~ you forget your worries

This Centre is irreplaceable

An outlet for my anxiety ~ really quite wonderful.

Here everyone cares and is understanding

It takes me out of my rut and adds to the quality of my life

It is a place where I feel safe and happy

I've always been a 'giver' I am used to being a giver. But here I find it easy to receive even though I'm still giving!

I am getting together with people who have been through the same experience and also trying to give something back. They are spiritual people and spiritual people are the loveliest people you could hope to meet. They are people you can trust.

The place and, more importantly, **the people** mean everything to me as they have played a major part in my recovery. Without the Centre there would be a huge void in my life.

This place is everything to me. My God ~ my life now gives me everything I want and more. I should think I would have killed somebody by now if this place didn't exist ~ I wouldn't have anything and would just be sitting at home

We must love it here because we come a bloody long way to get to this place!

In answer to my second question, 'What would it be like for you if this Centre didn't exist?' I'll give just one of the answers, which was said with much feeling

don't ... even ... go ... there

O yes, must just add this one in. I asked a carer the same questions and I must tell you he is married to someone who a few years ago couldn't say a single word. Now she talks non-stop and spends much of her life at Scotsdales! Anyway, he said ~ This Centre being available for my wife gives me **peace and quiet at home!**

Without the Centre? I asked himhe said ~ **it would be hell!**

No prizes given for identifying the person.

So here we are ~ all of us are part of the Cambridge Cancer Help Centre's past and, thanks to David Rayner, part of its glorious, exciting future. All helping each other, and it's interesting to read that scientists call the warm glow that hangs over us after we have helped another human being 'elevation'. It lasts longer, they say, than treating ourselves to new shoes! (*That came from a book 'Shoot the Damn Dog: a Memoir of Depression' by Sally Brampton, published by Bloomsbury.*)

And my answer to my question 'what does this Centre mean to you' would be this:

I must say to all the friends I meet here, you are marvellous, exciting, sometimes sad, often very funny, single-minded in your strong purpose to recover and get well, you are energetic, determined most definitely a cut above the rest.

Love Ann xxx

P S: As usual we'll be closed during August, but watch the notice board for coffee morning arrangements.

Joke, from Fran:

Farmer was walking to market. He met a young lady. He asks her if they can walk home together.

She said to him ...oh no, you may ravish me

He said to her... for goodness sake. I've got a goose, a bucket, an anvil and two chickens so how on earth am I going to ravish you?

She said to him...put the goose down, cover it with the bucket, put the anvil on top and I will hold the chickens.