

# KEEPING PACE

AUGUST 2009

## KEEPING PACE WITH PAIN SOUTHAMPTON BASED CHRONIC PAIN SUPPORT GROUP

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It's happened again, I'm late. Now in the past I've used all sorts of excuses, none of them true (why am I telling you that), but this time I've got a good one. It's not my fault, I was waiting for some information; it was posted to me, but only had my name on it, no address, no stamp, just my name. I'll say no more except that the initials of the culprit are SWMBO.

Anyway I hope you are all in good health, or as well as under the circumstances, one might say, Oh! before I forget we have to say a sad farewell to Jane, who is off to a new home in Kent. Jane has been a member for some time now, supplying us with lovely tomato plants, now where will we get them? So we all wish you every happiness and good health in Kent which by the way guys is renowned throughout the world as the Garden of England. It includes iconic landmarks such as Canterbury Cathedral, Leeds Castle and the White Cliffs of Dover,  "There'll be blue birds over the white cliffs of Dover"

OooH I love a bit of music, me.

I started growing dahlias last year (nothing to do with music), now I'm hooked, trouble is so are all the earwigs in Southampton, they love the flowers as much as we do. Now all you dahlia growers will know that the best way to trap these pesky little creatures is to put a pot filled with straw or shredded paper upside down on the top of a cane. Now that's all very well, but when I did it the paper fell out every time and if it was windy got paper everywhere, but

after doing it a few times I finally got it to stay put. I went down in the morning emptied the pots into a container, there was absolutely nothing in there but the paper, no earwigs, not one. After all that trouble huh!!

Did you know the dahlia is also known as *Tenjikubotan* in Japanese, which literally means 'Peony of India'.

According to the Japanese language of flowers, it means 'good taste'. Ah!! now I get it, earwigs must be Japanese, that's why they love the flowers so much.

#### The Beals (sounds good)

Steve & Chris are now fully trained hearing dog speakers which means they can give talks to schools, clubs, groups etc. They want to do this to raise and improve awareness of deafness and of course Hearing Dogs for Deaf People.

They would also like our help to save any printer cartridges, stamps (used or not), plastic milk bottle tops, and old mobile phones. All of these items can be recycled and used to raise money for the charity.

At the moment they have lots of people waiting for hearing dogs but there are not enough to meet demands.

Because of the recession lots of people who would normally donate dogs to the charity are selling them instead.

For those that don't know, Steve and Chris also had good news about Yogi, he is in the final three for Rescue Dog of the Year. They have had

the cameraman round to film them both for the award ceremony in October and then they all go up to London to meet a few well known personalities.

That's really good news for them isn't it.

If you were at the last meeting you will already know we are purchasing a mic and speaker system, this is so the quiet speakers can use this to make sure even those at the back can hear what's going on. We hope to have this available for the next meeting, (Sept) otherwise there will be trouble for someone, and we all know who that will be!!

#### Year So Far

So far KPWP has had a very good year, our speakers have been a pharmacist, an osteopath who also talked about the Alexandra Technique, we've had neurophysiology and drive-ability. Then to cap it all we had our "cream tea day" in August with beautiful home made jam, (3 types), lovely scones all tasting delicious and clotted cream from Cornwall. But that's not all, there was MM on the old joanna playing an assortment of relaxing music which only added to the cosy atmosphere and made it a very creamtealishous afternoon.

We have also had a lot of new members come along, which is so good to see. As a reminder for everyone, don't forget the library, you can take a book out for a deposit of £5 which is refundable. We have a good selection of self help & pain management books by some of the best authors.

## "DOC'S RAMBLINGS"



## April

Emma Davies, the pharmacist who works for the Southampton Pain Clinic, made a return visit today. We are so lucky to have a group of specialist speakers who have befriended our group and who are happy to come on a regular basis to talk to us. Emma led a group discussion about self medication. As we all know there are a host of medicines available over the counter, many of which make all sorts of claims about their effectiveness. Trying them can so often turn out to be a pointless and expensive experience. The main messages we took away from the meeting were: that it's important to keep your GP informed of any over the counter medications that you wish to try just in case they interact badly with the medication you already take, if your GP is uncertain about interactions then they can contact the pharmacy advisory service at the hospital, and if you are worried about any of your medications in general then make an appointment with your GP for a review (try not to crowd out the consultation with other health issues so that the focus can be on your specific concerns about your medicines).

## May

We had a captivating talk by Ian Traynar, a local osteopath. His talk was in 2 parts. Initially he facilitated a group discussion on the role of an osteopath, our preconceptions and how the Alexander Technique (AT) might fit in. He then went on to talk in a bit more detail about AT, explaining how it is actually the study of thinking in relation to movement and how "the poise of the head in relation to the body is key to the freedom and ease of movement." We just scraped the surface of this fascinating subject, but luckily Ian seemed willing to return at a later date and tell us more.

## June

We were pleased to welcome back Sally Curtis for the next instalment of neurophysiology. Most of the time people struggle with visualising pain and consequently the ability to explain what it feels like to live with it. Chronic pain has been described as the invisible disability. Sally has such a gift of illustrating the physiological processes that go on in the body when it is experiencing pain that it makes it all the more real. I particularly liked it when she told us about her research project. She asked healthy volunteers and those with chronic pain to see how long they could hold their arms up for before it became too painful. She had fully expected the healthy volunteers to be able to do it for longer. However, she found that it was those with chronic pain who lasted the longest, presumably because they were so used to living with pain, that holding their arms up was a mere "walk in the park" to them. This fits with my personal view that people with chronic pain are amongst the bravest people I know.

## July

Maintaining independence was the order of this month's meeting. Our speakers were Heather and Terri from Wessex DriveAbility, whose ethos is to enable individuals to drive or to travel as a passenger in order to maintain an independent lifestyle. Services offered by Wessex DriveAbility include various assessments – Driving; Transfer; Adaptations & Drive from Wheelchair. The team is headed by a Specialist Occupational Therapist and Specialist Driving Instructors. They stressed the need to get in touch with them should you be thinking of any modifications to your car in order that you get what's right for you, as an individual and then assist you in achieving this. Group members Mike and Beverley shared their recent experiences in getting new cars under the Motability Scheme, with adaptations to suit their needs. Beverley also took advantage of driving lessons to help her adjust to the car adaptations. All this just added further credence to the subject. For further information on these services call 023 8051 2222 or visit; [www.wessexdriveability.org.uk](http://www.wessexdriveability.org.uk)

## August

Isn't it lovely that our group has now been meeting long enough to have established traditions such as the annual cream tea? We had a truly splendid afternoon, weather and company included. Practice must make perfect as our band of volunteer scone makers did us proud. I reckon they were better than those served at The Ritz (and I should know having experienced afternoon tea at said establishment just last Saturday!) This year we had the additional treat of a musical accompaniment. We are very grateful to Dr Marilyn Monkhouse who played the piano for us whilst we chatted and ate. Thank you also to everyone who contributed with food, home made jam, oodles of clotted cream, drink making, dishwashing and so on. Can't wait for the Christmas party!!



## Gardening Stuff &amp; Quotes



I tried for twenty years or so  
To make my rhododendrons grow,  
I sought new species, far and wide,  
But still my rhododendrons died.

I danced around them, in a ring:  
I watered them like anything,  
And then I placed a bag of peat  
Around my rhododendrons feet.

Out of the peat, there came a lot,  
Of lovely things I hadn't got:  
Azaleas, Dahlias, London Pride,  
An Iris and a Phyllis Bide -  
But still my rhododendrons died.  
Stowaways By Reginald Arkell 1882-1959

Then followed that beautiful season... Summer....  
Filled was the air with a dreamy and magical light; and the landscape  
Lay as if new created in all the freshness of childhood.

- Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

"By all these lovely tokens  
September days are here,  
With summer's best of weather  
And autumn's best of cheer."  
- Helen Hunt Jackson, September, 1830-1885

"The morrow was a bright September morn;  
The earth was beautiful as if newborn;  
There was nameless splendor everywhere,  
That wild exhilaration in the air,  
Which makes the passers in the city street  
Congratulate each other as they meet."

- Henry Wadsworth Longfellow





## A film star in the making?

By Janet Bache

Recently I volunteered to take part in a training film for doctors, nurses and physiotherapists. The premise was that I had been referred to Melvin, the actor playing a nurse practitioner, by my GP for advice, encouragement and motivation to increase my weekly physical mobility to the government's new target of 3 hours each week. The film was made at Focus TV Studios in Sholing. I wasn't sure what to expect, perhaps a vast area like a TV news studio? Comfy sofas you see in chat shows? No, the whole studio was about the size of a medium bedroom! One half was full with cameras, sound machines and lighting equipment, the other half - the 'set' - was a basic mock up of a GP's consulting room. Andy, the soundman (he was also one of the cameramen) had to 'mike me up'. I then had to chat about what I had for breakfast so that he could sort out the sound level. Andy then told me that the most important thing was that I **must not look into the camera!** I promised to look either at Melvin or at the plant on the windowsill! Melvin was also 'miked up' and we then both had to chat to balance our two sound levels. Rob, the other cameraman, arrived and he and Andy both fiddled with the blinds, the lights and our positions. Finally the clapperboard was clattered and off we went! Although I remember talking about swimming and its benefits, I can't really recall much mainly because I had to really concentrate on not looking into the camera! I don't know how actors can just forget that it's there! It was an interesting experience and although I was only 'on' for 25 minutes, I was exhausted. Thank goodness it was all OK in one take, I don't think I could have repeated it!

## Kate Winslett eat you heart out

By..... She wouldn't let me tell you (I can be bribed)

Why did I agree to this? Was my first thought, after I'd been persuaded into taking part in a training video for GP's & nursing staff. I've just lost my front tooth and I'm all goofy. As it was too late to let them down now I felt obliged to attend the recording studio. This turned out to be a very ordinary semi in a residential area of Sholing "converted into small recording areas and a sound proof blue room. I nervously waited my turn, fortified with black coffee and choky biscuits wondering what the - I was doing here. After a brief chat I was shown into one of the converted bedrooms, a cosy fit with all the cameras sound and lighting equipment crowded around the GP's desk and chairs. The sound guy attached a microphone declaring it a much easier task on women as it protruded a little from their chests (what did he mean?) A quick sound check, a snap of the clapper board and we were off and they didn't even powder my nose. I have to admit, after the first two or three minutes I forgot about the cameras and crew and 35 minutes later I was told it was "a wrap", time flew by and it was a relatively painless experience. I hoped that they might get a couple of useful things out of it but was told they were going to use the full 35mins, I feel sorry for the poor devils who've got to sit through that lot! Just hope they find it useful. The best bit was a buffet lunch and a chance to chat with the production team, oh, and I got paid for it!, can't be bad eh! Have I seen the film? Definitely not or it would never have left the studio. I think my debut in the film business will also be my retirement, I haven't had any directors beating a path to my door. Ho hum **K.W. the second**

## Driving with Jessica - Chapter Four



I was in the car the other day with my family when I heard the sound of sirens. We were looking to see in what direction the sirens were coming when it all came flooding back to me. "I used to hate getting chased by ambulances" I said. They all looked at me. "Chased" my Mum said "you're supposed to pull over" "I know" I replied "but they used to chase me". I hated being in my car driving along when you would hear that dreaded sound creeping up on you. Then you would see it. The emergency vehicle tearing down the road horn going lights flashing, sirens blaring and you had **nowhere** to go!!! So I did as any other bad driver in my situation would, I took off. Heart beating fast thinking "oh god they are after me!" Trying to get away looking for a turning you could take while trying to anticipate what direction they were going to go so you could go the other!!! It was like a white knuckle ride at Alton towers!! Still Driving was just not coming naturally to me. Although I like to think that my creeping forward had improved somewhat as I hadn't had any more incidents of foot slipping and ending up in the path of oncoming traffic for some time, so I think I was making slow progress!!!

Still I was short of passengers as no one would get in the car with me. They would hear the horror stories from my family and before you know what was once me giving them a lift had suddenly turned into an "its okay Jess I will meet you there"! Just when I thought no one would ever get in my car again my sister and my (very) brave or (very) crazy friend Mandy said I could drive us to our Aqua class at Totton. I was delighted finally someone had faith in me again to not send them into the light prematurely!! The drive there was okay, no major setbacks and I think I must have been driving well as some lads in the car in front actually wanted us to follow them! Then it happened. I got into the car park and saw a speed bump! Don't panic I thought you can do this remember nice and smooth, approach nice and slow. Well I did approach slowly, so slow in fact that I managed to stall on top of the speed bump. I don't know if this has ever happened to you, but what an unpleasant experience. I seemed to stall in slow-mo, the car started violently jerking forward, jerking back going forward going back, flinging us back and forth like crash test dummies, for what seemed like forever before the engine actually stopped. People in the car park had all stopped to watch not believing what they were actually seeing!! Once again I had embarrassed myself driving. Then all of a sudden I couldn't stop laughing. Alison (my sister) and Mandy were howling with laughter. We stayed on top of the speed bump until my tears had cleared so I could make a dignified exit!!







## KEEPING PACE WITH PAIN

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### JOKES:

A boy called the doctor..

"Doctor, doctor come quick, my younger brother has just swallowed my pen."

"I'll be right over - what are you doing in the meantime?" "I'm using a pencil..."



At a party a woman was talking to a doctor. "What kind of a doctor are you?" she asked. "A Naval surgeon," he replied. "My, how you doctors specialize," she said.

**Why** don't oysters give to charity?  
Because they're shellfish.

I love deadlines. I especially like the whooshing sound they make as they go flying by.

**How** do you make a blonde laugh on a Saturday?  
Tell her a joke on a Wednesday.

**Why** won't sharks attack lawyers?  
Professional courtesy.

**Have** you ever noticed... anybody going slower than you is an idiot. And anyone going faster is a maniac. ~ George Carlin

### QUOTES:

I know God will not give me anything I can't handle. I just wish that He didn't trust me so much. ~Mother Teresa

It ain't what they call you, it's what you answer to. ~W.C. Fields

Before you put on a frown, make absolutely sure there are no smiles available. ~Jim Beggs

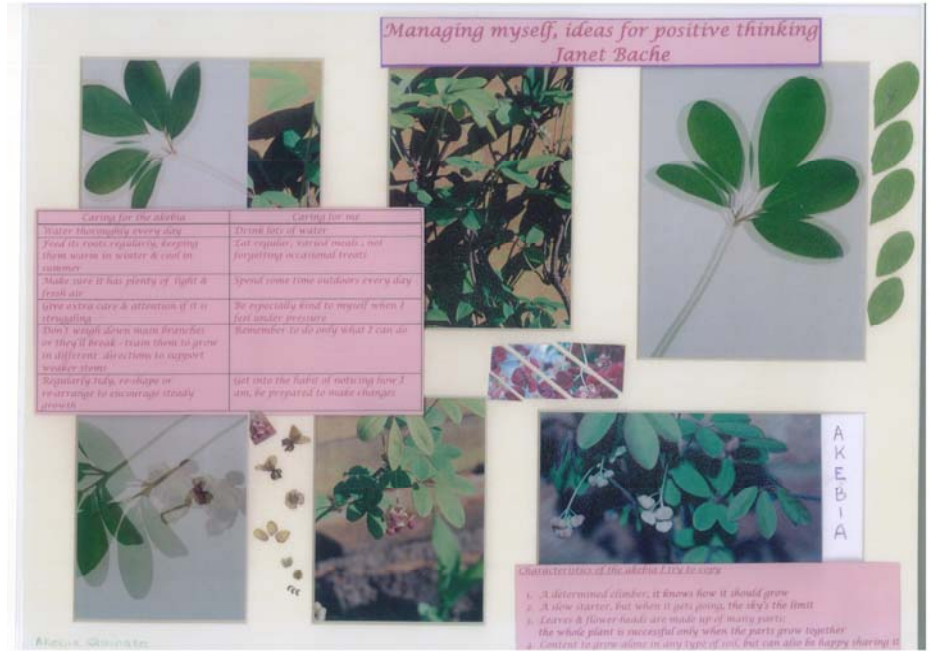
Nobody can make you feel inferior without your consent. ~Eleanor Roosevelt

### Forthcoming dates for your diary - Time 1pm.to 3pm unless otherwise stated.

- 🕒 **September 17th** Relaxation & Breathing Techniques with Debbie Harrison
- 🕒 **October 15th** Hearing Dogs for the Deaf Open Session
- 🕒 **November 19th** Development in Pharmacological Approaches to Pain Management with Dr Paul Schofield
- 🕒 **December 17th** Christmas Bash!!

KPWP would like to extend our thanks to the following companies:

Napp and Pfizer for the ongoing support that they provide and in addition Gruenthal who have just agreed also to help support our group during 2009/10.



I was inspired to design this picture after seeing art created by other people who are also living with chronic pain.

I enjoy gardening and photography, so I knew that they would be my starting point. When I researched the Akebia Plant, I was moved to use it as my subject. Janet Bache

### 20 Things We Can Learn from a Dog

1. Never pass up the opportunity to go for a joyride
2. Allow the experience of fresh air and the wind in your face to be pure ecstasy
3. When loved ones come home, always run to greet them
4. When it's in your best interest, practice obedience
5. Let others know when they have invaded your territory
6. Take naps and stretch before rising
7. Run, romp and play daily
8. Eat with gusto and enthusiasm
9. Be loyal
10. Never pretend to be something your not
11. If what you want lies buried, dig until you find it
12. When someone is having a bad day, be silent, sit close by and nuzzle them gently
13. Thrive on attention and let people touch you
14. Avoid biting when a single growl will do
15. On hot days drink lots of water and lie under a shady tree
16. When you're happy, dance about and wag your entire body
17. No matter how often you're scolded, run straight back and make friends
18. Delight in the simple joys of a long walk
19. Never be shy or embarrassed about displaying deep pleasure in physical contact situations
20. Greet each new day cheerfully and with enthusiasm. ~ From Janet

#### Disclaimer

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