



# WRSG Newsletter

WOLVERHAMPTON RHEUMATOLOGY SUPPORT GROUP

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CARING IS SHARING

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## Contents:

- Announcements
- Features
- Poems

## Monday 10<sup>th</sup> December

### What a good day!!!!!!

The day began with our Christmas coffee morning at the Holly Bush.

Approximately 80 members attended.

Pat and Les Jones took charge of the refreshments. Esme Till and Kath Sankey sold the raffle tickets with Malcolm Duggins and Kath drawing the tickets and Pat and Les distributing the prizes.

Pauline Callaghan and June Osborne manned the bric-a-brac table and were very good salesmen! We made £100 on the raffle and £49.50 on the bric-a-brac which paid for the refreshments. A good team effort!

Thanks also to all the members who donated the raffle prizes and the bric-a-brac. Sorry if I have forgotten anyone

# Happy New Year

## Carver Wolverhampton City Marathon

Joyce and I attended the presentation of the cheques from the Carver Wolverhampton City Marathon at 2.00 p.m. in the Mayor's parlour at the Civic Centre the same day. We received a cheque for an amazing £6,200. I have written to thank the Marathon committee as follows:-

Dear Mr. Savage,

I am writing on behalf of the Wolverhampton Rheumatology Support Group to thank the Marathon committee for the marvellous cheque for £6,200 which has certainly exceeded our hopes and expectations.

As I said at the presentation yesterday it was a pleasure to be a part of the Marathon committee and we wish you well for the Carver Wolverhampton City Marathon 2008.

The money will be spent on continuing the production of the eight page newsletter for our 200 members through 2008. We intend to deliver Education/Information Sessions with guest speakers and fund our three telephone help-lines.

We will be able to keep our yearly subscription at £5 making membership of our group affordable to everyone and we will endeavour to give the members a pleasant social life which is very important with such debilitating conditions as rheumatoid arthritis and similar complaints. We will also be able to maintain the stock of our equipment loan service helping members with lightweight wheelchairs, walkers and heatpads etc when required.

Thank you once again for your support.

Yours sincerely,

*Dorothy Darby (Chair)*

## Future Planning

As I said in the thank you letter to Mr. Savage of the Marathon committee we are proposing to put on Information /Education Sessions in 2008.

If members have any specific subjects you would like to know about or if you have any ideas for events that you would like us to arrange please let me know

### visit to the Houses of Parliament

Joyce is planning a visit to the Houses of Parliament on Friday 28<sup>th</sup> March. The cost of the coach fare will be £13 with members providing their own food and drink as usual.

We will leave Falkland Street coach park at 9.30 a.m. and leave London at approximately 5.00 p.m.

There will be 40 places on the tour plus 10 spare places in the coach if anyone just wishes to visit London.

To book a place ring Joyce between 4.00 and 6.00p.m. please

### Tribute weekend to Sinah Warren

From the 30<sup>th</sup> November to the 3<sup>rd</sup> December a party of us went on a Tribute Weekend to Sinah Warren, Hayling Island

We had good accommodation and the food and service was excellent.

The first tribute was to Barry Manilow and was very fast moving. The second night was a tribute to Frank Sinatra but we were not very impressed with that.

On the Sunday night there was a tribute to Dean Martin followed by a tribute to Rogers and Hammerstein with lots of songs from the shows. This evening was marvellous and we gave them a standing ovation.

A good time was had by all.

*Dorothy*

## New Year's Quotes and Stories

### What's in a Name?

"Here we are in a month named after the Roman god Janus, an appropriate personification of the start of the New Year. This particular Roman god had two faces so that he could look ahead toward the future and back at the past at the same time. As we get rid of an old year and look forward to a new one, we all try to be a little like Janus. We know through experience what we did wrong and what we did right, and hope to do better this year. Some people make ambitious New Year's resolutions; others just take a deep breath and hope for the best...."

### To Start a New Year

A new year is unfolding like a blossom with petals curled tightly concealing the beauty within. Let this year be filled with the things that are truly good with the comfort of warmth in our relationships, with the strength to help those who need our help and the humility and openness to accept help from others.

### Recipe for a Happy New Year

Take twelve fine, full-grown months; see that these are thoroughly free from old memories of bitterness, rancour and hate, cleanse them completely from every clinging spite; pick off all specks of pettiness and littleness; in short, see that these months are freed from all the past. Have them fresh and clean as when they first came from the great storehouse of Time. Cut these months into thirty or thirty-one equal parts. Do not attempt to make up the whole batch at one time (so many persons spoil the entire lot this way) but prepare one day at a time.

Into each day put equal parts of faith, patience, courage, work (some people omit this ingredient and so spoil the flavour of the rest), hope, fidelity, liberality, kindness, rest (leaving this out is like leaving the oil out of the salad dressing don't do it), meditation, and one well-selected resolution. Put in about one teaspoonful of good spirits, a dash of fun, a pinch of folly, a sprinkling of play, and a heaping cupful of good humour.

### A Year of Time

Though even thinking on the subject of time may prove discomfoting, it is not a bad idea especially at the beginning of a new year.

As we look into a year we look at a block of time. We see 12 months, 52 weeks, 365 days, 8,760 hours, 525,600 minutes, 31,536,000 seconds. We have done nothing to deserve it, earn it, or purchased it. Like the air we breathe, time comes to us as a part of life.

The gift of time is not ours alone. It is given equally to each person. Rich and poor, educated and ignorant, strong and weak every man, woman and child has the same twenty-four hours every day.

Another important thing about time is that you cannot stop it. There is no way to slow it down, turn it off, or adjust it.

Time marches on.

Obviously, time is one of our most precious possessions. We can waste it. We can worry over it. We can spend it on ourselves. Or we can use it well.

The New Year is full of time. As the seconds tick away, will you be tossing time out the window, or will you make every minute count?

### Time for New Beginnings

This is a time for reflection as well as celebration.

As you look back on the past year and all that has taken place in your life, remember each experience for the good that has come of it and for the knowledge you have gained.

Remember the efforts you have made and the goals you have reached.

Remember the love you have shared and the happiness you have brought.

Remember the laughter, the joy, the hard work, and the tears.

And as you reflect on the past year, also be thinking of the new one to come because most importantly this is a time of new beginnings and the celebration of life.

### "A Morning Wish"

"The sun is just rising on the morning of another day, the first day of the New Year. What can I wish that this day, that this year, may bring to me?"

A few friends who understand me and yet remain my friends

A work to do which has real value without which the world would feel the poorer  
A mind unafraid to travel, even though the trail is not blazed

A sense of humour and the power to laugh

A little leisure with nothing to do  
And the patience to wait for the coming of these things with the wisdom to know them when they come"

### Christmas cards

I would like to thank everyone who sent me Christmas cards. Thank you for all the nice messages about the newsletters which I found very encouraging.

Several years ago I wrote my Christmas gift list and without the family it came to over £300. I decided that not only could I not afford this I was having difficulty coping with the shopping, wrapping and delivering the gifts.

I rang many of my friends and committee colleagues and said "Can we just do cards and not presents as it is all too much for me?" I think most of them were relieved. On Christmas morning I would have a table full of chocolates, biscuits and drinks which I didn't really want and which would end up as raffle prizes.

I really love the cards and I decorate my house with just the cards and my tree.

However, I have a confession to make. I receive all the cards addressed to the WRSG committee but as we use my house as a base and we don't have a committee meeting until January I put them all up here but I don't know what else I can do!!

*Dorothy*

The following is from Pauline Callaghan and I found it quite funny

### Bad neighbours

A new Council tax re-evaluation policy wants to charge us more if we live in a nice area. That ought to mean discounts for those of us who live in rough areas. There is a huge council house in our street. The extended family is run by a woman with a pack of fierce dogs. Her car isn't taxed or insured, and doesn't even have a number plate, but the police still do nothing. All their kids have broken marriages except the youngest, who everyone thought was gay. Two grandsons are meant to be in the Army but are always out partying in nightclubs. They are out of control.

### Honestly - who'd live near Windsor Castle?

#### And another one from Pauline

I was walking down the street when I was accosted by a particularly dirty and shabby looking homeless woman who asked me for a couple of pounds for dinner. I took out my wallet, got out £10 and asked, "If I give you this money, will you buy wine with it instead of dinner?" "No, I had to stop drinking years ago", the homeless woman told me. "Will you use it to go shopping instead of buying food?" I asked. "No, I don't waste time shopping," the homeless woman said. "I need to spend all my time trying to stay alive." "Will you spend this on a beauty salon instead of food?" I asked. "Are you NUTS!" replied the homeless woman. "I haven't had my hair done in 20 years!" "Well," I said, "I'm not going to give you the money. Instead, I'm going to take you out for dinner with my husband and me tonight." The homeless woman was shocked. "Won't your husband be furious with you for doing that? I know I'm dirty, and I probably smell pretty disgusting." I said, "That's okay. It's important for him to see what a woman looks like after she has given up shopping, hair appointments, and wine."

I don't want to be a killjoy but:

### Stronger drinks put many at risk

People are putting their lives at risk because they tend to drink wine, the strength of which was particularly under-estimated under the old assessment system.

Men are advised to drink no more than 21 units a week and women no more than 14. A report warns that the strength of wine has increased sharply in recent years, with most table wines now 11.5% to 13.5% alcohol by volume (ABV).

This has been mirrored by many types of lager and beer.

In addition, research suggests the average size of a wine glass used in pubs and bars is now 169ml, compared to the 125ml measure previously used in the calculations.

#### Old assumptions

When drinking surveys were first carried out in the 1970s it was assumed that a glass of table wine, a single measure of spirits or half a pint of beer equalled one unit of alcohol.

Now the ONS will assume that a glass of wine equals two units, while a large can of strong beer (6.5%) will count as three units. "Current confusion may mean that large numbers of people are drinking at harmful or hazardous levels and aren't aware that they are putting themselves at risk in the long run."

Published: 2007/12/14 BBC Health

### Hydrotherapy

I hope the members going to hydrotherapy are feeling the benefit. Please recommend this service to fellow patients because I really want it to succeed.

### The Christmas School Play

The Teachers and pupils put so much effort into their Christmas school plays and concerts.

I went to see Jack in his. He was an all singing, all dancing giant in a musical version of Jack and the Beanstalk and he was very good but I would say that wouldn't I?

*Dorothy*

I am extremely grateful for the articles from members for this newsletter because I am preparing them and putting them in a bag before Christmas for posting before New Year so that I don't have to work over the holiday so thanks to members who have contributed.

I don't know about "Britain's Got Talent" I think the WRSG has talent.

Margaret Belcher sent me a very nice letter and enclosed the following poem which she says "Written April 2004 – Every word is true. However, I am most grateful to Mr. Isbister who performed the surgery"

My Poor Feet  
(Post Surgery)

I am bored. Oh, woe is me,  
When my plaster's off, I hope I'm free!  
To walk or run, to skip or jump,  
If I can't I'll get the hump.

I've sat and knit, done crosswords too,  
Had a cold, or was it flu?  
I've painted, drawn, telephoned and read.  
At night I've stayed awake in bed.

The surgeon warned 6 weeks or more  
Can you, or will it be a bore?  
I've been so patient, I've been so good.  
George has been fantastic. I never thought he would.

Six long weeks, I've had enough  
Remove these boots and this wool stuff.  
Let me up and walk away,  
I want to run with no delay.

They removed my boots with a special saw,  
I won't have to wear them any more.  
The feet are painful and how they glow  
The only way I can walk is slow.



We have three more poems from Brenda Mullaney (Our WRSG Poet) as follows:-

Pipe Dreams

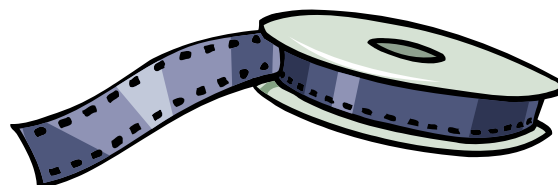
I wanted life to be like the pictures  
I saw when I was a girl  
I had such romantic notions  
My head was in a whirl  
But now I know it was a pipe dream  
There are no happy sleigh rides in the snow  
No stolen kisses from a handsome prince  
Under the mistletoe

No being the belle of the ball  
With a dress fit for a queen  
And a partner so dashing and tall  
But life's never like the silver screen  
Good always triumphed over evil  
In those films of yester year  
The Sheriff always got the baddie  
And won the girl he loved so dear

There was always snow at Christmas  
And children sang carols in the lane  
And frolicked happily in the snow  
Playing some happy game  
I wanted to dance like Ginger Rogers  
And partner Fred Astaire  
To look like Ava Gardner  
And have Rita Hayworth's hair

There were films of love and devotion  
And how families struggled through the war  
But they always clung happily together  
And that's what families are for.  
But life is not a film set  
And the ups can be very rare  
And the downs can overwhelm you  
The other side of the rainbow is never there

So now I think of the child I was  
And the pipe dreams that got in the way  
So I now do the best I can in life  
And live for everyday.



## Just another Christmas Day

What about your Christmas Day?  
Did anyone come to call?  
Did you long for the phone to ring?  
Or Christmas cards to drop in the hall

Did you have a Christmas Dinner?  
And settle down to watch TV  
Did you yearn for times from the past?  
And how life used to be

Did you see the house across the way?  
And see friends and relations arrive there  
Did you hear the children laughing?  
And wish that you were there

Did you want to turn the fire on  
When you began to feel the cold  
Were you too proud to ask for help?  
And afraid of getting old

Did you recall happier Christmases?  
When friends and family were there  
Did you wonder how it came to this?  
And did you want someone to care

And when you went to bed that night  
Did you shed a tear and pray?  
So thankful that the day was over  
Just another lonely Christmas day



## Neighbours

I've lived in this street for 40 years  
And once knew everyone by name  
Now people quickly pass me by  
And nothing is the same

Those early days people would stop and speak  
And pass the time of day  
Now they scarcely look at you  
And go quickly on their way

In those days I was a busy Mom  
But my lovely neighbour would call to see  
If there was anything I needed from the shops  
And this was a godsend to me

For having a toddler and a new baby too  
Getting out was difficult some days  
Her kindness I can never forget  
And her caring loving ways

And as my children grew older  
And I then had some time to spare  
I tried to help others nearby  
A simple thing to show you care

Now I rarely see a neighbour  
They are out most of the day  
And times have changed drastically  
But is this the price we have to pay?

---oo0oo---

## I think you may find the following useful

### Public Holidays in England and Wales 2008

New Year's Day	January 1
Good Friday	March 21
Easter Monday	March 24
Early May Bank	May 5
Spring Bank Holiday	May 26
Summer Bank Holiday	August 25
Christmas Day	December 25
Boxing Day	December 26

## NHS Connecting for Health

### How you benefit: what's in it for patients?

NHS Connecting for Health is working on a range of programmes, systems and services to benefit patients.

We are supporting the NHS to deliver better and safer care, via new computer systems and services, which link GPs and community services to hospitals.

We aim to 'put patients at the heart of what we do so this is a brief guide of what we offer now and will offer in the future, to help you to understand how you benefit as a patient.

### Choose and Book

Choose and Book is a national electronic referral service which gives patients a choice of place, date and time for their first outpatient appointment in a hospital or clinic. Patients can choose their hospital or clinic and then book their appointment to see a specialist with a member of the practice team, at the GP surgery or at home by telephone or over the internet, at a time more convenient to them.

### Electronic Prescription Service (EPS)

The Electronic Prescription Service will enable prescribers - such as GPs and practice nurses - to send prescriptions electronically to a dispenser (such as a pharmacy) of a patient's choice. This will make the prescribing and dispensing process safer and more convenient for patients and staff.

### GP2GPGP2GP

GP2GP enables patients' electronic health records to be transferred directly and securely between GP practices. It improves patient care as GPs will usually have full and detailed medical records available to them for a new patient's first consultation.

## HealthSpace

HealthSpace is a secure website where patients can store their personal health information online such as height, weight and blood pressure.

### NHS Care Records Service (NHS CRS)

The NHS Care Records Service will improve the safety and quality of patient care. It will give health care staff faster, easier access to reliable information about patients to help with their treatment.

### NHS Number

The NHS Number is fundamental to the National Programme for IT. It is the common unique identifier that makes it possible to share patient information across the whole of the NHS safely, efficiently and accurately. The NHS Number is the key to unlocking services such as the NHS Care Records Service, Choose and Book or the Electronic Prescription Service.

### Picture Archiving and Communications System (PACS)

PACS enables images such as x-rays and scans to be stored electronically and viewed on screens, so that doctors and other health professionals can access the information and compare it with previous images at the touch of a button. It makes x-rays on film a thing of the past, leading to faster and improved diagnosis methods.

### Social Care Integration Project (SCIP)

The Social Care Integration Project is an NHS Connecting for Health project which aims to enable improved outcomes for people using health and social care services, through enabling better, more seamless service delivery between NHS and adult social services.

*Department of Health*

### A pleasant experience

On the 11<sup>th</sup> December I went to see the nurse at my GP surgery to have a dressing changed on a cut on my arm.

I was there in the middle of a Mother and toddler clinic.

There was an empty seat next to me and a three year old little boy left his Mom and his Nan and came to sit there.

He brought a Thomas the Tank Engine Book. "Hello" I said. He showed me his book and I told him it was a long time since I had read Thomas the Tank Engine to my grandchildren. He said would I read his book to him. I put my glasses on and duly read the book.

He told me he wanted lots of Christmas presents and he asked me how Father Christmas got the presents to his house. I said he came down the chimney but the little boy said "What is a chimney" That caught me out because I didn't know if he had a fireplace in his house so I told him Father Christmas was magic and would find a way. Jack says I should have said through the letterbox because everyone has one of those!

When I had finished reading his story and they still hadn't called me in to the nurse I gave him the book back and he said "Thank you for reading that" and off he trotted back to his Mom and his Nan.

He was a really delightful little boy and I am sure he got his presents.

While I was in the room having my dressing changed I read the funny notices on the wall The one I liked most was:-

"No-one remembers the things I do right  
No-one forgets the things I do wrong!"

**HAPPY NEW YEAR**

I read the following in the Healthcare Commissions' bulletin on the Internet. Well done New Cross Hospital!

### Healthcare Commission -England's Healthcare Watchdog - Supporting innovations in safety

We are proud to have jointly sponsored, with the National Patient Safety Agency, the patient safety category at this year's Health Service Journal awards.

We would like to congratulate the winner, Royal Wolverhampton Hospitals Trust, for their programme to strengthen infection control 'Facing the challenge – healthcare-acquired infections'.

Highly commended trusts were Imperial College London and St Mary's Trust for their PINK patient safety video and Luton and Dunstable Hospital Foundation Trust for their patient safety initiatives.

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I have received the following notice from Wolverhampton City Council:-

### Do you have trouble reading small print?

We have a range of books in LARGE PRINT that are much easier to read.

We also have TALKING BOOKS AVAILABLE ON TAPE AND CDs so that You can listen to a book if you have trouble reading

**These are available at Bilston  
Library, Mount Pleasant**

**Telephone:  
(01902) 556253**

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