



Merry Christmas



ISSUE 7

# KEEPING PACE

DECEMBER 2006



SOUTHAMPTON CHRONIC PAIN SUPPORT GROUP

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That time of Year



Doc's Ramblings,



Napp Visit



Ground Rules Revisited



## SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

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Beware, "may cause drowsiness"

It's that time of year again, do I wear a coat, a waterproof, short or long sleeves, I don't want to sound too much like an old historian but I remember when Spring was Spring, Summer was Summer, Autumn was Autumn and Winter was Winter, NOW you haven't a clue, mid October you're out in shorts and a tee shirt sunbathing, it's now December, I know I'm late with this one, but hey.....

Years ago we had proper Autumns, Winters with real snow, no fake stuff here. I remember as a child earning money from digging people out of the ice and snow down our road, walking in front of my dad's car in the snow when there was a heavy fog. My first job, I remember driving to work with no heating in the car, I had to start it with the starting handle because the battery was always flat, (what ever happened to starting handles). Goodness, I'm sounding just like my parents did when they were telling me about what life was like living in the war years and after with rationing.

Since the last newsletter we've had card making and silk painting with Tracy, (yes that is my ugly mush on the top right, I've man-

aged a little disguise, but if I do any more Joan would kill me). We had the lovely cream tea with wonderful scones supplied by Joan and Christine and not forgetting the physical activity with Babs. You can find The Docs and Wee Nurses ramblings on page 2 which give you in more on these.

I think it was back in July, a friend came round and gave me two little plants and told me they had been sent to me by one of his daughters, who had sown some seeds from a chili they had used in some cooking and all these little plants had grown. Well, you won't believe this, it turned out to be a competition, about who could grow the largest plants and biggest chilies - unbelievable, she is 10 years old and I'm, well, a bit older. Isn't it incredible how the competitive nature takes over? I was feeding them, talking to them, I had them on the windowsill and when the sun moved they moved with it. I'm not proud of myself but I did deserve to win, mine were competition entries, you've never seen chilies like it, they were like small cucumbers, well not quite but they were big. I

can't show you the photo's because I don't like bragging about beating a 10 year old - I should have let her win I suppose, as it was her chili plant - in fact at one stage she did say as she grew them they were really hers so there really wasn't a competition, she just lent them to me. Oh well you win some, you lose some. The moral of this story is - there is no moral.



Silk painting & card making in July



New Forest AOP group celebrate the news of the Action on Pain Resource & Information Library - "APRIL" Walk in Centre, at the Leonard Cheshire Centre, New Milton, December 2006

- Christmas gift suggestions:
- To your enemy, forgiveness.
  - To an opponent, tolerance.
  - To a friend, your heart.
  - To a customer, service.
  - To all, charity.
  - To every child, a good example.
  - To yourself, respect."
- ~ Oren Arnold



This is what we will see in February, car painting to raise money for Macmillan Cancer Support. I've seen more of the photo's, and they are great, but to see the real thing you will all have to join us at the February meeting.





### "DOC'S RAMBLINGS"



#### JULY SESSION

This afternoon saw the return of the talented artist Tracey Spice. This time she talked us through the intricacies of silk painting. A large group then sat round the table and produced some beautiful pictures. Those who did not fancy the painting made greeting cards out of a variety of papers, beads, ribbons and other bits and pieces Tracey kindly supplied. What was so nice about the afternoon was the sociability of sitting around a table chatting and yet being creative with our hands at the same time. Next month is August and there may be members away on holiday. We have therefore decided not to have a formal guest speaker but to enjoy an informal cream tea. Scone makers have volunteered to cook and Kevin is sourcing proper clotted cream from Devon! Sadly we seemed to lack home made jam makers but I'm sure something from a supermarket will suffice. Do come and join in the treat.



This beautiful picture was taken by Joan when she was exploring Hilliers Aboratum in

#### AUGUST SESSION

##### A wee bit of Nurses Rambling!

With the holiday season in full swing we had anticipated a quiet August meeting - how wrong were we! It was a large turn out, with several new faces and a few from the past were welcomed back. This was an "open session" and this gave the group the opportunity to discuss the topics and speakers that they would like to cover in future meetings. This included the return of the pharmacist and medication; personal safety and in the home from the Police, the Fire Brigade, Home Safe, Trading Standards & Accessibility. We hope to have this arranged for early in the New Year. This was followed by a Cream Tea - which was kindly supplied by the group members. To finish the meeting Steve gave a short talk on his hobby of wood turning and how he was able to use this as a form of distraction therapy when his pain was at its height. Steve also brought in examples of his work for the group to see.



##### Post script from Joan

**The Cream Tea Thief.....** "Taxi Joe" a newly retired greyhound became a member of my household, just prior to the August meeting. Taxi was refusing to walk on my tiled kitchen floor and nothing on earth would make him do so. Following the meeting I returned home with a box containing one scone, two jars of jam and a pot of clotted cream.



As I was in hurry to pick up my husband from work, I left the box in the middle of the kitchen floor, and quickly departed. On our return to the house crumbs were found on the hall carpet, **the dog had eaten my scone!** My husband went through to the room where Taxi's bed is to find neatly placed in the middle of his bed **two jars of jam and a pot of clotted cream!** So much for not doing tiled floors!

#### SEPTEMBER SESSION

We were delighted to welcome Babs Sharp to our meeting. She is a specialist in Physiotherapy for Chronic Pain. She gave us a useful explanation about nerves and how they behave (or possibly, more accurately, misbehave!) in chronic pain conditions. She stressed the importance of keeping moving and made us get up regularly to stretch throughout the meeting. Something that we should apply daily to all sorts of activities but something that we often find embarrassing to do if we are not in the company of others suffering with chronic pain. She reminded us of the necessity to pace our activities if we are to keep our pain levels under the best control. She also demonstrated how stress can form a vicious cycle with pain and emphasised the therapeutic role that regular relaxation can have in pain management. Our group continues to grow and we welcomed some new members this week. Next meeting Austin is going to do something very different to his usual line of work and show us how to use photos to make cards for Christmas. So we hope that lots of people will come along and not only give Austin some well deserved support but also learn a new skill.



#### OCTOBER SESSION

We had a relatively small but lively group meeting this month. Austin lead the meeting by describing how he and his wife had got into card making and how beneficial he had found this to be for his health, particularly his swollen hands. Word had obviously got out to other members of the group, many of whom seemed, also, to be avid card makers. They brought along samples of their craft. We had such a display of talent it was wonderful. I'm not sure we had much time to make many cards of our own but the opportunity to share ideas and admire other people's handiwork was lovely. We got a little further in planning our Christmas party and casting our Mummer's play. We will finalise the event at our November group so it is important that any members who want a say in how we "party" on December 21st must try and make this meeting. We would also like to say a big thank you to Austin and the members of the Edmund Kell Unitarian Church for their kind donation of money to our Southampton Support Group. Our thoughts so far are to put some of the gift towards setting up a library of helpful books for our members to borrow and the rest towards some software that Kevin might find useful when he produces our quarterly newsletter

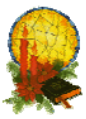


#### NOVEMBER SESSION

We were delighted to welcome Emma Davies to our group this month. She is the pharmacist at the Pain Clinic in Southampton and is very experienced at helping patients understand and rationalise their chronic pain medication. She talked about lots of topics ranging from how difficult it is to get the dosages right if you're using non-steroidal anti-inflammatory creams such as ibuprofen gel to the pros and cons of the different strengths of co-codamol. There was loads more to discuss and explain and so Emma has kindly offered to return in January. She is prepared to answer more individual questions and we will find a quiet corner so that those who wish will have privacy to do this.



Wouldn't life be worth the living  
Wouldn't dreams be coming true  
If we kept the Christmas spirit  
All the whole year through?



As most of you know a few of the Southampton AOP members went to Napp Pharmaceuticals in November, for a follow up to a meeting we had in Southampton concerning the development of their patient website. It was a very interesting visit; we were introduced to Napp by the medical director who gave us a talk on what Napp was doing now and how they are still a family owned business, which concentrates on the issues of pain management. He then went on to present some of the very interesting ways that we will manage pain in the future. Following this we went on a tour of the manufacturing plant to have a look at how things are done, unfortunately there were no samples, but we did come away with an insight into how those little things we pop into our mouths every day are made. As you can see by the photographs on the left we were all made to wear funny hats but there were no champagne corks flying nor was old lang syne being sung in the background. We had a very good trip and Napp looked after us very well.

These are some more of those, did you know's..... just for Christmas

The idea of presenting people you love with gifts is as old as the human race. The idea of exchanging gifts at Christmas time originated with the birth of Jesus, when three wise men travelled to deliver gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh to the newborn baby. Shepherds in the fields also came to give gifts to the newborn baby Jesus.



Everything changed when Clement Clarke Moore wrote the story/poem *'Twas the night before Christmas* in 1822. This story quickly became the most popular poem throughout the world, and children learned in it that Santa Claus brought gifts on Christmas Eve, and they started expecting Santa to bring them gifts as well. Children especially would look for gifts in their stockings hung up to dry by the fireplace. (So it's all Clement's fault).



### MISTLETOE



Mistletoe was used by Druid priests 200 years before the birth of Christ in their winter celebrations. They revered the plant since it had no roots yet remained green during the cold months of winter.

The ancient Celts believed mistletoe to have magical healing powers and used it as an antidote for poison, infertility, and to ward of evil spirits. The plant was also seen as a symbol of peace, and it is said that among Romans, enemies who met under mistletoe would lay down their weapons and embrace.



Scandinavians associated the plant with Frigga, their goddess of love, and it may be from this that we derive the custom of kissing under the mistletoe. Those who kissed under the mistletoe had the promise of happiness and good luck in the following year.

### CHRISTMAS 'SUPERSTITIONS

It is said :

- "The child born on Christmas Day will have a special fortune."
- "Snow on Christmas means Easter will be green."
- You will have as many happy months in the coming year, as the number of houses you eat mince pies in during Christmastime.
- In Greece, some people burn their old shoes during the Christmas season to prevent misfortunes in the coming year.
- To have good health throughout the next year, eat an apple on Christmas Eve.
- The gates of Heaven open at midnight on Christmas Eve. Those who die then go straight to Heaven (an Irish belief).
- Christmas candles should be left burning until Christmas morning and should rest undisturbed from time of lighting until they are snuffed.
- Singing Christmas carols at any time other than during the festive season is unlucky.



St. Nicholas is important in Greece as the patron of sailors. According to Greek tradition, his clothes are drenched with brine, his beard drips with seawater, and his face is covered with perspiration because he has been working hard against the waves to reach sinking ships and rescue them from the angry sea. Greek ships never leave port without some sort of St. Nicholas icon on board.



The spiritual side of Christmas often goes a little unnoticed amid the mad rush of present buying, decorating and food preparation. Whether you celebrate the renewal of nature, friendship, gratitude to the Universe or the birth of Christ, it is a very integral part of this festival and very enriching to include this dimension to the day. Many traditions have played a part in forming Christmas as we know it today (commercialism included!).



With so many new members we thought it would be a good to broach the ground rules again, so here is a modified version of the July '05 article with the additions from the November meeting for all to ponder, :~

### Ground Rules:

As the support group seemed to be doing so well and numbers are still steadily growing Norma and Joan wondered whether it was time to review the ground rules. The idea was that these should help everyone within the group to feel relaxed and able to participate freely. The ground rules will need to be revisited and developed as the group grows and membership alters and the intention was to return to them at the beginning of each meeting to decide if we still agree with them or want to change them and to let any new members who have come along on the day know what the group is all about. Here are the revised ground rules as of November '06:

*Promote positive side of living; Accept ups and downs; Accept all age groups; Know each others names & welcome new members; Respect each others views; Involvement; Making the branch work—working for each other & equal opportunities to all; Confidentiality within group; Equal opportunities; Sensitivities & awareness, to be sensitive to peoples needs and to respect people's personal space; Donations are voluntary*



We are on the Web

www.action-on-pain.co.uk



Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ Was Born



Action on  
**pain!**

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What can I give Him,  
Poor as I am?  
If I were a shepherd  
I would bring a lamb.  
If I were a Wise Man  
I would do my part.  
Yet what can I give Him?  
I give Him my heart.  
-Christina Rossetti



A big thank you to Bill (our man from the Forest!) for baking and decorating a fabulous Christmas Cake (without peel but with almonds) This cake is currently being raffled, with the raffle being drawn at the Christmas party on December 21st.

### Important Newsflash:~

Jim & Jessie Horrocks have done us proud, they have managed to secure a cheque for £240 from a local business to go towards the coming years expenses. This is absolutely fantastic news and I'm sure that you will join me in thanking Jim & Jessie and of course our sponsor/donator.

### F&S Property Management

### ACTION ON PAIN'S PHONE LINE

The dedicated telephone help-line, manned by people with chronic pain, provides expert advice and support based around their own experience.

Confidential and informal, **Pain Line** has gained a reputation for providing a quality service to their callers.

Call on: **0845 6031593**

### (lo-call rate)

As the call staff are all volunteers there may be times when the line is not manned, Please leave a message and they will get back to you.

The **Pain Line** is open from 0900 hrs to 2100 hrs Monday to Friday

Answer phone out of hours.

N.B. The **Pain Line** staff are not qualified to give medical advice, however the advice given is based around their day-to-day living with chronic pain.

### Future Meetings

**January 18th 2007** - "Expert Patient, Beverley Newman  
"Brown Bag Session" with Emma, Pharmacist  
Action on Pain AGM to follow this meeting at 3pm  
**February 15th 2007** - "Car Painting", Lynn Ansell



-What did the bald man say when he got a comb for Christmas ?  
Thanks, I'll never part with it !

-What did the big candle say to the little candle ?  
I'm going out tonight !

-How long does it take to burn a candle down ?  
About a wick !

-What do you have in December that you don't have in any other month ?  
The letter "D" !

-What do you call a letter sent up the chimney on Christmas Eve ?  
Black mail !

-Why does Father Christmas go down the chimney ?  
Because it soots him !

-What do snowmen eat for breakfast?  
Snowflakes.

-Why does Santa have 3 gardens?  
So he can ho-ho-ho.



If you think you can, you can. And if you think you can't, you're right.  
*Mary Kay Ash.*

When I was young, I found out that the big toe always ends up making a hole in a sock. So I stopped wearing socks. *Albert Einstein*

Setting a good example for the children takes all the fun out of middle age. *William Feather*

A stockbroker urged me to buy a stock that would triple it's value every year. I told him, "At my age, I don't even buy green bananas."  
*Claude Pepper*

### QUOTES:

*What is Christmas? It is tenderness for the past, courage for the present, hope for the future. It is a fervent wish that every cup may overflow with blessings rich and eternal, and that every path may lead to peace. ~ Agnes M. Pharo*

*If there is no joyous way to give a festive gift, give love away. ~ Unknown*

*Bless us Lord, this Christmas, with quietness of mind; Teach us to be patient and always to be kind. ~ Helen Steiner Rice*

*If you think in terms of a year, plant a seed; if in terms of ten years, plant trees; if in terms of 100 years, teach the people." ~ Confucius*

*"I haven't failed, I've found 10,000 ways that don't work " ~ Thomas Edison*

*"Blessed is the season which engages the whole world in a conspiracy of love." ~ Hamilton Wright Mabie*

### Disclaimer

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