



Swanfield Monthly

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The **Annual General Meeting** will be held on **TUESDAY 28th APRIL 2009** – at 7 pm for a 7.30 pm prompt start. Notices of the meeting, minutes and the accounts will be sent out at the beginning of April – and electronically for those of you who elected for that format. Reports on the Centre's activities will be made, together with the accounts for last year. Just as importantly, you all have the opportunity to elect your new committee to serve for the next 12 months. If you feel you would like to serve on the Committee, or perhaps you know someone who would, - please start thinking about it NOW. Nomination forms will be available from 1st April 2009 at the Centre. There are normally 6 Committee meetings per year that you would be expected to attend. Please contact Alistair at the Centre if you would like to know more about what is involved by being on the Committee.

Counselling for MS Therapy Centre Members

Freda Cunningham was until recently working on a Monday with the MS Therapy Centre covering for Maya whilst on Maternity leave. Freda had recently retired following a successful career spanning 27 years in the NHS. During the last thirteen years, she was working in the Oral and Maxillo Facial Department at St John's Hospital in Livingston where she developed and provided a counselling and support care service for patients suffering from Oral Cancer and their relatives.

Having a qualification in counselling, Freda's pioneering work in this new field of holistic care was recognised and was invited to join two National Committees. These are SCAN (South East Scotland Cancer Network) and SIGN (Scottish Intercollegiate Guideline Network). The committees prepared and published the Scottish Guideline on Oral Cancer services and protocols.

During her time at the Centre, Freda noted that a counselling service for members and their families would be useful and complement other services already on offer. If you would like to discuss counselling, please contact Freda in confidence on 0131 334 5814.

In the meantime, we would like to thank Freda on behalf of all the members for her work at the Centre and wish her all the best for the future.

Blog update

VITAMIN D: A recent blog on our website highlights progress in vitamin D research relating to MS. Professor George Ebers, Research Professor in Neurology at the University of Oxford and a team from the UK and Canada have found that **adequate intake of Vitamin D helps to control a gene known to increase MS risk**. The team say the study implies that mothers taking Vitamin D supplements during pregnancy and then giving it to their children in their early years may reduce the risk to a child of developing MS later in life. They also note that accumulating evidence suggests that it can reduce the risk of developing cancer and offer protection from other autoimmune diseases.

So how much Vitamin D is 'adequate'? Vitamin D is obtained through sun exposure and fish oils. A report on Vitamin D published in April 2008 by Oliver Gillies (available in the Centre) examines the evidence and discusses the quantities. He notes that government guidelines suggest a safe level of 1000 IUs, or 25µg per day, but results of trials show that most people in Scotland need up to **5000µg, or 5g, per day** because of the lack of sunlight during the winter months. Gillies also notes that use of sunscreen can reduce vitamin D formation significantly and instead recommends that careful sun exposure without sunscreen, (but obviously not burning!), is preferable in our climate.

Annual renewal of membership and 200 club membership

Membership payments of £7 for full members and £3.50 for associate members are now due for the year 1st April 2009 – 31st March 2010.

We have decided that membership of our 'mini-lottery', the 200 Club, will now run for the same period. This will make renewal easier, both for members to remember and staff to administrate! We therefore invite all existing players to renew their entry into the weekly draw **now**, with payments based upon when you signed up, at the same time as renewing their Centre membership. A full explanation will be given in the letter sent out with the AGM invitation and agenda.

There are some spaces left for new players, so we would be delighted to sign you up if you are not already playing! For the small sum of £16 per year, there is the chance to win £10 each week with four prizes of £50 or £100 awarded during the year.

Summary of Results of the Members' Survey carried out in February 2009

The Committee were delighted with the high response to the survey carried out in February – thank you to all of those who returned your copies. Members made positive comments about the Centre which are much appreciated! Importantly, some very constructive suggestions on areas for improvement and further services were made. The strategy and business plan are both being brought up to date to reflect the results, and more details will be available at the AGM.

In the meantime, here is a summary of responses. Over half the responses requested that talks by experts on issues related to MS be held at the Centre. The other most popular service requests included massage, podiatry, and pilates. Comments about therapies highlighted soundproofing, equipment and availability (ie: evening appointments) and all of these will be investigated with regards to cost and feasibility. One misconception to be corrected is that physiotherapy is not possible with a catheter. There are exercises that it is possible to do – please speak to Rohan for more information.

Comments and suggestions about transport and parking have been noted also, and are being examined. Watch out for lift-sharing schemes! If you would like to take part, either giving or receiving a lift, please let us know.

There is a lot of information on MS-related issues in the Centre. Presentation/availability of this is being reviewed. The textline is advertised in every newsletter, and if it would be useful to you to send us a text rather than calling then give it a go. A 'volunteer information pack' is now available, giving new volunteers more information about MS and the Centre before they start.

With regards to HBOT, please note that session times and depths are available on our website. The requests for child-free sessions have been noted. This year we have been visited by three Italian families who are unable to access the therapy at home for their autistic children. They are coming over for a few weeks at a time, and while they are here the child is having two sessions per day – one at 8.10am and another later on. We are working hard to try to minimise the disruption in the Chamber, particularly with regards to the noisier children. It is not always possible to ensure a child-free session, however, so if you would definitely prefer this then please do let the staff know. On the positive side, however, if members wish to attend the temporary 8.10am sessions (at 24 feet) please ask about them when booking. At this stage we are not making them a permanent fixture, but are reviewing the situation.



Dates for your Diary.....

Committee Meeting:	Tuesday 17 th March
AGM:	Tuesday 28 th April
M S Awareness Week	Commencing 27 th April 2009
Can collection dates:	4 th April '09: Howgate shopping centre, Falkirk 24 th October: Waitrose, Comely Bank TBA: Morrisons, ASDA at Platinum Point.
Other dates:	23 rd – 24 th May: Drs. Neil's Garden Weekend August/Sept: coffee morning (TBC)

We are very grateful for donations to the Centre especially to these people for their support:

Chancelot Flour Mill—Western Harbour	£525.00
Valerie Lobban in Edinburgh	£ 50.00
R B S Shared Services Finance Gogarburn	£ 59.81 & £227.50
Waitrose Bank Comely Bank	£670.00
Flower of Scotland Lodge	£150.00
Brian Joyce who arranged a Charity Disco	£1800.00

Events diary

The MS Society organise free Self-Management courses for anyone with a long-term health condition. Both last for six weeks for two and a half hours per week. They are led by people who have a long-term condition themselves. The courses are designed to help with understanding the condition, managing symptoms, making the most of information received from doctors and nurses, and sharing experiences.
Call Ailsa on 335 4050 to sign up.

Kirkcaldy: from Thursday 26th February on Thursday mornings. Sign up asap
Gullane: commencing Wednesday 18th March. Sign up by Monday 2nd March.
Dunfermline: from Tuesday 24th March in the afternoon.
Further courses are to be organised in **Polmont, Selkirk, and West Lothian.**
We have the details in the Centre, or else look at:
http://www.mssocietyscotland.org.uk/life_with_ms/learning_more/local_courses.html

Reunion and Charity Fundraising dance

A Reunion Charity Dance took place on 27th February for clubs including The Gamp Club, McGoos, The Place and Romanos. 250 people bought tickets to boogie the night away at the Masonic Club on Leith Walk. A fantastic time was had by all – the DJ worked hard and the dance floor was over-flowing. The total amount raised for the Centre came to over £1800! We hear also that this may be supplemented by a further corporate donation from an employer matching part of it.
Our very grateful thanks go to Brian and his friends for choosing MSTC Lothian as the charity to support, and all their hard work in selling tickets and organising a great fun night.

Valentine's Raffle

The Valentine's Raffle was drawn on 13th February. There was just one prize: an enormous Beauty Basket, kindly donated by Lesley Peat and her husband David. Lesley has been coming for HBOT therapy since the Centre was set up in 1984, and David did a stint as committee Chairman some years ago. The basket was won by Ann Williamson, a regular attendee on Thursday afternoons for HBOT and Yoga. Very many thanks to the Lesley and David for arranging the donation of the prize, huge congratulations to Ann on her win, and thanks to everyone who took part in the raffle which raised £129 for the Centre.

Therapies on offer at MSTC: Focus on.....REFLEXOLOGY!

Reflexology is a compression massage of the feet. It is one of the most successful complementary therapies in recent times and continues to gain acceptance with western medicine. The body is mapped out on the feet, with each foot divided into five zones corresponding to areas, organs and systems of the body. Areas of imbalance reveal themselves as tender spots on the feet although you would not have realised they were there before. The Reflexologist works on these areas to address blockages within the body and allow the systems to work optimally and harmoniously.

The most immediate benefit of Reflexology is a sense of well-being and relaxation. This therapy helps to manage the stresses of everyday life by calming the nervous system, which is enormously important in stress management. Relief of stress then enhances the immune system. Existing ailments are also treated depending on their severity.

Many clients at the Centre now rely upon it: "she can identify a problem without me saying anything, and then sort it out"; "during my first two or three treatments I wasn't lying straight, but then I became perfectly comfortable....everything just seemed to fall into place."; "it was a bit sore the first time because there was a lot to fix, but after that it's been fine", and "I really look forward to it – I feel energised and more able to cope".

Reflexology is available at the Centre from **Maureen McGonigle (07746 779 525)** and **Jacobine Scott (07905 402 230)**. Both have treated clients with MS for many years. Contact them directly to arrange appointments.

Fundraising – easy ways to help

We always need to raise funds to continue to cover our running costs and to allow us to develop the centre and the services on offer. There are many easy ways to help:

- **Collection cans:** do you have a local pub or shop that would have one of our cans by the till?
- **Smarties:** take a tube of Smarties and bring it back filled with coins. Better still, take a handful of tubes and distribute them to your friends, family and colleagues at work!
- **Can collections:** these take place approximately once a month in local shopping centres. Please come and hold a can for an hour or two on an occasional Saturday in a warm environment surrounded by shops! It's boring work but raises a significant amount of money for the Centre. Wheelchair users often are particularly successful – the less mobile you are the more money you can raise!! Telephone the centre or speak to a member of staff to let them know you'd like to help.
- **Stamps:** many businesses collect their used stamps and send or bring them to us. We take them to a dealer who gives us money in return. Would your colleagues and friends take part? See the website for how to make the most of this.
- **Amazon store:** when using Amazon to buy books, music, electronics, toys and other items, access Amazon through our website and earn commission for the Centre.
- **Swan badges/raffle tickets:** take the badges (£1 each) and sell them to friends, family and colleagues. Take raffle tickets (when there is a raffle being held) and sell them too.

Thank you for supporting our **200 Club** fund raising initiative. If you are not in it... why not! – there are plenty of spaces available. It costs £16 per year – and you stand the chance of winning one of the £10 weekly prizes, or the £250 or £50 prizes twice a year. Please fill in a form in the Centre or contact one of the staff for details. The 200 Club winners are as follows.

01/12/08	58	Anne Mathison
08/12/08	13	Denise King
15/12/08	80	Paul Bartlett
22/12/08	50	Lorna Barr
29/12/08	56	Jim Cleary
05/01/09	09	Margaret Wand
12/01/09	11	Rob Parker
19/01/09	10	Alistair Purser
26/01/09	43	Jean Richardson
02/02/09	175	Alison Ball
09/02/09	155	Jill Harrison
16/02/09	74	Anne Grindlay-Swan
23/02/09	27	Keith Hunter
02/03/09	64	Alix Jameson

Just a reminder of the various Therapies we offer

HBO; Physiotherapy, Yoga 0131 554 5384

Reflexology; Indian Head Massage;
Jacobine Scott 07905 402230

Reflexology; Indian Head Massage;
Reiki; Ear Candles
Maureen McGonigle 07746 779525

Holistic massage
Lucie Bradley 07913 803216

Tai Chi
Laurent Haquin 0131 258 1070

Hypnotherapy
Stephen McMurray 07971 700881