



AMAZING
ARLENE



YOU'RE
A STAR



IN THIS
ISSUE



NEW
GYM

In touch

NEWS

AUTUMN 2015

“

A warm welcome to our Autumn 2015 newsletter.

Many of you will know that Tony Meire, our incredible chairman of 11 years, has sadly resigned due to ill health. Tony has been a key figure in helping us achieve our vision of a brand new centre, and stepping into his shoes as chairman is no mean feat. I know everyone will join me in wishing him heartfelt thanks for everything he's done, and all the best on the road to recovery. You can read more about Tony on p4.

I'd also like to extend an open invitation to members to participate in future board meetings. If you'd like to attend or indeed join the board as a trustee, please contact trustee Geoff Fell via the centre.

Leo Wilde, chairman

”

Kent
ms
Therapy Centre

01227 470876 | kentmstc.org | info@kentmstc.org

TRY SOMETHING
NEW

We have so many therapies on offer at the centre – all specifically chosen because they're known to help alleviate symptoms of living with MS.

To book an appointment, call 01227 470 876.

Choose from:

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Gym | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Acupuncture |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Pilates | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Hot stones massage |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Hydrotherapy | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Craniosacral therapy |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Reflexology | |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yoga | |

Acupuncture

...works for me!

I was taking medication for neuropathic pain for seven years before trying acupuncture. Over time, with regular treatments I slowly reduced my painkillers and now I don't take any at all.

Louise O'Boyle, member

Raffle ticket draw 2015

Enclosed with this newsletter are two books for **Christmas Draw** raffle tickets. First prize is £200 in cash, plus also up for grabs are overnight stays at 4* hotels, and tickets to Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs pantomime at the Marlowe Theatre. Last year we raised just over £6,000 with our raffles – can we beat this?



WHAT'S IN THE GYM?



Member Marlene Fell works on the multi-gym

Thanks to a generous donation, we now have a multi-gym specifically designed for members.

As lead physiotherapist Hugh Brunskill says:



Hugh Brunskill, lead physiotherapist

Exercise is vital if you have MS, but members have told me they can feel excluded from mainstream gyms. Our new **therapeutic gym** makes everyone welcome, regardless of ability. It's a great place to improve your own fitness – plus as you work in small groups you can lend camaraderie to others. Come along and see how it could help you.

Among the equipment on offer is:

- A multi-gym designed for wheelchair users
- Parallel bars to help people work on balance and standing
- A treatment plinth for those who find it hard to get down onto and up from the floor
- A rowing machine and Motomed exercise bike to build up strength in arms and legs

THANK YOU TONY

“Our members and staff were all very saddened to hear that **Tony Meire**, our chairman of almost 11 years, had suffered some ill health. Tony has made a good recovery but has taken the decision to resign.”

“I first met Tony 12 years ago when he brought his wife Anna along to the centre shortly after her diagnosis of MS. I remember talking to them both at what was a very difficult time for them. What really struck me was Tony’s compassion and concern for Anna’s health, but also his very positive attitude towards her condition.

Tony came along at a time when we were desperately seeking a chairman and secretary to help support the centre. We had written to all of our members to ask if any of them would be willing to take on the roles. Tony and Anna very kindly answered our plea.

When Tony joined the centre the new building appeal was underway but was moving rather slowly. During Tony’s time at the helm, his positive, compassionate and professional attitude helped gain the confidence of our many supporters.

He has done an enormous amount of work in the background and we shall be forever grateful to him for everything he has done to turn the members’ dream of a new centre into a reality.”

“We can’t thank you enough, Tony”

Karen Middlemiss,
Member support manager



Tony Meire, chairman 2004-2015

You're a
star

SUPPORT FOR CARERS

Living with a condition like MS is a challenge, and it's often made all the more bearable with loved ones and friends close by.

Wendy and David
Lenihan



Carers can play a vital role in quality of life and independence, and at KMSTC we know how important they are.

Our first ever **Carers Support Drop in Surgery** in July was a great success. We want to build on this, so watch this space for another special event combined with a carers' coffee morning. **Carers Support** is a government-funded organisation which provides respite care for those being cared for as well as outings for carers, and we hope they'll also give a presentation.

FUN

AT THE CENTRE
EVERY MONTH

Coffee, anyone?

Our monthly coffee mornings at the centre are a great chance to meet other people in the same boat, and raise vital funds to keep our charity running.

They take place on the third Saturday of every month, from 9am til 12 noon.

Time to volunteer?

If you have any free time to spare, you're very welcome as a volunteer at the centre. Whether it's lending a hand fundraising, helping out with the hyperbaric oxygen chamber or manning the shop or donation station, we'll put you to good use!



FABULOUS FUNDRAISERS

April

Fashion Show

April's charity fashion show at the centre was a chance to stock up on high-street outfits at reduced prices. Some members were on hand to model clothes themselves, including Anna Meire (right), and there were lots of opportunities to try things on in comfortable (and private!) surroundings.



So many **amazing people** go out of their way to keep our charity going. Here are just a small selection we want to show our appreciation for. To everyone else we don't have room to include: **a massive thank you, too!**

Two Oceans Challenge



May

A team of 20 supporters cycled 320 miles across France as part of a week-long Two Oceans Cycle Ride – Atlantic/Mediterranean, raising thousands of pounds for the centre.

Starting in Hossegor on the Atlantic coast, over five days the intrepid team pedalled their way across France down to the Mediterranean resort town of Narbonne-Plage.

We also have one of the cyclists, Paul, to thank for applying for a community plus grant from the Santander Foundation linked to the challenge. The result was £5,000 towards our brand new multi-gym equipment.

May



Kent Police HQ

We were invited to attend a passing out parade at Kent Police HQ, where we received a much-needed cheque for £4,432.91.

Members and supporters of the centre gathered at the beautiful **Bewl Water** reservoir in Lamberhurst for a 13-mile sponsored walk.

Well done to everyone who took part – even if you didn't manage the full course!

The Big Bewl Water Walk



June

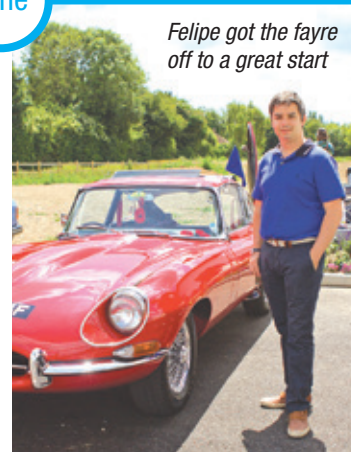
Fayre fun for member Ann Price



Summer Fayre

There was lots to see and do at this year's summer fayre. A classic car show, jazz band and Punch and Judy show for the little ones

Felipe got the fayre off to a great start



kept us all entertained. Plus, star guest **Felipe Alviar-Baquero** from TV's The Apprentice opened proceedings in style.



July

Boot Fair

Here's centre supporter, **Les Barrow** (who just happens to be the father of fundraising manager Helen!) doing a table-top sale at Deal Undercroft.



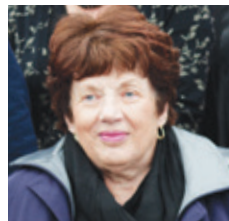
Arlene's Challenge



To celebrate turning 50, **Arlene McManus** set herself a day of physical feats at Chatham Ski Centre, Splash at Gillingham and Kent MS Therapy Centre – despite being in hospital the week before.

In four hours she managed to ski two descents; toboggan one descent; snow-tube one descent; swim 20 lengths; swim for five minutes against a wave machine; descend a large water chute; cycle a mile and row half a mile.

Arlene's Challenge was part of our Month of Sundays events, which raised nearly £12,000 in total.



Sue Crook

Sue worked in the care industry for decades but 11 years after being diagnosed with MS at the age of 40, she was forced to take medical retirement.

“Being diagnosed with an illness like MS is unfair, but having spent decades caring for others myself, I felt it was doubly so.

Luckily, these days I’m not in pain and my speech and upper body are OK, but my legs and balance are both problems.

In the world of MS, things change rapidly, so I take life half an hour at a time. I’m strong willed and stubborn, and simply won’t let MS get to me.

If I can’t achieve what I need to one way, I’ll find another way. I might be wiped out at the end but at least I’ve done it.

When people find out I have MS they sometimes say ‘Oh, I’m sorry to hear that’. I reply ‘Don’t be sorry – it’s not all bad.’

Living alone has helped me

I’m separated from my husband and live alone, with my two grown-up sons living nearby. I’m incredibly independent and find it hard to ask for help.

Living on my own I can do what I like – even if that means coming home after a big day at 6pm and going to bed with a meal on my lap.

Never say no

A friend once told me she didn’t say no to anything – those words have stuck in my head.

So I said ‘yes’ to becoming a member of the Red Wheelies mobility scooter formation display team in 2007 until we retired earlier this year, and all the adventures that brought. Because of MS I’ve been able to do lots of things I wouldn’t have had the chance to try before.

Coming to the centre

When I first walked through the centre’s doors 12 years ago, I didn’t know whether I was coming or going. My marriage was breaking down and I was struggling to cope with having to give up work.

The place has been a lifesaver. I have oxygen therapy for energy and reflexology to stimulate feeling in my feet, both on the same day. They make it far easier for me to walk afterwards.

But it’s not just about the therapies. Being part of a community at the centre has helped me meet lovely friends. We all look out for each other. I might not be able to say that without MS.”

In March, we said a huge thank you and a sad farewell to the unforgettable Red Wheelies who retired after 16 incredible years of fundraising adventures.

A red scooter formation team of women living with MS, the Red Wheelies launched in 1999 to prove that you can have a fun life with MS – no matter your age or ability. Over the years they raised between £25,000 and £30,000 for the centre, and just a few of their amazing key achievements include:

- Appearing on TV’s **Britain’s Got Talent** and **The Michael Ball Show**
- Winning a **Guinness World Record** for the furthest distance an individual could cover in 24 hours on a mobility scooter
- Scooting across **Hadrian’s Wall**
- Travelling from **Winchester Cathedral** to **Canterbury Cathedral** along the Pilgrim’s Way

The Red Wheelies race at the Buckmore Park go-kart track, from back row, left to right:

Maggie Dossiter, Gill Smith, Rosemary Hobbs, Dinah Horn, Vida Ivatt, Sue Crook, Carol Coulson, Marlene Fell, Kate Davies and Jackie Weeden.



The power of HBO

Soon after I was diagnosed, my MS specialist nurse told me about Kent MS Therapy Centre, but I thought 'I don't need anything like that – I can do it all by myself.' Then I heard there was a **hyperbaric oxygen therapy chamber**, and decided to try the experience. Before long, I was having thrice-weekly fixes. For me, **oxygen therapy works**, and frankly I don't care if it's my mind convincing me of that. If I feel better because I've done something, I'll do it.

Photo: Roger Waltham



Cate Jackson

Have you tried HBO yet?

Call the centre on
01227 470876
to find out more.



For a full list of events see the website

Dates for your diary..

Interested in taking part in any of these events, or just finding out more? Please contact **Helen Wathen** on 01227 470876 or hwathen@kentmstc.org

Friday 16 October,
7pm, Stour Centre,
Ashford.

**KM
BIG QUIZ**

Enter a team of up to eight for this **fun quiz**, and raise money for the centre.

See www.kmcharityteam.co.uk/challenge/bigquiz/

**CHARITY
CONCERT**

Sunday 18 October,
7-9pm, UK Paper Club
(Main Hall), Avenue
of Remembrance,
Sittingbourne.

UK Paper Band Sittingbourne Charity Concert,
£5 per ticket, see www.ukpaperband.co.uk

FLOWER ARRANGING

Friday 23 October, 7.30pm,
Kent MS Therapy Centre.

This will be a evening of entertaining stories and beautiful flower arranging with local florist **Robin White**. Tickets cost £5 each, from the centre.

**HALLOWEEN
QUIZ**



Friday 30 October, 7.30pm,
Kent MS Therapy Centre.

Enter a team of up to six for £5 per person for our **spooky Halloween quiz**. Fancy dress is optional, but there'll be a prize for best carved pumpkin!

BIG BREAKFAST

Saturday 7 November, 10am-midday,
Adisham Village Hall.

Feeling peckish? Come and enjoy a hearty breakfast (or a healthy option) – and raise money for the centre.

**XMAS
MARKET**

Browse a host of
different stalls
packed with
gift ideas.

Saturday 21 November,
9am-3pm, Kent MS
Therapy Centre.

There'll be festive
spirit in spades, plus
you can get your
Christmas shopping
sorted all under
one roof.

**XMAS
COFFEE
MORNING**

Saturday 19 December,
9am-midday, Kent
MS Therapy Centre.

Please join us for some
warming **festive treats**
including mince pies,
mulled wine and a few
Christmassy surprises.

**CAROLS
AROUND
THE
TREE**

We're planning a
carol singing event
around the centre's
Christmas tree. Keep
an eye on the website
and Facebook page
for more details.

**THE
BIG GIVE
CHRISTMAS
CHALLENGE**



Our charity has again been selected to take part in **The Big Give Christmas Challenge**, which enables us to get donations match funded up to £2,000. This year, everything we raise from this challenge will be used to provide hydrotherapy at the centre (pictured).

If you'd like to make a donation knowing it'll be match funded, please visit new.thebiggive.org.uk/project/hydro at midday on Friday 4 or Saturday 5 December.



Shop online and help us for free

If you shop online, please think about making purchases through www.giveasyoulive.com. It has thousands of stores, including most of the high street names. Plus it doesn't cost you a penny more, and your chosen charity gets a percentage of what you spend.



It costs £200,000 a year to keep our fantastic new centre running. Every penny counts – can you help?

Here are two easy ways to donate:

By text: Text **KMST13** and your amount, ie £5, £10 etc, to **70070**.

Online: Go to www.justgiving.com/Kentmstc (or visit directly from our website by clicking the 'Donate' button).

You can also donate in other ways:

- Send us a cheque
- Gift aid
- Give As You Live
- Volunteering
- Via Ebay when selling an item
- Donating goods to our charity shop
- Leave us a legacy

See kentmstc.org.uk/fundraising/donate-to-kmstc for more information.

Get in touch with Kent MS Therapy Centre

Find us at:

Bradbury House, Merton Lane North, Canterbury, Kent CT4 7AZ

Call us: 01227 470876

Email us: info@kentmstc.org

Kent MS Therapy Centre is open:

Monday to Friday, 8.30am - 5pm

Like us on Facebook:

www.facebook.com/KentMSTherapyCentre

Follow us on Twitter:

www.twitter.com/KentMSTC

Kent MS Therapy Centre is a registered charity.

Registered charity number: 801382

Registered company number: 2339750

Chair of Trustees: Leo Wilde

Patrons: Frank Brake, Rob Key – Kent and England cricketer, Rt. Hon The Countess Mountbatten of Burma CBE

***Data protection** – Please rest assured that any contact information we have for you is held in the strictest confidence. We do not sell or share your details with anyone.*

Multi-gym photos p1 and p3 courtesy of Samantha Jones Photography.

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