

KEEPING PACE

FEBRUARY 2008

KEEPING PACE WITH PAIN SOUTHAMPTON BASED CHRONIC PAIN SUPPORT GROUP

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Welcome to the New Year and a nearly new newsletter. Still the same name and the same old bloke producing it, but it was decided we needed different colours and here they are - hope you like them.

Well, hasn't it been a busy time? I can't believe that already we are coming up to our third year, a little reminder there for Norma, can't think why it just came to me like a lemon drizzle cake.

Before I let you go on through this wonderful publication we need to thank a few people for the fantastic work they are doing raising money for the group.

Lise - I imagine by now you have heard about the money Lise has raised from her Fundraising Birthday Party; the final total was £940.10, but not only that, she has also raised another £40 from her online calendar sales and items she has sold on Ebay.



Above is a picture of Lise at her Fundraising Party.

What a brilliant way to start the New Year - well done Lise and a very big Happy Birthday from us all.

Thanks must go to everyone who has given donations, large or small, whatever it is, lets just say without all of us we would not be the most amazing, staggering,

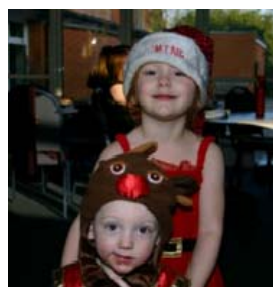
incredible group of people that we are, and in my mind there's nothing wrong with blowing our own trumpet.



But we don't need to stop there though, so get your thinking caps on and come up with some good fundraising ideas and bring them to the group to discuss.

I heard that you all survived without my tea and coffee at the Christmas party. I was very sorry not to be there with you all but due to some difficulties just couldn't make it, however from what I heard it all went well - even in the kitchen!

Look below at this lovely picture taken at the Christmas Bash, of Katie and Joshua all dressed in their Christmas uniforms ready to do business with whatever smells or looks like cake or chocolate - well done you two!



Following is another picture which was also taken by our resident photographer at the Bash, as you can see it's of Our Steve with Yogi and I can see by this why they call a dog "mans best friend" they look particularly handsome together, don't you think.



IMPORTANT

As you have probably heard the meeting time is changing in March 2008 to 1.30 - 3.30, this is because the Church is extending the lunch hours in their Drop in Café.

What this does mean, for those that fancy it, is to have a quick bite before the meeting, but be forewarned there will be no excuses accepted from any of you if you go into "Afternoon Nap" mode, this will be treated with the utmost severity - in the kitchen doing the washing up, Ha!

Well as I have already said, what a fantastic way to begin the New Year, hopefully this means we can now start up our own library without having any commitments elsewhere. Sometimes I can't believe how generous people can be.

2008, not only Chinese Year of the Rat (which are those people born in 1936, 1948, 1960, 1972, 1984, 1996 and 2008) but also this is the year for;

Keeping Pace With Pain.





“DOC’S RAMBLINGS”



December

Once more we held what is fast becoming our traditional Christmas party! This year we had a music quiz and we must thank Andrea for all her hard work in putting it together. We were entertained once more by Denis's humour and Jim's piano playing. It was lovely to celebrate with so many old friends and new faces.

Thank you to everyone who brought contributions of food and gifts for the Secret Santa.

January

This meeting was such a positive start to our New Year. We revisited our Ground Rules and it was heartening to see how they were still appreciated and relevant. We added a few refinements but essentially the group felt that it was still united and positive in its ideals. (see below)

Dorothy entertained us with her belated Christmas Quiz. It was huge fun and caused many a laugh. Some of our younger members made the tongue in cheek observation that it was "ageist", claiming that they weren't even born when Bing Crosby made famous White Christmas! (Come to think of it, it's not beyond the possibility that their parents weren't either!) So, jealous of their youth and wanting to be fair, we have challenged them to writing the next quiz! Watch this space!!

We had an open and stimulating discussion about the Southampton Pain Service and the possibility of increased involvement of patients in it. There were thoughts about focus groups, a "Buddying system, closer links between the Support Group and Pain Management Programmes and, loud and clear, the desire "to be heard". This was to be fed back to the Pain Clinic Team and we will have to wait and see what develops.

We had good news about a donation from the Rotary Club of Southampton (thanks Austin) towards our rent and continuing donations from the sale of Kip's cards (thank you again Kip). Lise is also busy fundraising and we are all invited to her 30th Birthday Party at Central Hall 11-1pm this Saturday 26th January. Bring whatever food and drink you fancy and, instead of gifts, she has asked for donations to Keeping Pace. What a generous idea.

Congratulations to Steve and Yogi for passing the hearing dog for the deaf final exam! I know Steve was far more nervous than the dog!

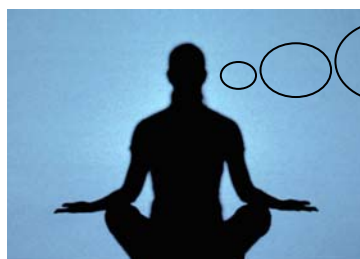
Ground Rules (revised on January 17th 2008)

- ◆ To promote the positive side of living with pain
- ◆ To know each other's names & to welcome new members
- ◆ To respect each other's views
- ◆ To accept ups and downs
- ◆ To accept all age groups
- ◆ To encourage the group members to work towards common goals and to give mutual support
- ◆ Equal opportunities to all
- ◆ To maintain confidentiality within the group
- ◆ To be sensitive to people's needs
- ◆ To respect people's personal space
- ◆ Donations are voluntary but welcomed

We've got a mouse, where, there on the plant pot, no it's on the other one, no it's up the tree. This mouse, which we think lives in the garage, is taking the mick. Whilst we are watching out the window there's this acromouse doing somersaults across the selection of plant pots, then up the tree and onto the roof of the hanging bird table, looks underneath, then decides, No, I'm going back down. What I want to know is, where's the blighter gone when I get out to chase him?



Here are the details for the free yoga sessions – YOG-PRANAYAM Hindu Temple, Radcliffe Road, Southampton Monday to Friday, 5:30-6:30pm (excluding Wednesday) Teacher Krishan Gupta



New Series - Chapter one

Driving with Jessica (you may recognise her!)

I don't know how I'd done it, the main thing was I had. After 87 lessons. I had passed my driving test!! I remember I had just passed and I walked across the car park to tell my instructor. Before I could say anything though he said "it's okay, don't worry, you can try again". "Try again" I said "I don't need to I passed!!" To say that he looked absolutely horrified would be an understatement, "but you left the test centre on the wrong side of the road" "I know" I said. What he didn't yet know was that I had also gone around a roundabout in the wrong lane, hit the curb, twice, stalled a couple of times and fouled up my reverse parking!! He dropped me home afterwards and told me that he didn't know how I had done it and how he had only put me in for it to get experience. The last thing he said to me was "if you ever see me on the road keep clear of me!!" Charming!!

Within a couple of months I had my first car, a very spacious (and I really can't stress that enough) Fiesta. And then it went from bad to worse.....

Things didn't start well. For my first outing I took my dad, brother and sister out. It would be a journey they would never forget. I hold my hands up, I know I did bad; I nearly took out a petrol pump, I took a roundabout on two wheels and I nearly gave them whiplash stopping at a red light (the lights went amber I sped up, lights went red I emergency braked, we were flung forward, suspended for a while before slamming back into the seats!!). Just when you think it couldn't get worse the tree jumped out of nowhere. OK so it didn't jump out as such. I had turned the corner and was on the pavement (to this day I don't know how?) heading for this tree screaming "what do I do what do I do" "BRAKE, BRAKE" they all screamed but I didn't, I kept screaming "what shall I do?" "BRAKE", so I slammed them on and narrowly missed the tree. "Why didn't you brake?" the truth is I don't know why I didn't think of it!! Seems so obvious now. Anyway they were all shouting and all I could say was "I was scared too!!!"

And that's just the first of many a tale of my driving mishaps. Coming next news letter... Starting the day with a smile, A visit to the hospital and what happened when the policeman told me "Go straight home".



Now imagine the car full of passengers and heading towards a tree!! I screamed so loud!! I think it's a good thing I don't drive anymore!!

Change of Free Bus Travel from April 2008. - Provided by Steve Beal

The Concessionary Bus Travel Act states that "Everyone aged 60 and over including disabled people in receipt of High Rate Disability Allowance will be entitled to free bus travel. The new criteria contained in the regulations are:

- ☞ Aged 60 or over
- ☞ Blind
- ☞ Partially Sighted
- ☞ Profoundly or severely deaf
- ☞ Without Speech
- ☞ Has a disability that effects walking
- ☞ Without the use of both arms
- ☞ Has a learning disability, that is, a state of arrested or incomplete development of mind, which includes significant impairment of intelligence or social functioning.
- ☞ Would, if applied for, be refused a driving licence to drive a motor vehicle under part 111 of the road traffic act 1988.

Poems

"Still lie the sheltering snows, undimmed and white;
And reigns the winter's pregnant silence still;
No sign of spring, save that the catkins fill,
And willow stems grow daily red and bright.
These are days when ancients held a rite
Of expiation for the old year's ill,
And prayer to purify the new year's will."

- Helen Hunt Jackson, *A Calendar of Sonnets: February*

"The day is ending,
The night is descending;
The marsh is frozen,
The river dead.

Through clouds like ashes
The red sun flashes
On village windows
That glimmer red."

- Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, *Afternoon in February*





KEEPING PACE WITH PAIN

Newsletter Contact Details,~

Email:

Kevin@keepingpace.co.uk

Telephone:

023 8051 2402

Address:

Keeping Pace With Pain
30 St James Road
Upper Shirley
Southampton SO15 5FF

JOKES

Creation

A man said to his wife one day, 'I don't know how you can be so stupid and so beautiful all at the same time. The wife responded, 'Allow me to explain, God made me beautiful so you would be attracted to me; God made me stupid so I would be attracted to you!

Lost in Translation

At a Budapest Zoo: Please do not feed the animals. If you have any suitable food, give it to the guard on duty.

Holy Blunder

Mr. Peabody was elected and has accepted the position of church warden. We could not get a better man.

Mixed-Up Metaphor

We have buttered our bread, and now we have to lie on it.

If April showers bring May flowers then what do May flowers bring? - Pilgrims!

Tourist: How would you describe the rain in this part of the country? - Local: Little drops of water falling from the sky

Why did the baker stop making donuts?

He got sick of the hole business

A man rushed into the doctor's office and shouted, "Doctor! I think I'm shrinking!!" The doctor calmly responded, "Now, settle down. You'll just have to be a little patient."

Did you hear about the restaurant on the moon? The food is terrific, but there's no atmosphere.

Two cows were lying in a field. One of them says to the other, "So, what do you think about this mad cow disease?" The other says, "What do I care. I'm a helicopter."

Smiling is infectious, you catch it like the flu!
When someone smiled at me today, I started smiling too.
I passed around the corner and someone saw me grin
When he smiled I realised, I'd passed it on to him.
I thought about the smile, then realised its worth
A single smile like mine, could travel round the earth.
If you find a smile begin, don't leave it undetected
Let's start an epidemic quick and get the world infected!



Forthcoming dates for your diary - Time 1.30 to 3.30pm unless otherwise stated.

February 21st 2008

NHS Health Trainer - Linda Connis

March 20th 2008

Our 3rd Birthday - cake! Andy and his Canaries

April 17th 2008

Bat man!; What's new in the Pain Medication world? - Emma.

May 15th 2008

Fibromyalgia - Colin Beevor, QAH, Portsmouth

June 19th 2008

Hand Reflexology/Relaxation Techniques/Massage - Debbie Harrison

Topics to be hopefully covered later in the year include Osteoporosis; Healthy Eating; Alexander Technique; Benefits; Tools for Self Reliance



Colloquium on ME/CFS and Fibromyalgia - by Rev. Austin Fitzpatrick

It was a great disappointment not to be able to attend the Colloquium on ME/CFS and Fibromyalgia and to hear experts define the differences between these three very similar Complaints. So, I have to be satisfied with reading the Gibson Report to Parliament dated November 2006.

As we all know, Chronic pain is different from short-acting or acute pain. Acute pain is a symptom of a medical problem, illness or injury, and is only temporary. Chronic pain is more than a symptom - it is an actual illness or medical problem that persists beyond the healing phase, usually three to six months, and has not responded to traditional medical treatment, such as rest, medicine, injections, physical therapy or surgery. With time the pain spreads and increases in intensity.

For myself there were also other issues to take into account like **increasing isolation** - which was partly overcome through my ability to interact within this group, unanticipated strain owing to **enforced unemployment** and legal issues and sleep problems. These changes often add to the pain problem as the patient continues to become less interested in physical activity and has more negative emotional experiences.

Doing my homework for the Colloquium made me realise that my CPS is not *completely* unrelated to the ME, Chronic Fatigue Syndrome and Fibromyalgia, series of complaints or diseases. I wonder if anyone in the group would like to spend an hour talking about this question - maybe we could have a corner in a pub (or hire a room) somewhere on a day when this group does not meet. I am not unconvinced that such complaints can be treated in isolation - what do you think?

QUOTES:

Half an hour's meditation is essential except when you are very busy. Then a full hour is needed. - Francis de Sales

We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence then, is not an act, but a habit. - Aristotle

The mind grows by what it feeds on. - Josiah G Holland

Worry never robs tomorrow of its sorrow, it only saps today of its strength - A J Cronin

Life truly lived is a risky business, and if one puts up too many fences against risk one ends up by shutting out life itself - Kenneth S Davis

Men can only be happy when they do not assume that the object of life is happiness.- George Orwell

Depression is merely anger without enthusiasm. - Steven Wright

We win half the battle when we make up our minds to take the world as we find it, including the thorns.- Orison S. Marden

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