

# CLAN



THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF LARYNGECTOMEE CLUBS NEWSLETTER

Issue No. 135

December 2015

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## A WORD FROM THE EDITOR

### NO CRUISING



Without a doubt, 2015 has been a tough year for Mr and Mrs Editor. No cruising at all! On the other hand, there have been the trips to New Zealand, Croatia and Swanage. And although there were no direct contacts with laryngectomees, we did encounter St Blaise, Patron Saint of Laryngectomees, in Dubrovnik (see page 4).

#### Challenging

It's certainly been a challenging year for NALC in the move from being an associated charity of Macmillan and towards independence and self-funding. And, as our President, Malcolm Babb reports, thanks to your generosity, great progress has been made. Sadly, Andy Gage passed on this year but we remember his enduring contribution to NALC and CLAN and especially to the website. And so we look forward to 2016 with some confidence. And, we sincerely hope, a return to cruising too!

*Ian Honeysett*  
**Ian Honeysett (Editor)**

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*The views expressed by the contributors are not necessarily those of the Editor or NALC. Great care has been taken to ensure accuracy but NALC cannot accept responsibility for errors or omissions.*

### Deadline for issue No. 136: 1 February 2016

**A big thank you to everyone  
for their very kind and generous  
donations throughout the year.**

**Alex McGuiggan, Treasurer**

To make a donation please complete and return this form to: NALC Suite 16, Tempo House, 15 Falcon Road, Battersea, London SW11 2PJ

I would like to make a one off payment and enclose a cheque payable to **NALC**.

I would like to make a one off payment of £ ..... by card.

*(A facility to do this will soon be available on the website)*

Name on card .....

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Start date □ □ □ □ Expiry date □ □ □ □

Security code (3 digits on back of card) □ □ □

If you would like to make a regular donation, please set up a standing order through your bank account to:

**National Association of Laryngectomee Clubs**

Sort Code: **20-46-60**  
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If you are a UK Tax payer, may NALC Gift Aid your donation? Yes  No

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NALC reclaim on my donation in the appropriate tax year.

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## Syrup of Figs for my Baltic Cruise

My wife and I have just returned from a 14 nights Baltic cruise leaving from Southampton and going as far as St Petersburg in Russia. Most of the time we were in the Baltic Sea and the cruise was very calm and enjoyable with many great stops along the way. Around 6.00 pm we usually met up with 3-4 other couples for a pre-dinner drink, with us being the only UK citizens. This was the time of day when our new-found group told each other about our day's events and this usually led on to other lifetime experiences and a few jokes. During our first week a Philippine lady served us and I must say she looked after us well. During the second week the staff in our chosen bar were changed around and now our main server was a man from northern Europe, who again looked after us well.

It was on his second night that the waiter called me aside for a quiet word. He told me that during the first week of the cruise he had been working around one of the poolside bars by day and he had come into contact with a baldheaded passenger who could only talk if he pressed the button on his neck. He said that in all of his time working for Princess Cruises he had never seen anything like this before. He then revealed that on seeing me for the first time the previous night, he thought I was the same person but this time wearing a wig. We had a laugh and I explained to him why the two of us had a button on our throats. I then went back to our table and told the others and this was now the main point of conversation for the next few minutes. This led on to me telling the others about the cockney slang for a wig, calling it a 'syrup' as in syrup of figs. My wife, who is Cornish, has never really got to grips with this and has on several occasions seen someone with a wig and said look they've got a fig.

Before we went for dinner the wife and I had a walk around the ship looking at all the men's necks in an attempt to spot this other passenger. Then after a short while we saw one of our drinking team who told us she had just spotted the other laryngectomee guest in the photograph gallery area. We shot up to this area and

sure enough my wife found him. I introduced ourselves to him and his wife and told him the waiter's story, and I was so glad to say he also found it to be funny.

### How Long?

We had a chat for a while, and as I am quickly finding out, the first question asked when two laryngectomee patients meet each other seems to be "how long have you had it?". He was now in his eighth year while I have only just reached my first anniversary. He went on to tell us about some of his experiences and said he had moved to a new area to live a couple of years ago. On two occasions he had called the hospital for a valve change and they told him they would have to order one. The first time it took two weeks before he had it replaced. I asked why he was not in possession of a spare valve and he informed us that he had never ever been issued a replacement. It would not be correct to say which area he lived in, but I did tell him of the great treatment and care that I have received from our ENT department at Treliske hospital at Truro. I suppose this is what you could call postcode treatment, but they would be very hard pushed to match our great team.

*Terry & Bridgette Hayes (From the Speak Easy, Cornwall Newsletter)*

## NALC President's Christmas Message



2015 has been an important year for NALC. Could we manage the transition from being an associated charity of Macmillan and the funding that status provided to become an independent and self-supporting group?

The response of our clubs and members of the laryngectomee community has been magnificent and we have exceeded our expectations of the income we have received from donations and other sources. Consequently the outlook for the future is encouraging.

There have been other significant events during the year. We have moved to new premises, and this is working well. Andy Gage, an NALC Vice-President and Webmaster, passed away in April and this was a terrible shock to us all. We will not forget his important contribution to both NALC and the Central London Laryngectomee group.

I pass on my thanks to the NALC Officers, Committee Members, staff and club members around the country for their hard work during the year.

I send Christmas greetings to all our readers and wish you all a happy New Year.



*Malcolm Babb*

## Notes from the President

**NALC Constitution** At a recent Extraordinary General Meeting an amendment was approved unanimously. The change involves extending our aims and purposes as stated:

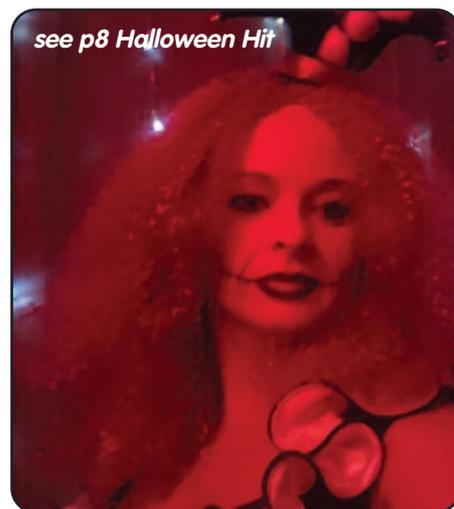
"To collaborate with other head and neck cancer patient groups in areas of common interest, including extending support to such patients through our affiliated clubs."

Many of our groups already have patient members who are not laryngectomees and we also want to improve our links with other patient groups.

**International Tracheostomy Masterclass, Doncaster Royal Infirmary** In October, for the second year running, I was invited to contribute to this event, which attracts clinicians from all around the UK and beyond. I ran a workshop aimed at showing the challenges faced by laryngectomees after their operation, especially their needs in emergency situations.



see p8 Halloween Hit



## Slippery Elm

I have been a fan of Slippery Elm powder since soon after my laryngectomy.

After my laryngectomy I had trouble eating anything acidic such as tomatoes, capsicums, onions etc. or drinking beer and orange juice as I would suffer acid reflux. And once the reflux started I had coughing fits that seemed to trigger more reflux and so on. It was getting to a point where I did not look forward to meal times at all and was living on a more and more restricted diet.

Once I was put on to Slippery Elm I used it whenever I suffered from acid reflux and each night before going to bed. I used to mix a heaped teaspoon of Slippery Elm powder with about half a cup of milk, gradually mixing very thoroughly before drinking.

### Daily at First

I used Slippery Elm at least once a day for about two years and since then I only use Slippery Elm powder if I suffer acid reflux, which thankfully is not very often these days. In fact it would be at least six months since I last used it.

Slippery Elm (*Ulmus rubra* or *Ulmus fulva*) is a native of North America. The inner bark is the part of the tree that has medicinal properties, it is extracted from a ten year old tree and dried. The subsequently ground bark is sold in two forms: a coarse powder for use in poultices and a fine powder for making a mucilaginous drink. It also has nutritive properties and can be used for infants and invalids.



Red Indians were well versed in the use of poultices of Slippery Elm bark powder for wounds, boils, ulcers and burns. During the American Revolution, surgeons treated gunshot wounds with a bark poultice. Toothache can also be treated with a bark poultice.

A drink made from Slippery Elm is effective against coughs and soothes the throat. It is also used to treat gastric problems including GERD and acid reflux, for which I am recommending it. The high mucilage content adheres to the wall of the oesophagus and soothes any irritation and tends to sit on top of the stomach contents preventing further reflux.

Before taking Slippery Elm, talk to your doctor, pharmacist, or health care professional if you have allergies (especially to plants), have any medical condition, or if you take other medicines or other herbal/health supplements. Slippery Elm may not be recommended in some situations.

There are a number of links on the internet, and a good place to start is [www.botanical.com/botanical/mgmh/e/elmli09.html](http://www.botanical.com/botanical/mgmh/e/elmli09.html).

*(From Still Talking, NSW Newsletter)*

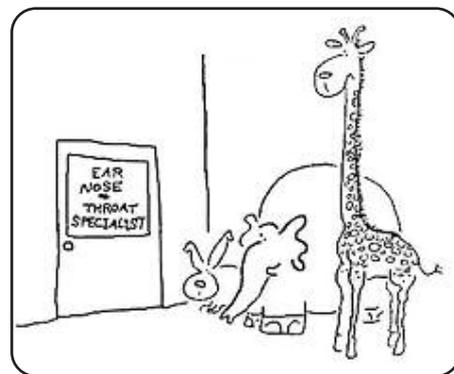
## St Blaise

You can't visit Dubrovnik in Croatia without hearing the name of St Blaise, a physician and bishop of Sebastea in historical Armenia (modern Sivas, Turkey). We knew him as the Patron



Saint of people with injuries and illnesses of the throat. This was due to the occasion when a distraught mother, whose only child was choking on a fishbone, threw herself at his feet and implored his intercession. Touched at her grief, he offered up his prayers, and the child was cured. But we soon discovered that he is also the Patron Saint of Dubrovnik due to his appearing in a vision in 971 to Canon Stojko of St Stephen's Cathedral. He revealed the plan of the Venetians to spy on the city's defences and Stojko warned the Senate. The Feast of St Blaise is celebrated on 3 February when various of his relics are paraded through the streets.

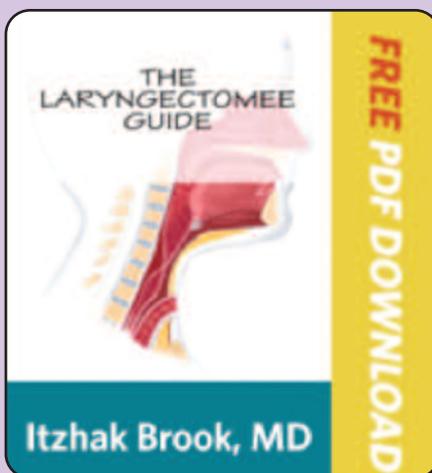
St Blaise is also the Patron Saint of wool combers as he was martyred by being beaten with iron combs and then beheaded.



see p8 Halloween Hit

## Dr Brook's Books

Dr Itzhak Brook writes: "I am happy to inform you that my free books *The Laryngectomee Guide* and *My Voice, a Physician's Personal Experience with Throat Cancer* were endorsed by the American Academy of Otolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgery. The e-book versions of the books are available (free) on my website (<http://dribrook.blogspot.co.uk/>). The site contains videos, articles, and information helpful for oral and head and neck cancer patients. Paperback copies of the books are available on Amazon.com. You can also watch my recent lecture 'Speaking after laryngectomy' for Speech and Language pathologists given at Iona College, New York.



# My Reiki Experience

I was diagnosed with cancer of the throat just before Christmas 2008. I then had a total laryngectomy in January 2009 and a partial thyroid removal at Derriford Hospital in Plymouth. All was well until I received the 37 sessions of radiotherapy accompanied by chemotherapy. Over the next three or four years I increasingly suffered with pains in my throat, difficulty in eating, drinking, and generally swallowing. This reached a stage whereby I was having to have the speech valve in my throat changed every week or so. The radiotherapy treatment had caused such tissue damage to the inside of my throat that it had caused it to tighten, and things were obviously not quite right. My Consultant Otolaryngologist and Head & Neck/Thyroid Surgeon tried various surgical procedures to correct the situation to no avail. I was unable to eat, drink or talk for almost a year and had to take fluids through the PEG in my stomach.



## Pectoral Flap Surgery.

In 2014, my Consultant in Plymouth referred me to another at the Sunderland Royal. After interviews and pre-tests, I underwent Pectoral Flap surgery. Simply put, muscle tissue was taken from my left pectoral muscle and relocated to the inside of my throat. This was a total success and very soon I was eating, drinking and talking once again. I was prescribed physical exercises which are similar to those prescribed to patients who have undergone a mastectomy. I have so much admiration for the skills of those surgical consultants both in Plymouth and Sunderland. I also admire the skills of the Speech & Language Therapist in Plymouth who has so patiently and caringly catered to my every need since those early days.

Some weeks after that operation I started to develop muscular pain in my left shoulder and arm. I think muscular pain is always difficult to describe, but I would say that this was similar to a dull toothache going down my arm! The pain was severe enough to keep me awake at nights and it was sometimes difficult to know which way to lay in bed.

Eventually I sought private assistance from a Sports Therapist. I still had the shark-bite scar on my chest where the wound had been clipped together with 80 or so metal clips. I think the therapist was a little intimidated by this and began to doubt her abilities. She was, after all, used to treating sports injuries rather than cancer survivors. She treated the area around my shoulder whilst trying to keep away from the wounded area. Although these massage sessions were relaxing they were not really doing anything for the pain. So she then referred me to an Orthopaedic Therapist.

This therapist complemented the continuing treatment from the Sports Therapist and, I thought, showed a greater understanding of the problem. She too massaged the surrounding area but prescribed me more physical exercises. The cost of the weekly sessions with these two therapists was quite steep and this went on for several months.

## Shoulder and Elbow Clinic

It was while I was waiting for a routine ENT appointment that I was watching the in-house television service in the waiting room. I learned of the existence of a Shoulder and Elbow Clinic. I had not previously realised that such a clinic existed and so I made enquiries. It transpired that I had to be referred by my GP. I was duly referred and received an appointment within a month or so. I was given very extensive tests and scans and the Orthopaedic Consultant said there was some damage inside my shoulder and this in turn was causing the nerve pain down along my left arm. He recommended three courses of action:

- Do nothing and persevere.
- Have a course of three steroid injections in my shoulder and,
- If that didn't work, consideration could be given to keyhole surgery.

We both agreed that the course of steroid injections might be the best way to go, and he injected me immediately. The injection itself was very painful to have but that soon passed. The Consultant then made a further appointment for me in a month's time. I slept that night, and next day the pain was much relieved although it hadn't disappeared completely. As advised by the Consultant, I continued the home exercises and the weekly visits to the two therapists, but after a while these visits became less frequent until eventually both said they could do no more for me. A relief really as they were quite expensive!

## Reiki

I was reading an article in the local newspaper. I had never heard of Reiki before and being as cynical as the next man, I read more about it on the internet. Reiki is based on the idea that energy flows through us. This life force energy directly relates to our quality of life.

If someone's life force energy is low, then such a person is more likely to get sick or feel stressed, and when it is high, we are more capable of being happy and healthy.

The practitioner is able to direct, enhance and balance this flow of energy.

At this stage, with the continuing pain in my shoulder and left arm, I was willing to try anything. And so it was that I made contact with Venita who very kindly invited me to my first session of Reiki at the Mustard Tree Cancer Support Unit in Plymouth. Venita interviewed me to ascertain the problems I had and then proceeded with my first session. At no time was I indoctrinated into doing anything, nor coerced or pressured into doing anything I didn't want to do. I found that first session to be totally relaxing in mind and body... and in a rather exhilarating way. I find this difficult to explain as I hadn't experienced anything quite like that before and so I decided to have a further session. I then continued with further weekly sessions.

In the meantime, I was waiting for the appointment for my second steroid injection. I received a letter in the post to say that my second appointment had been delayed a month. Later, I received another letter to say that my appointment had been delayed yet another month.

I did eventually manage to get a somewhat belated appointment at the Shoulder and Elbow Clinic but this time not with the



Consultant. The doctor that saw me put me through various physical tests and gave me the inevitable once-over. I informed him the pain was still there although it was now quite manageable. We mutually agreed that the second and third steroid injections should not be necessary but if the pain level should go up again I could return for further treatment.

And so I continued with my weekly Reiki sessions. As the sessions progressed, so the pain in my shoulder and arm reduced dramatically. At my most recent session I explained to Venita that the pain in my arm had all but gone. There was still residual pain in my shoulder but totally manageable. I casually said "You and Reiki seem to have done the work on my shoulder and arm." Venita responded by saying she was so happy that I was feeling better and was convinced that the Reiki healing had played a huge role. Venita then explained that the body responds to the Reiki energy and knows how to heal itself... the healing takes place on physical, emotional, mental and spiritual levels. Venita added that she was merely a 'conduit' for the Reiki energy.

*Geoffrey N. Read*

## Coffee Money

I received £800 from Ward 29 (ENT), Royal Victoria Hospital Belfast – this was the proceeds of a coffee morning that they held to fund raise for us on 1 October and the nurse who headed it up, Daphne Riddell, said that they would hope to do something similar for us again in the future. The people in the photograph along with me are Daphne Riddell (CNS nurse) and Mr Barry Devlin (ENT surgeon). They were so pleased to raise this very commendable sum of money for us.

*Alex McGuiggan*



## Better In Lincs

A new machine called a linear accelerator is improving treatment for cancer patients in Lincolnshire. The first of three new state-of-the-art radiotherapy machines is already improving treatment for cancer patients across Lincolnshire. As previously reported, a new machine called a linear accelerator was brought in at Lincoln County Hospital at the end of June to deliver radiotherapy to cancer patients. It works by delivering high energy x-rays to the patient's tumour. The new machine is part of a £6.7 million investment by United Lincolnshire Hospitals NHS Trust to replace all three linear accelerators at Lincoln hospital by 2017 and to improve the environment in which treatment is delivered.

Dr Miguel Panades, consultant oncologist at Lincoln County Hospital, told the BBC the machine targets the tumour without damaging surrounding tissue. He said: "It has a small CT scanner attached to the machine. We would take those images to give us an accurate position of the tumour so a few seconds later the treatment is going in the right place." Throat cancer patient David Perkins started his treatment on the old machines and is now using the linear accelerator. He told the BBC: "The old scanner is not as computerised as the new one. It is like sitting in a Rolls Royce with the new one and a Robin Reliant with the old scanner. While the treatment is in place, there is no pain. You do not know anything is being done."



Two other machines are currently on order. They come as ULHT was classified as requiring improvements, including in the treatment of cancer care. This new equipment has been accompanied by a refurbishment of the department to provide easier access for patients and a more comfortable environment. The investment will allow the department to continue to deliver high quality radiotherapy services to the people of Lincolnshire and develop new techniques further to improve services. As previously reported, senior business manager at the trust, Lisa Vickers, said: "We are delighted to see the first of our new LINAC machines in service. This will allow us to offer our patients radiotherapy treatment using modern techniques locally. The feedback we have had from patients treated on the new machine has been excellent and they like the new environment much better."

*This article was published by the Lincolnshire Echo on 18 August 2015 and was included in the PLC Newsletter.*

## Broccoli and Stilton Soup

### Ingredients

1 to 2 heads of broccoli  
2 to 3 ozs (50 to 75 g) Stilton  
Knob of butter  
1 stock cube  
¼ pint of cow or soya milk  
Salt & pepper

### Method

Wash and chop the broccoli. Place in a saucepan. Throw in the Stilton, butter and seasoning. Then add the stock and extra water to almost level with the broccoli. Bring to the boil and leave to simmer for about 20 to 25 minutes. Wait for it to cool slightly before adding the milk and liquidising. Season further as desired. Extra herbs or fresh cream can also be added at the last minute.

Preparation and cooking time:  
30 to 35 minutes



*Patricia & Clare Sternfield*

Taken from *Soups & Puddings* produced by THANCS Group. Minimum donation (from non-laryngectomees) of £2.00 per copy. THANCS group: Hawthorn Suite, Worcestershire Royal Hospital, Charles Hastings Way, Worcester WR5 1DD.



# Can Aspirin Stop Cancer Returning?

**Biggest-ever clinical trial could be a 'game-changer' for future treatment of the disease:**

- Study will recruit 11,000 patients and run at more than 100 UK centres.
- Over-the-counter drug has already been linked to preventing heart attacks.
- Trial is being funded by Cancer Research UK and National Institute for Health Research.
- Officials urge people not to start taking it unless approved by their doctor.

The world's largest clinical trial to see whether taking aspirin every day can stop cancer returning has begun in the UK. The study will recruit 11,000 patients who have recently had... or are having... treatment for bowel, breast, oesophageal, prostate or stomach cancer. It will run at more than 100 centres in a study that will last for up to 12 years.

Aspirin is already proven to help prevent heart attacks and could change future cancer treatment if successful. Researchers will compare a group of people taking 300mg of aspirin daily, a group taking 100mg of aspirin daily and a group taking dummy drugs. The over-the-counter drug is already proven to help prevent heart attacks and strokes in some people. 'Unless you are on the trial, it's important not to start taking aspirin until we have the full results as aspirin isn't suitable for everyone, and it can have serious side-effects.'

## Previous Research

Previous research has suggested it could also prevent some types of cancer. The trial is being funded by Cancer Research UK and the National Institute for Health Research. Its overall aim is to see whether taking aspirin every day for five years can stop or delay cancers that have been caught and treated at an early stage from coming back. 'There's been some interesting research suggesting that aspirin could delay or stop early-stage cancers coming back, but there's been no randomised trial to give clear proof,' said Professor Ruth Langley, chief investigator from the Medical Research Council Clinical Trials Unit at University College London. 'This trial aims to answer this question once and for all. 'If we find that aspirin does stop these cancers returning, it could change future treatment... providing a



cheap and simple way to help stop cancer coming back and helping more people survive. But, unless you are on the trial, it's important not to start taking aspirin until we have the full results as aspirin isn't suitable for everyone, and it can have serious side-effects.'

## Some Benefits

Aspirin is the common name for acetylsalicylic acid... a painkiller which can be traced back to Greek times. It is an established treatment for heart disease patients because it makes blood less 'sticky', helping to prevent the formation of blood clots in the artery which can lead to a heart attack. Because of this it is already taken daily by more than two million angina sufferers in the UK to protect against further attacks and against strokes. Thousands more take it to ward off heart disease. But this latest research is just one of a flurry of studies in the past few years which have claimed that the drug may also help treat other serious illnesses... including prostate cancer, heart disease, deep vein thrombosis (DVT) and bowel cancer.

Costing barely 2p a day, it is thought to work by reducing the number of blood clots that tumours can hide in. Dr. Fiona Reddington, Cancer Research UK's head of population research, said: 'Aspirin's possible effects on cancer are fascinating and we hope this trial will give us a clear answer on whether or not the drug helps stop some cancers coming back. The study will recruit 11,000 patients who have recently had, or are having, treatment for bowel, breast, oesophageal, prostate or stomach cancer.'

*This article was published by Kate Pickles for Mailonline on 22nd October 2015 and was included in the PLC Newsletter*

## Doctors!



### Huff Post

*My doctor is amazing! If you tell him that you want a second opinion, he'll go outside and then come back in again.*

*He gave one patient six months to live. At the end of the six months, the patient hadn't paid his bill, so the doctor gave him another six months.*

*While he was talking to me, his nurse came in and said, "Doctor, there's a man here who thinks that he's invisible." The doctor replied, "Tell him that I can't see him."*

*Another time, a man came running into the office and shouted, "Doctor, doctor! My son just swallowed a roll of film!" The doctor replied, "Well, let's wait and see what develops."*

*One patient came in and said, "Doctor, I have a serious memory problem." The doctor asked, "When did it start?" The man replied, "When did what start?"*

*I remember one time I told my doctor that I had a ringing in my ears. His advice was... "Don't answer it!"*

*My doctor has his share of problem cases. One patient said to him, "Doctor, I think I'm a bell." The doctor handed him some pills and said, "Here, take these. If they don't work, give me a ring."*

*Another guy told the doctor that he thought he was a deck of cards. The doctor told him, "Sit over there. I'll deal with you later."*

*When I told my doctor that I had broken my leg in two places, he told me to stop going to those places.*

*You know, doctors can be very frustrating. You wait a month for an appointment, then he says, "I wish you had come to see me sooner."*

From the PLC Newsletter



# News from the Clubs

## The Windpipers, Blackpool

They had their annual outing in July – once again going on the Fish & Chip Cruise, boarding *The Kingfisher* at Barton Grange Garden Centre. It was a lovely evening as they sailed to Bilsborrow and then towards Garstang, watching the wildlife on the way. They then held a quiz: cartoon characters, general knowledge (one question was: "What does DVD stand for?" One answer, which caused great mirth, was "Dick Van Dyke"). Finally, there were TV theme tunes. All great fun and back at Barton Grange by 9.30 pm. Then, on 28 November, a trip to the St Nicholas Fayre in York, with its Morris Dancers, street theatre, carols, buskers and craft fair. Their Christmas Party is on 19 December at the Dalmeny Hotel, St Annes with a 'Take That' Tribute Night.

## 20:20 Voice

They had fewer riders for the Skegness bike ride than normal but the results of the sponsorship were incredible as their team from Barrow-upon-Soar (Team Helen) raised some £2000! This should have guaranteed the ladies involved the 'team sponsorship prize' kindly awarded by Karl Storz (Medical Suppliers). They ended September with our annual meal night at the Chef & Spice restaurant, with 53 people attending – and what a night it was folks! Their restaurateur took it into his head to make a speech and then Rob Willson proudly presented their cheque for £10,000 for the 'Biopsy Grabber' they had promised to buy their ENT department some time ago.



Their good friend and patron Mr Willie Thorne kept the room in high spirits as he proceeded with the raffle – amid much amusement and laughter – and even ended the evening with a mini auction. As supporters filed in, they found a tube of Smarties with an instruction leaflet; this caused some amusement as they asked the new owners of each tube to enjoy the contents at their leisure and then to fill the Smartie tubes with 20p pieces: they even gave them the charity bank account details for when they has accomplished the task! It will be interesting to see how much this initiative actually raises. The evening actually raised £590.07p with one diner (completely separate to our event) donating a pocketful of loose change to the raffle ladies – without even wanting a ticket! How nice was that?

## Chinwags

Six club members visited the Falkirk Wheel on 21 August. It was followed by a boat trip and then lunch for a splendid day out.



## Nationwide Pilot Scheme

The PLC Newsletter contains an article by Victoria Bischoff for *The Daily Mail* of 15 September 2015 which says: "Nationwide is piloting a scheme where customers affected by cancer will be able to call experts trained by the Macmillan charity. Cancer sufferers are to be given extra financial support through a telephone service launched by Britain's biggest building society. Last month, Money Mail revealed how vulnerable customers are routinely let down by financial companies when they need help the most. Money Mail's Looking After Your Legacy campaign has been championing better service for families who suffer a bereavement or are dealing with sick relatives. Now Nationwide is piloting a scheme where customers affected by cancer will be able to call experts trained by charity Macmillan."

The full service is due to launch in October. Callers will be assigned a case worker with the power to waive late payment fees, extend overdrafts and offer mortgage repayment holidays. One in two people in the UK will be diagnosed with cancer during their life, according to Cancer Research UK. Those who need to take time off work for treatment... or to care for loved ones... can quickly find themselves in financial difficulty. Yet a report by Macmillan reveals most cancer patients are too scared to ask banks for help because they fear they will be turned away or even be forced to pay off credit card or mortgage debt. Alison Robb, group director at Nationwide, says: "By connecting people to the support they need, we hope to lessen a burden at a point when money really should be the last thing on their mind."

## Peace of Mind



Plant three rows of peas:

1. Peas of mind
2. Peas of heart
3. Peas of soul

Plant four rows of squash:

1. Squash gossip
2. Squash indifference
3. Squash grumbling
4. Squash selfishness

Plant four rows of lettuce:

1. Lettuce be faithful
2. Lettuce be kind
3. Lettuce be patient
4. Lettuce really love one another

No garden without turnips:

1. Turnip for meetings
2. Turnip for service
3. Turnip to help one another

To conclude our garden we must have thyme:

1. Thyme for each other
2. Thyme for family
3. Thyme for friends
4. Thyme for yourself

Water freely with patience and cultivate with love.

There will be much fruit in your garden because you reap what you sow.

*(Still Talking Newsletter of NSW)*

# News from the Clubs

## Speak Easy, Cornwall

During the last quarter they visited the Elizabethan Trerice Manor, which is very interesting, the lunch was good and so was the weather; August brought the rain, so the Burncoose Nurseries visit was confined to the tea room, leaving the gardens for another time, but a second tea shop stop at Penventon nurseries in Lanner provided excellent food. This month found them at the Victoria Inn for lunch when they discussed:

- Ambulance service for laryngectomees: The latest information they have received is that the SW Ambulance Service can be contacted with the following information so that they are made aware of a neck breather at that address: Name & address; Telephone number; Mobile phone number; Date of birth. Also, please advise them if nobody at that address can speak. You will need to re-confirm every six months that you are still at that address, so they can keep their records updated.
- Membership: They have been delighted to welcome new members during the last 18 months but, in common with other groups in Cornwall and Devon, active membership has declined. All understand that it is difficult for some members to attend and also that hospital visits take precedence. For some time now all social events have been shared between Speak Easy and

Recovery Clubs, although at this time they are not proposing to amalgamate. They would like to arrange to meet with the professionals at Treliske to discuss the future of both Clubs. They continue to provide 'goody bags' to new patients on request from SLT, but would like to follow this through in some useful way to help those adjusting to their new lives.

- The Macmillan Cove Centre: Site surveys have begun and it is hoped that the centre will open by this time next year. It is thought that about 100 volunteers will be needed along with even more money to be raised. A launch campaign is being planned for December/January. If all the suggested ideas are implemented The Cove will be excellent for all cancer patients.
- Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly Cancer Patient and Carer Group: Dave has been attending meetings of the group which aims to represent the interest of people who have been affected by cancer. They have told of trials of new drugs and treatments, and said that two Macmillan GPs and a nurse facilitator have been recruited in order to improve communication and the work between Acute Trusts and GPs. One GP will be based in North Cornwall and the other in the West; the nurse will cover the middle of the county.

## Plymouth Club (PLC)

Recent events include: Friday, 18 September 2015: The World's Biggest Coffee Morning. The Mustard Tree Cancer Support Centre held their event in aid of Macmillan. Members of The Plymouth Laryngectomy Club – PLC were in attendance and donated cakes or buns which were then sold off. Raffle prizes were also donated. Lots of people were coming in to buy cakes and the place was very busy. The Mustard Tree held their event a little early this year as the national event for Macmillan Cancer Support was held on Friday, 25 September 2015. The PLC also made an additional monetary donation.



Friday, 2 October 2015: Funeral of Ivor Housan. Ivor was a throat cancer patient who died tragically in a house fire in Cawsand in August 2015. Ivor was not a member of the PLC nor was he a member of the Speak Easy Club in Cornwall. Geoff & Jean attended the funeral to represent the PLC. In accordance with Ivor's wishes, a cheque was handed over to Julie, Ivor's daughter, for the Cat's Protection League on behalf of the PLC. The entourage proceeded from Cawsand, driving along the cliff tops on a beautiful sunny day, and on to the crematorium at Bodmin where the Celebration of Life took place. It was a lovely service and some of Ivor's favourite music pieces were played. The service concluded with a rendition of 'Always Look on the Bright Side of Life'. Julie was so very pleased that the PLC was represented at the service and asked for her especial thanks be passed on to everyone for the support of the Club.

Monday, 5 October 2015: PLC Away Day: A Tour of Plympton Fire Training Centre. Members enjoyed a tour of the Centre where Neil Willmott gave a most enthusiastic talk whilst showing members around. This proved to be an extremely interesting venture. A donation was made to The Firefighters' Charity. The day was rounded off with luncheon at the Lord Louis Restaurant & Carvery at Plympton.

## Halloween Hit

My grandad had cancer three years ago so I wanted to raise money and awareness. I decided on holding a Halloween party and raffle. I went to local companies: Tanznhair, the Toby Carvery, Hollywood Bowl, Empire Cinema, Tesco and Partyman World. They all donated raffle prizes which I greatly appreciated. My sister also made cakes to sell at 50p each. We raised a grand total of £308.17p! Thanks to family and friends for a great event, which we all enjoyed. The photos show Emma and her Grandad, plus some scary partygoers.

*Emma Styles*

