

January 2009

ISSUE No 6

Southampton and District Branch

In this issue

- Bits from the Chair
- From Rosemary Rockett
- Branch Meetings
- Forthcoming events
- Fundraising Corner
- Maria and Trudi's Arctic Trek 2010

Diary dates

Branch Meetings

The Branch holds open meetings at Bedford House from 7.30 pm to 9.30 pm on the second Tuesday of every month.

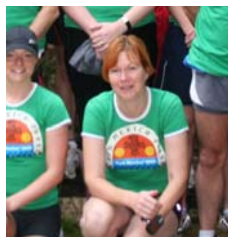
Dates for 2009 are: 10th February, 10th March, 14th April, 12th May, 9th June, 14th July, 11th August, 8th September, 13th October, 10th November, and 8th December

Coffee Mornings

19th February, 19th March, 23rd April. *More dates to follow*

A brief note from the Chair

Last November I took part in the Run Mexico Challenge to raise funds for the Association, and the full story is later in this newsletter.



Although a little belated I hope that Christmas was good and that you all enjoyed the New Year festivities – and on behalf of the Southampton Branch Committee I would like to wish you very good wishes for 2009.

The Committee are putting their heads together to come up with some fun fundraising events for your Branch, entertainment and interesting speakers for Branch meetings. Some people will be undertaking international challenges and others undertaking more personal challenges closer to home.

We are looking forward to seeing many of you at meetings and coffee mornings throughout the year, and we hope we will help make 2009 a memorable time for you.

Best wishes

Sue

From Rosemary Rockett

The Christmas Party went with its usual good fun, just about fifty people attended, including those who have helped us over the last year, and some who have promised to help in this coming year; and old friends who are not able to regularly attend.

Friends from Fawley Church Choir entertained us with a selection of Christmas music, some of which we all joined in. We had another beautiful silver castle, made for us by Cheral (Ken's daughter) - after the party it was donated to the Honeypot Children's Home at Blackfield - they loved it.

A special thank you to all the Committee for all the hard work putting on such a lovely spread.

A presentation of wine and engraved glasses was made to Ken Bryant who has retired after around 25 years' service to the Branch - we hope very much he enjoys the wine, and hope he will not be a stranger to our group and will attend some of our meetings as the weather improves.

I have been asked by Alison Denny to wish you all a belated Happy New Year. Alison always makes a donation in lieu of sending cards and this is the first letter in which she has been able to send greetings to you all.

Rosemary

Branch Meetings

The Branch holds open meetings from 7.30 pm to 9.30 pm on the second Tuesday of every month at Bedford House, Amoy Street, Southampton SO15 2DR.

Bedford House is at the end of Amoy Street, off Bedford Place, and there is plenty of parking which is free in the evenings.

These meetings are open to anyone with an interest in Motor Neurone Disease and provides an opportunity to meet and socialise with those living with MND and those dedicated to helping and supporting them. We usually have a guest speaker and refreshments are provided.

The Branch also organises regular coffee mornings at St Marks Church Hall, Archers Rd, Southampton SO15 2LU from 11am to 12-30pm

Coffee Morning dates over the first few months in 2009 are Thursday 19th February, 19th March, 23rd April. Further dates will be advised in the future.

The speakers at the February meeting will be Sandra Lawton and Eyvette Lycett from Dendron (*Dementias & Neurodegenerative Diseases Research Network*)

Forthcoming events

7th March : Music Quiz at The Gleneagles Pub, Butts Ash, Hythe

29th March : table top sale at Hythe and Dibden Parish Hall, West Street Hythe 1 – 4 pm

13th June : 50's/60's rock 'n' roll evening at The Waterside Sports and Social Club, Long Lane, Holbury

Fundraising Corner

“dunk it” event

At November's Branch Meeting member of the Committee demonstrated the fun that can be had in organising a “dunk it” event for Branch fundraising. Maybe during this year some of you could arrange a “dunk it” event with your friends for Branch funds. It doesn't have to be a sweet one, a soup kitchen event goes down well in an office or work setting – serve home made soup and a roll for £1 - especially good at this time of year! (it's helpful to have a friend and a slow cooker for this!!)

The ideas for ‘dunk it’ are endless, have a go and don't forget to take photos to share with the rest of the Branch membership through the Newsletter.

Green Disks at Waitrose

No doubt those of you who shop at Waitrose have noticed the little green disks being given out to be put in the charity boxes

I am pleased to say that MND has been chosen to get some of the monthly £1, 000 in two areas: Karen Nash Gould, who last summer kindly organised the opening of the Longstock Water Gardens near Stockbridge in aid of MND, nominated us at her local store in November 08; and Waitrose Hythe (Trudi's local store) in December.

Anyone can nominate MND in their local store - you just have to fill in a form and hand it in, so next time you shop at Waitrose DO THE DEED. It's such an easy way to raise those all important funds.

Maria and Trudi's Arctic Trek 2010

Plans are in full swing to raise £8,000 by the end of the year. Maria and I will be having a Music Quiz on 7th March at The Gleneagles Pub, Butts Ash, Hythe, so let us know if you would like to enter a team (£2 per person).

On 29th March we have a table top sale at Hythe and Dibden Parish Hall, West Street Hythe 1 – 4 pm,

Let us know if you would like to book a table, which are only £5, or just come along and support us.

On 13th June we have a Rock and Roll evening at The Waterside Sports and Social Club, Long Lane, Holbury with The Trojans - an excellent band of the era playing music from the 50's and 60's, i.e. The Shadows, Buddy Holly, Elvis, and more. Tickets are £8 each.

Contact either Maria on 02380 890051 or Trudi on 02380 891008 for details of any of the above events.

The madness of a long distance runner

Day 1: In the early hours of the morning on Saturday 15th November 2008 I descended upon Gatwick Airport along with 19 others from all parts of the UK and one from Spain. We were off on the Run Mexico Challenge. This was my third challenge for Motor Neurone Disease. Elaine Wyspianski, Senior Community Fundraiser at National Office escorted us on our challenge.

After a very long flight, Gatwick to Houston (10 hour flight) – Houston to Cancun (3.5 hour flight) and then a 3 hour coach transfer to a remote part of Mexico by the name of Izamal. By the time we arrived in Izamal we were all shattered and the running had not even started.



The Team Run, Mexico 2008

Day 2: Today we were free to wander around Izamal and recover from the journey. There was a lot of excitement, talking about running preparations, how we thought we might survive the running for four days and how we would celebrate at the end of it. Izamal was quite an interesting little town; the buildings were brightly painted, but rather run

down. We visited a Monastery, and had a look at some shops. Lunch was interesting, not quite sure what we had, but it was very tasty. We had an afternoon of taking it quietly in the guest house where we stayed and then a meal together in the evening before heading off to bed at 9 pm.

Day 3: We transferred out of Izamal at 7 am. Yes, this was going to be a week of very early mornings, and probably early nights! Today was day one of running. We thought it was going to be a coolish day, but as soon as we arrived at the start of point of our running, the sun suddenly shone and the temperatures rose. We were baking. We soon got separated out and the trail of runners could be seen for quite a distance on the long straight roads of Mexico. When running you seem to pair up with someone of a similar running ability and I ran most of the four days with Caroline who lives near Peterborough.

We were cheered along by the locals and all cars passing would beep their horns and wave. We eventually reached our destination for day one – a town named Piste. Piste was very run down, but the Piramide Inn where we stayed proved to be very comfortable and the food was good.

During the afternoon we visited Chichen Itza – now one of the Seven Wonders of the World (there must be more than seven)! We had a meal together in the evening and believe it or not were in bed by 8.30 pm.

Day 4: Here we go again yet another early start and we are off on the start of day two of running. Now I must tell you that on day one I managed to gain some enormous blisters which were extremely painful. I do not know why, I have never had such awful blisters. So, on day two my feet were covered in Compeed (blister plasters). There were many more straight roads today, more little villages and lovely children waving at us as we passed by. My feet were very painful, but had to keep going. Again, ran along with Caroline. There was an

amazing finish to the end of day one.

We were heading towards the town of Valladolid. This was the biggest town in which we stayed. Going back to the running on entering Valladolid we all received a Police escort. We felt very special with the Police car behind us helping us on our way; the Police escorted us for about a mile and a half. It had been another extremely hot day. The Police escorts gathered a lot of attention and raised more awareness to the MND challenge.

Today we wandered around the town, took advantage of a lovely coffee/chocolate shop and just took in the sites of the town, did a tiny bit of shopping and then back to the hotel for dinner and again in bed by 9 pm.

Blister update: still painful – now blisters on top of blisters.



A small child watching the runners

Day 5: Today we were running to the village of Coba. This was another day of straight road running. We did have some bends in the road today and we become very silly and got excited at the site of a bend. The blisters were getting worse; again my feet were well padded with blister plasters. I managed to struggle on, though at about 13 miles my feet were very painful. We thought we were nearly at our finish line as someone said when you see the lake you are near the finish, we saw the lake, but still had another two miles to run. The lake was huge. Very interesting though, there were danger signs all around the

lake and guess what – the lake was full of alligators. You could see them sleeping by the side of the lake, this was amazing, to actually see them in the wild.

We reached the finish line, some people were already in and there were big cheers as we crossed the finish line.

The place where we were staying for this night was slightly more upmarket than most places we stayed in, but it was the only place to stay.

This afternoon we went to a Cenote. These are underground pools. The water in them was so clear. Only problem was for me that the blisters were now worse and the skin was flapping in the water. Again had a nice dinner in the evening, we laughed a lot, everyone got on so well. Bed again early, ready for our final day of running.

Day 6: The last day of running. Today we head to Tulum our final destination. We were not quite sure where we were staying when we got to Tulum, we were told it was going to be basic!

A very strange run today. We had to run by the side of a very busy road, the Mexicans called it motorway, but nothing like our motorways. The drivers were all very friendly, again waving and beeping their horns. It was extremely hot. We ran through the town of Tulum and then headed towards the coast and the finish line. As we ran along, we eventually saw the Caribbean Sea, what an amazing site. We became so excited as we thought the finish line was within sight. How wrong we were, we ran and we ran, we kept thinking we must be there by now, then eventually after another long, long straight road, we saw the finish. We were now so excited. Some people had already finished and they were jumping up and down and shouting at us.

As we crossed the line we were handed a Margarita. Probably not the drink to have at the end of running, but we were so overwhelmed at actually getting through the four days, that we did

not care. There were photos taken while we waited for everyone to cross the line for the final time. As we saw the last bunch of runners heading towards the finish we ran out to meet them and crossed the line again together. The blisters held out, were now extremely painful. Another challenge completed.

We spent the afternoon recovering on the beach, and in the evening had a celebration meal.



(Just cooling down!)

Day 7: Today was a free day to recover from the four days of running. We visited the Tulum ruins and then spent an hour in the town of Tulum. We then walked for believe it or not five miles! We spent another afternoon on the beach, we had a singing session and generally enjoyed the remainder of our time.

Day 8: Today we go home. Straight after breakfast we had to leave for the airport in Cancun. Another long drive to the airport. We then flew home via New York, a quick change of planes and then on to Gatwick. We arrived back in Gatwick to guess what – snow, wind and rain.

As yet I cannot give you the total amount of monies raised. We have a meet up on Saturday 24th January and then we will be updated with the sponsorship total and, oh yes, told where we are going next time – *did I say next time?* – well watch this space.

Sue

Material for future Newsletters

The goal is to produce a Branch Newsletter every 6 to 8 weeks, depending on how much material is sent in.

This is your newsletter and you are most welcome to send in news, letters, favourite recipes, write an article, write a quiz or poem, draw a picture, etc. Please also send photographs if available.

Please email any material to:
tricia_churchill@btinternet.com

or post to:

Tricia Churchill
The Wellhouse
102 Christchurch Road
Winchester SO23 9TG

Branch Committee

Sue Stone - Chairman
Maria Stott - Vice Chairman
Bernice Allison - Secretary
Nalin Shukla – Treasurer
*Donations to me at: 5 Maytree Road,
Chandlers Ford, SO53 5RT*
Rosemary Rockett - Branch
Contact - 02380 891842
Tricia Churchill
Peter Farren
Gaby Perrett
Rosie Perrett
Trudy Evans