



## WRSO Newsletter

WOLVERHAMPTON RHEUMATOLOGY SUPPORT GROUP

Charity No 1041181

CARING IS SHARING

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### CELEBRATING 100 NEWSLETTERS (WRSO)

As this issue of the WRSO Newsletter is our **100<sup>th</sup>** I would like to celebrate by remembering our former Chairpersons who are sadly not with us and their dedication to supporting our members with their phenomenal hard work for the WRSO and the Newsletters.



**Carol Boneham (International Poet)  
(1947 to 2009)**

**Carol Boneham (Founder Chairperson of the WRSO) sadly passed away on the 13<sup>th</sup> December 2009.**

**Chairperson WRSO 1994 - 2005**

Carol was responsible for commissioning the Wolverhampton Rheumatology Support Group together with Diane Evans in 1994. As members of the WRSO we are without doubt indebted to Carol for her vision and her hard work in setting up the group as a registered charity all those years ago.

Carol was often in touch with me and often commented as to how strong the WRSO is with our committed membership.

After Carol relinquished her position of Chairperson to the group due to ill health she developed an interest in poetry. Carol was awarded two consecutive American Awards from the International Society of Poetry for her outstanding work in 2006 and 2007.

She also had her book of poetry published entitled: 'Climb Upon My Rainbow and Find Your Destiny' (2006) I understand that she was about to have 50 more of her poems published, but sadly passed away before this was achieved. Peter, Carol's husband assures me however that he intends to submit her work for publication.



**Dorothy Darby (1941 to 2009)**

**Dorothy sadly passed away on the 12<sup>th</sup> February 2009. Chairperson WRSG 2005 -2009**

**A Tribute to Dorothy from Liz**

I first met Dorothy in 1994; I had been newly diagnosed with Rheumatoid Arthritis. Dr Newton thought I might be useful in some way to the group and arranged for me to meet her. The day we met happened to be my birthday it was also Dorothy's and we discovered that we shared the same birth date.

At the time of our first meeting I was feeling quite poorly and definitely felt very sorry for myself. Discovering that I had Rheumatoid Arthritis was profound, so life changing. Meeting someone else who understood exactly how I was feeling was wonderful, she showed me the way forward

Dorothy took me in hand; she was my buddy, never giving me the time to feel sorry for myself anymore. I took an early retirement from Nurse Teaching and she soon introduced me to the world of voluntary work and I started as a volunteer for Arthritis Care UK and eventually became a home visitor for the WRSG. To this day I will always be indebted

to Dorothy for the friendship she gave to me; she was an absolute life line in those early dark days of Rheumatoid Arthritis.

There are many people who are indebted to Dorothy for similar reasons to mine not least for the untiring work and devotion to assisting others in her various roles on many health care forum's and committees around the city.

To name a few of her achievements:

Chairperson/Secretary WRSG

Chairperson Lymphoedema Group  
Member of various Primary Health Care Trust Committees

Member of various Royal Wolverhampton Hospitals NHS Trust Committees

Member of the former Wolverhampton City Public Information Group.

Previous Chairperson/Press Officer of the Patients Forum.

Voluntary Home Visitor and Information Officer for Arthritis Care UK

Committee member of the former Wolverhampton Community Health Council.

Invited by the WRHT to attend the 60th anniversary of the NHS as a patient representative held in Westminster Abbey in 2008.

I miss Dorothy, I miss her inspiration and driving force, the energy she invested into the WRSG was phenomenal. The group were blessed to have had such a leader.

**Liz Walker Chairperson WRSG**

**The following poem was written by Carol Boneham and submitted following Dorothy's sad death**

### **Do not be Sad**

Do not be sad  
For I am with you  
Do not be sad  
In our lifetime we have  
Done so many things together  
And now I am resting in God's garden  
Thinking of you all  
So do not be sad for as time goes by  
You will have all our lovely memories  
I have only left you for a little while  
I am with you in spirit  
So tell all my family and friends  
I am only just asleep  
And one day we shall all meet  
So do not be sad

**(Carol Boneham 1947 – 2009)**

Carols Book of poetry has been published, Peter Boneham, Carol's husband has donated 12 books to the WRSG. These copies will be available for sale at our AGM with monies raised to be donated to the WRSG to assist with helping members.

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### **Membership Renewal**

#### **(Reminder)**

Please note WRSG membership renewal fees were due for 2011/2012 on the 1<sup>st</sup> June 2011. Because we are a non profit

making group we are keeping the fees at the same level for members £5 for single membership and £8 for family membership. New members who have joined the group since January 2011 will not have to renew their membership.

Cheques made payable to the WRSG and forward to our Treasurer.

Mrs Kath Sankey  
78 Dilloways Lane  
Willenhall  
West Midlands  
WV13 3HJ

### **DATES FOR YOUR DIARY**

#### **WRSG Annual General Meeting**

**Friday 28<sup>th</sup> October 2011  
1pm – 3 30pm**

**Venue: Linden House, Tettenhall Rd**

WRSG members are cordially invited to attend the Annual General Meeting which is to be held on Friday 28<sup>th</sup> October 2011.

A finger buffet lunch will be provided for members courtesy of the WRSG.

We are pleased to invite our President Dr P Newton and our Vice President Dr J Dixey.

#### **Speakers:**

Doctor Paul Newton (Consultant Rheumatologist)

Paul Uppal MP (Wolverhampton South West)

Debbie Mitton (Clinical Nurse Specialist Rheumatology)

Sally Giles (Rheumatology Clinical Trials Nurse)

**Your Invitation to attend the AGM is enclosed in this Newsletter. We would appreciate an early acceptance to book the finger buffet.**

**Symphony Hall Christmas Carol Concert Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> December 2011**

Joyce Knibbs is organising a visit to the Symphony Hall Birmingham for this very popular Christmas Carol Concert.

Joyce has negotiated reduced ticket prices for the WRSG. Cost will be £25 which includes the coach fare. The coach will leave Faulkland St Coach Station at 6pm. Final details will be published in the next Newsletter.

Please ring Joyce Knibbs on **01902 862198** cheques made payable to WRSG please forward to Joyce Knibbs, 623 Cannock Rd, Fallings Park, Wolverhampton. WV10 8PH

There are a few places still available

**Turkey and Tinsel Break.  
Bodelwyddan**

Turkey and Tinsel break at Bodelwyddan Castle, Wales 12<sup>th</sup>/16<sup>th</sup> December 2011

Coach will leave Faulkland Street Coach Station 9am Monday 12<sup>th</sup> December, return 16<sup>th</sup> December.

Balance outstanding for this break to be paid by 10<sup>th</sup> October please. Cheques made payable to WRSG and forwarded to:

Joyce Knibbs 623 Cannock Rd, Fallings Park, Wolverhampton. WV10 8PH

**Coffee Mornings**

**October 3<sup>rd</sup> 2011:**

**Coffee Morning**

Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2011  
10 30am-12 30pm  
(Doors Open 10 00am)

**Talk: History of Old Wolverhampton  
Billy Howe (Speaker)**

Billy Howe will entertain us with 'HOWES LIFE'. Forgotten memories of old times in Wolverhampton. (Talk and Slides) Will you recognize anyone in the slides????

Linden House, 211 Tettenhall Road,  
Wolverhampton WV6 0DD

**November 7<sup>th</sup> 2011**

**Coffee Morning**

Monday 7<sup>th</sup> November 2011  
10 30am-12 30pm

**Mary Shipway: Talk on Indian  
Head Massage**

Linden House, 211 Tettenhall Rd,  
Wolverhampton. WV6 0DD

**(Invitations enclosed with this Newsletter)**



## FEATURES

### Christmas Lunch

Monday 5<sup>th</sup> December 2011

11am coffee (at no cost to members)

12pm Christmas 2 course meal

**£10 per member**

**£13 guests**

We are planning a Christmas lunch for our members the venue as usual will be Linden House, 211 Tettenhall Road Wolverhampton. WV6 0DD

**(Your invitation and menu is enclosed with this Newsletter.)**

This is the first time the group have organised a Christmas Lunch for members, we are relying on your support for a successful merry time.

Thank you all for supporting our coffee mornings they are proving to be very successful with what I think is the right mix of social events combined with the more educational topics. If any of our members would like to suggest topics for the coffee mornings we would like to hear from you.

We still do need you to return the invitation slips so that we can order the correct number of coffees/tea etc. More importantly we need everyone to sign in on arrival to Linden House to comply with Fire regulations.

### **New Ticket System introduced for Blood Monitoring at New Cross Rheumatology Department**

**Debbie Mitton (Clinical Nurse Specialist)**

I thought I would let you know of a few changes in the department for blood monitoring.

Currently we are having over 90 patients bled on a morning and, as you can imagine this is causing huge delays for patients. Some patients are coming along a week either too early or late for their test adding to the booked number of patients to be bled.

Therefore from the 1st September 2011 a new ticket system will be used for the blood test monitoring.

Patients will keep their blood forms and then take a ticket and be called in by that number. This will help with the flow, stop any confidentiality issues and will be quicker hopefully for patients.

The patients monitoring booklets will be updated if their GP always wants to see it or if their GP is out of the area. We have been told we cannot fund another phlebotomist nor have a session on a Friday to ease the numbers, therefore we have had to do something. Also if patients turn up (1 week early or late) they will need to be rebooked. We just have not got the manpower to continue this way.

An information letter is currently being handed out to patients informing them of these changes.

However as always patients will be treated individually regarding their blood tests ie: if a patient does turn up and it is not the correct date, we will look at the reasons why etc: and see if they can be accommodated.

We have quite a lot of patients complaining that it is their turn etc with no exact way of knowing, I think the ticket system will be much more appropriate and update the unit's profile.

Comments will be welcome

Regards

**Debbie**



**Balbir Rai, Bhagwant Sachdeva and colleagues with the Duchess of Cornwall**

## **Walking for Health (Wolverhampton)**

### **Queens Award Presentation**

As you know I am always promoting the Walking for Health programme for our members, exercise to my mind is the single most important part of managing our Arthritis so that we can remain independent and mobile.

I was delighted to hear from our committee members Bhagwant Sachdeva and Balbir Rai who are walk leaders for the programme of the above prestigious award.

The Walking for Health volunteers were presented with the Queens award for Voluntary Service 2011, on 25<sup>th</sup> July 2011, at Botanical Gardens, in Edgbaston. The award was presented by the Duchess of Cornwall.

Following the announcement of the award, 4 people from the Walking for Health team were selected by lottery to attend the Buckingham Palace Garden Party. Our very own Bhagwant was one of those selected and she attended on the 29<sup>th</sup> June 2011. She had a wonderful time.

## **WRSB Grant Application**

Kath Sankey and I have been very busy applying for grants. The latest one has been submitted to West midland Co operative for £1500. If we are successful, and I sincerely hope we are the grant will fund a Challenging Arthritis Course which we will purchase from Arthritis Care at an agreed cost of £1500.

This course will start in February 2012 and run for 6 weeks. Each session will last for two and a half hours. At the moment Julie Hibbs is looking to book a suitable venue. We would like to hold it at Linden House because the venue is familiar to our members.

The course is free to our members and includes supporting books, handouts etc: Please look out for future news on the course Julie and I will be contacting all new members, the course is open to everyone but we only have 18 places.

I am very committed to this course and the concept of self management, learning more about your condition and coping in a more effective way. We should be in control of our Arthritis not the condition being in control of our lives.

## **Challenging Arthritis Comes to Wolverhampton**

Despite, or perhaps because of the prevalence of arthritis the disease is often dismissed by people as a natural part of the aging process.

But this assumption ignores the numerous ways that arthritis affects approx 1 in 5 of the UK population - not just elderly. But all ages.

Fortunately help is at hand for WRSg members and residents of Wolverhampton with a free Challenging Arthritis Self Management course set up by the charity Arthritis Care and purchased by the WRSg. The course will be held in Wolverhampton, starting on Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> February 2012 the course will run for 6 weeks...

Each session runs from 1pm to 3.30pm and includes a refreshment break.

The course is being run by two Arthritis Care members who themselves have to cope with arthritis so they have a vast experience on a personal level in dealing with the condition and are fully trained to deliver the material. Over the six week period participants will learn how to manage their arthritis more effectively by looking at many topics such as healthy eating, distraction techniques, relaxation, pain management, exercise and their relationship with health care professionals. The course provides support and understanding from being with other people with arthritis to share ideas and thoughts.

**Julie Hibbs**

## **Donation from Waitrose**

The WRSg have been awarded £310 from the supermarket Waitrose (Community Fund)

We are extremely grateful to Waitrose for this donation and intend to use it to help fund our coffee mornings for next year.

We already have a very interesting programme for 2012 including workshops for our members to discuss issues regarding our Arthritis. We also have a number of specialist speakers.



**Kath Sankey with Joyce and Brian Knibbs receiving the cheque from Sharron Raznik of Waitrose**

## **One Voice Disability Network**

One Voice Disability Network is a voluntary organisation and gets financial help from Wolverhampton City Council. It is a useful resource for disabled people.

Did you know that One Voice has a website you can access and get help?. You can now get information on money and debt, making a will, funding for your organisation or group, the latest job vacancies, access, changes to tax and benefits, news, events and the disability network.

There are also other websites of interest to disabled people, DVD reviews, stories, essays, photos as well as all you need to know as a disabled citizen in the One Voice Disabled People's Directory.

So why not check it out? If you don't have internet at home you can use for free 1hour a week at your local library.

[www.1voice.org.uk](http://www.1voice.org.uk)

## **WRSG Website**

Just to remind you of our own WRSG website edited by Martin Peake. You can look at previous issues of the WRSG Newsletter and check forthcoming events and meetings.

[www.wrsg.org.uk](http://www.wrsg.org.uk)

## **Poem**

### **Autumn**

Autumn is a clocks changing  
And dark evening after school

Autumn is shiny conkers  
And seeing who finds most

Autumn is leaves flickering down  
Into heaps on the roadside

Autumn is birds flying south  
To escape the snow

Autumn is football  
And our team ready to win

Autumn is dead leaves and windy walks  
Bonfires and sausages

**Mehwish Shakeel (March 2009)**

**Thank you for taking time to read this 100<sup>th</sup> edition of our Newsletter. I look forward to seeing you at the Coffee mornings and the Annual General Meeting.**

**Best Wishes to all our members**

**Liz Walker (Chairperson WRSG)**

The views expressed in this Newsletter are taken in good faith and are not necessarily endorsed by the editor or the WRSG. The use of a product name does not constitute an endorsement by the WRSG.