

# STROKE WATCH

**"Yesterday is the past, tomorrow is the future and every day is a new beginning"**

AN OCCASIONAL NEWSLETTER PUBLISHED BY EAST KENT STROKES (CHARITY NO: 1122466)

NUMBER 20, 2010

## Amanda Cottrell gets a well earned OBE in the New Year Honours List

AMANDA Cottrell, pictured *right* with Robin Cant at Laurendenn Forstal, her Challock home, during last summer's EKS Garden party, has been appointed OBE in the New Year Honours List.

It was at that August get-together that an announcement was made that Amanda had agreed to become the first President of EKS – but we are just one of many organisations who have benefitted from Amanda's tireless efforts and valuable support.

A former High Sheriff of Kent, a magistrate for over 20 years, chairman of her local parish council, and a governor of Challock Primary School, Amanda is also Vice President of the *Canterbury Festival* and a trustee of the Canterbury Cathedral appeal, the chair of tourist lobby group, *Visit Kent* and patron of *Produce in Kent*.

She is also chairman of *Fairbridge Kent*, a charity that supports young people in Medway, as well as a trustee of *Kent Community Housing Trust* and *Kent Wildlife Trust*.

Amanda has also been county president of the *Kent Girl Guides* and president of the Kent branch of the NSPCC, so it comes as no surprise to learn that the nomination for an OBE was for her work on behalf of the people of Kent.

"It is a wonderful thing to be honoured by Kent. Apparently a large number of people put my name forward", she told reporters.

Sandra Matthews-Marsh of *Visit Kent*, told the *Kentish Express*, "She is one in a million with tremendous energy and drive. Amanda has dedicated her life to serving the people of Kent and assisting numerous community groups and organisations in achieving their goals."



### Let's stick together ...

*WHERE* were these walking sticks having a social get-together around a convenient radiator on a sunny but chilly December day? They were spotted by David Worsley at Howfield Manor, near Canterbury, the venue for the 2010 Christmas Lunch – their owners being fed and watered at table at the time. More of David's pictures on Page 7.



### Post-hospital stroke care needs to improve

AS MANY of us are already too aware, the follow-up care given to stroke patients in England once they leave hospital is often lacking and needs immediate improvement.

The *Care Quality Commission* reviewed the performance of all 151 primary care trusts, finding gaps in rehabilitation services such as physiotherapy. They reported (12/1/2011) that patients often faced delays in being seen, while some areas were failing to provide services altogether.

I doubt that many of our East Kent Strokes members will be surprised by these findings!

**More in What the Papers Say, Page 5**

## East Kent has some of the 'best hospitals in the country' says Dr Foster Intelligence

ACCORDING to the latest hospital guide published in November by Dr Foster Intelligence, East Kent Hospitals University NHS Foundation Trust is the 'NHS hospital trust of the year'.

The Hospital Guide found that East Kent performed consistently well in several key measures of quality of care. These include having low mortality ratios and a high number of patients with hip fractures

receiving surgery within two days.

The Hospital Guide found that East Kent was the strongest performer across the country in its provision of stroke care – demonstrating quick and consistent delivery of diagnosis, treatment and outcomes.

It was also highlighted in the report as performing particularly well across four out of six treatment and outcome measures for stroke care across the patient's journey.

## Our Monthly Get-togethers

*Lunch times approx. 12:30*

**Mondays at Hythe Fish Bar in the Pavilion at Eastwell Manor, Boughton Lees**

7 Feb, 7 Mar, 4 Apr, 2 May

**Tuesdays at The Red Lion, Hernhill, nr. Whitstable**

15 Feb, 15 Mar, 12 Apr, 10 May

**Thursdays at the Fayrenew, Kingsgate, Broadstairs**

24 Feb, 24 Mar, 21 Apr, 19 May

**Thursdays at The Duke of Cumberland, Barham, Canterbury**

27 Jan, 3 Mar, 31 Mar, 28 Apr, 26 May

## 2011 Events

Further details, including costs, for all these events may be found in the flier enclosed with this issue of *Stroke Watch*

*All events on Tuesdays unless shown.*

**Golf at Great Chart, Ashford**

29 Mar, 26 Apr, 24 May, 21 June, 19 July, 23 Aug, 20 Sep, 18 Oct

Contact: Harry Brenner

Tel: 01843 835080

Email: [harrybrenner@supanet.com](mailto:harrybrenner@supanet.com)

**Kingfisher Boat Trips, Wateringbury**

7 June, Wed 7 September

Contact: Geraldine Wyant

Tel: 01227 721319

Email: [geraldine@kola18.demon.co.uk](mailto:geraldine@kola18.demon.co.uk)

**Kent & East Sussex Railway, Tenterden**

Monday 11 August

Contact: Sue Waple

Tel: 01227 713455

Email: [suep@waple.eclipse.co.uk](mailto:suep@waple.eclipse.co.uk)

**Kent Gliding Club, Challock**

3 May, 5 July, 2 August

Contact: Toby Gower

Tel: 07957 402677

Email: [toby.gower@yahoo.com](mailto:toby.gower@yahoo.com)

# New report shows stroke survivors are amongst the most vulnerable in society

A NEW report reveals for the first time the extent of the financial impact of having a stroke, making stroke survivors amongst the most vulnerable in society.

The *UK Stroke Survivor Needs Survey*, commissioned by The Stroke Association, has revealed that more than half of the people employed at the time of their stroke (52%) said it had a negative impact on their work, meaning they'd had to reduce their hours or give up work entirely.

The study gathered data from a total of 799 respondents throughout the UK and is the first of its size to offer a compelling and accurate reflection of the challenges that stroke survivors face.

A fifth of people (18%) said they'd had a loss of income since their stroke and a third (33%) said they'd had to endure an increase in expenses, such as making adaptations to their home or having to pay more to heat their home during the day because they can't work.

The report also showed that people with

difficulty speaking and communicating after their stroke were significantly more likely to experience problems with their work, income and increased expenses.

Joe Korner, Director of Communications for The Stroke Association said, "This report paints a bleak picture of stroke survivors struggling to make ends meet.

The survey revealed that over half of people (54%) didn't receive the information they needed after their stroke, such as advice on diet and benefits entitlements. "We know that many people have to give up work and go on benefits to survive, hand-to-mouth, so it's distressing to find out, that despite the progress made in improving stroke provision in recent years, people aren't getting the support they need.

"We are worried that existing services to help people with their communication problems, paid for by local authorities and PCTs may now be under threat. With local authorities having to cut spending by 7% a

year, it's possible they will raise the eligibility criteria to receive care. It is vital that stroke survivors do not fall into a black hole."

The survey, which was led by researchers at King's College London, aimed to find out the extent of problems people have to deal with following a stroke. It found that almost half of those questioned had on average three unmet needs, meaning that they weren't getting any support or help with their problems.

Dr Christopher McKeivitt from King's College London, the lead author of the report, said: "Much of the previous research into stroke has focused on hospital care and this is the first time that the difficulties stroke survivors face when they get home have been looked at in detail.

"Our research shows that stroke is a long-term condition and the appropriate support is needed to help address these problems."

## Equality Act 2010

FROM 1 October, 2010, the *Equality Act 2010* replaced various targeted pieces of anti discrimination legislation such as the DDA. Disabled people are now protected from indirect discrimination, making it unlawful to have a policy that applies to everyone but particularly disadvantages disabled people.

The Act also introduces protection from "discrimination arising from disability", which occurs when a disabled person is treated unfavourably because of something connected to their disability. As before, businesses and service providers of all types have a duty to make "reasonable adjustments" to ensure that people with disabilities can access their services to the same standard as non-disabled customers.

If you believe you have been discriminated against, harassed or treated unfairly by a person or organisation providing any kind of service, facilities, goods or public functions, you can:

- make a complaint to the person or organisation directly yourself
- use an alternative dispute resolution service, so that someone else helps you sort it out
- make a court claim (within six months of the discrimination occurring)

You can get advice from the *Equality And Human Rights Commission*, whose helpline number is 0845 604 6610.

The Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) can also provide free and impartial advice.

## Drug 'could reduce stroke damage'

IN NOVEMBER, the *BBC* carried a piece about a new experimental drug that may dramatically reduce brain damage in patients who have suffered a stroke.

Californian scientists, writing in the journal *Nature*, said doing this in mice helped reverse the effects of a stroke. A treatment based on this approach could be given days later, while conventional treatments need far quicker action.

The *Stroke Association* said far more testing would be needed on any new drug. Cells start to die in the affected area, and while nothing can bring these back, scientists know that the cells immediately surrounding the damaged area play a crucial role in the ability of the brain to recover and compensate for the damage.

This process of "re-wiring", in which neighbouring brain cells make new connections to replace some of those lost during the stroke, can partly determine the degree of long-term disability some patients will suffer.

## Kent health trust cuts GP referrals to save £19m

DOCTORS in East Kent have been told to save money by not referring patients to hospital for non-urgent operations, it was reported on *BBC News* on November 16 last.

The *Eastern and Coastal Kent Primary Care Trust*, which has outlined the measures, is predicting an overspend of £19m by the end of the financial year.

It has asked GPs not to refer patients for a total of 64 procedures, including some knee and hip replacements, tonsil operations and cataract surgery.

Chief executive, Ann Sutton, said GPs were being asked for their views.

The trust said in the first six months of this year more patients had been treated than planned, with more money spent than expected.

Other low-priority procedures which doctors are asked to consider include

bariatric surgery for obese people, tattoo removals and varicose veins treatment.

The new measures affect the area's three main hospitals – the Kent and Canterbury, the William Harvey, in Ashford, and the Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother, in Margate.

The waiting time for treatment in hospital has also been raised by three weeks, to 16.

The trust, which said it was required by the government to achieve a surplus of £12m by the end of next March, said the new restrictions would be in place until at least mid-February.

Ms Sutton described it as "a very challenging time" for the trust, but said the list of low priority treatments was widely accepted and widely understood.

She added that the impact on patients should not be "too significant".

## Act FAST wins award

THE Department of Health's *Act FAST* marketing campaign was recognised at the prestigious Institute of Practitioners in Advertising (IPA) Effectiveness Awards 2010. Of 38 entries short-listed across the whole of the private and public sectors, only seven achieved the highest Gold Award Status, among them the Stroke *Act FAST* campaign. Comments from the judges included describing it as "a brilliant mnemonic" and "measuring change in a case like this is an incredibly difficult task, but it was done in a very compelling way."



*The formal launch of our second vehicle at The Fayre on 21st October, 2010. Neil Kefford (local radio DJ) did the honours, helped by Carole Moore (Sainsbury's Canterbury) and watched closely by members Toby Gower and Peter Holland whilst trying out our scooters.*

# Good news for EKS members and for Motability customers

OUR NEW vehicle is managed by Thanet Community Transport Association in Dane Valley Road, St.Peters, Broadstairs, CT10 3JJ, and is available for use by members of EKS and their families at preferential rates. Bookings can be made for half or whole days – or even longer, e.g. for holidays – as is the case with our other vehicle, which is managed by Wealden Wheels Community Transport, Pevington Farm, Egerton Road, Pluckley, TN27 0PF.

Both vehicles are fully adapted to take a wheelchair user, four passengers and a driver, or six passengers if a wheelchair is not used. The vehicles are also available to transport members to our gatherings, by prior arrangement with volunteer drivers.

The new vehicle in Thanet can be booked through Geraldine Wyant on 01227 721319. You can also contact Geraldine on her mobile, 07971 477768, or email her at [geraldine@kola18.demon.co.uk](mailto:geraldine@kola18.demon.co.uk)  
The Pluckley vehicle can be booked through John Towner on 01233 840448.

*And on the subject of transport, EKS members may also be interested in two items published in the December 20010 issue of Mobilise magazine:*

### 1: Longer leases for low mileage Motability customers.

MOTABILITY customers who only drive a low number of miles can now keep their cars for longer. This new customer benefit means anyone who has driven fewer than 15,000 miles within their three year lease can choose to keep their car for up to two additional years – great news for customers who enjoy their current car and are happy to put off the hassle of choosing a new one when their lease expires.

The low mileage means the car is less likely to experience the levels of wear and tear of most cars at the end of their three years, so customers can be assured of reliable motoring for an extra year. They will also now be eligible to receive an enhanced Good Condition Bonus amount, depending on the length of the lease extension, when they return their car – a cash reward previously unavailable to customers who extended their lease.

At the end of the fourth or fifth year customers with a lease extension who wish to replace their existing Motability car with a brand new one, can simply make the usual plans. For more information on Motability visit [www.motability.co.uk](http://www.motability.co.uk) or call 0845 456 4566.

*...and in an article on the subject of...*

### 2. Motability's nearly new WAV (Wheelchair Adapted Vehicle) scheme

*Bethann Siviter wrote:* "There were a few wrinkles with the brand new 'nearly new' scheme, but Motability's staff were great. The slightly more 'experienced' vehicle is a useful option for someone whose situation has changed, or who has an immediate need.

Being able to provide a 'nearly new' vehicle in perfect condition to one of 550,000 plus people who look to Motability to support their freedom and independence makes good sense, for customers, and for Motability – who must balance precious but finite resources.

## Clot drug for heart patients

HUNDREDS of thousands of heart patients would benefit from a new type of blood thinning drug to cut their risk of stroke, say UK experts. Patients with a trial fibrillation (AF), an erratic and sometimes fast heart-beat, can reduce their risk by a fifth when taking *Rivaroxaban* rather than the most popular existing treatment, *Warfarin*. The data comes from a study of 14,000 patients presented at the American Heart Association conference.

## Experimental work with brain cells, radio waves and high dosages of statins

DOCTORS in Glasgow have injected stem cells into the brain of a stroke patient in an effort to find a new treatment for the condition. The elderly man is the first person in the world to receive this treatment – the start of a regulated trial at Southern General Hospital. He was given very low doses over a weekend and was then discharged. His doctors say he is doing well.

Over the next year, up to 12 more patients will be given progressively higher doses – again primarily to assess safety – but doctors will be looking closely to see if the stem cells have begun to repair their brains and if their condition has improved.

*THE LANCET* has reported on a study which suggests that a short blast of radio waves to the kidneys can help control high blood pressure in patients who do not respond to medication.

The pioneering work, described in the medical journal, selectively severs nerves to the kidney that play a key role in regulating blood pressure. Although still in the testing phase, experts say the procedure could one day help hundreds of thousands of patients. Half of patients fail to achieve good blood pressure control with drugs. This is partly because it can be difficult to remember to take medication every day, but for up to a fifth of patients it is because the drugs simply have no effect.

RAISING the doses of cholesterol-lowering drugs could prevent many more heart attacks and strokes, say researchers. UK and Australian teams compared a standard statin treatment with a more intensive therapy, publishing their results in *The Lancet* medical journal.

They concluded that higher doses cut heart attacks and deaths by 13%. However, experts warned that a bigger dose of the most popular statin could produce many more cases of side effects.

## New Neuro Rehabilitation Unit for Hothfield Manor offers more facilities

HOTHFIELD MANOR Acquired Brain Injury Centre has opened its doors to an exciting new Neuro Rehabilitation service. The unit is just a short drive from the M20, and is ideally located within the countryside near Ashford, a peaceful and beautiful setting to begin the next phase of someone's rehabilitation.

The Huntercombe Group have developed a brand new 22 bed rehabilitation unit. Our facilities include:

- 19 Large individual rooms with en-suite, flush floor facilities
- 2 Transitional living apartments.
- A range of comfortable living room and quiet room areas.
- A Hydrotherapy pool
- Physiotherapy Gym
- Occupational Therapy Treatment Room
- A safe wheelchair accessible indoor/outdoor environment.
- Consulting Rooms

The service provides a multi-disciplinary rehabilitation approach for people who are suffering from a neurological condition like:

- Stroke, Acquired Brain Injury, Multiple Sclerosis, Guillian Barre Syndrome, Spinal Cord Injuries and more.....

The service is able to offer specialist Neuro Physiotherapy and Hydrotherapy, Neuro Occupational Therapy, Speech and Language Therapy, NeuroPsychology and a team of Registered Nurses and Rehabilitation Assistants.

In addition to this the Physiotherapy department is currently opening its doors to an out-patient clinic either in the gym or Hydrotherapy pool (assessments apply).

If you would like more information on referrals, prices or to arrange a visit, please contact one of the team either via telephone on 01233 643272 or email; [susannah.cole@fshc.co.uk](mailto:susannah.cole@fshc.co.uk).

## Why not enjoy the benefits of Physiotherapy and Hydrotherapy too?

HYDROTHERAPY is available at the Tor Spa in Ickham, where the beautifully warm hydrotherapy pool is hired by Chartered Physiotherapist, Clare Sutherland, on Mondays and Wednesdays. Clare offers hydrotherapy sessions at very reasonable rates and is able to help people with most degrees of physical disability into the pool, so long as they can weight bear. The benefit of hydrotherapy to Stroke survivors can be immense.

Bookings should be made direct with Clare on 01227 763164, or Mobile 07946 441760. Clare will also do home visits, if necessary, in areas local to Canterbury, or will see patients at her clinic in Canterbury.

## Want to try out a lap-top, with help from EKS?

THANKS to the funds raised by Jessica Redfearn, Chloe Stonebanks and the North School in Ashford, we have two re-furnished laptops available for loan to stroke survivor members of EKS.

They are on a 'first come' basis although we have designated funds to purchase two more should they be required. It will not cost you anything initially to discover how easy using one can be and there is no commitment should you decide it's not right for you. One to one guidance to get you started can be arranged if necessary.

For the technical they are wireless enabled with Windows XP Pro and Microsoft Office 2003, 1gb memory and 40gb hard disk. If you are interested contact John Towner on 01233 840448.



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# What the Papers Say

IN TRUTH, this should really be what the *Daily Telegraph* says, for is from that newspaper that John Towner regularly clips the news stories that he feels will interest *Stroke Watch* readers.

On the front page of this issue, brief mention is made of a recent report by the *Care Quality Commission* on the need for improvements in follow-up care for stroke patients, which was headlined by the paper...

## Recovering stroke patients are failed by a third of health trusts

The report revealed that fewer than 40% of PCTs provide good access to psychological therapy or stroke counsellors. Similarly, rehabilitation services to stroke patients focussing on helping them return to work were provided in only 37% of areas. The same percentage of PCTs offered early supported discharge, which provides more rehabilitation at home and achieves better results.

In almost half of England's 151 PCT areas, the report concluded, patients had to wait two or more weeks until they received community-based speech and language therapy.

*On the same day, January 12, the Daily Telegraph carried a story by their Medical Editor, Rebecca Smith, under the banner...*

## Painkillers increase risk of stroke death...

Painkillers commonly used to treat arthritis, post-surgery pain and frozen shoulder, can increase the risk of dying from a heart attack or stroke by fourfold, a study has found. Scientists have undertaken one of the most comprehensive studies on the cardiovascular effects of powerful painkillers and have concluded there is little evidence they are safe for the heart.

They stressed that while the overall numbers of people suffering heart attacks or strokes while on the drugs is small, there are important risks associated with taking them. The drugs include ibuprofen which is available over the counter, without prescription and the authors have questioned if this should be allowed to continue.

The drugs, called non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) and a subgroup of newer ones called COX-2 inhibitors, are known to affect the heart and one of them, Vioxx, was removed from sale in 2004 because of the increased risk of heart attacks. Since then doctors have questioned the safety of the whole class of similar drugs.

The analysis, conducted by a team at Bern University, evaluated 31 studies involving over 116,000 patients who took the painkillers regularly, mostly for arthritis pain. The drugs were naproxen, ibuprofen, diclofenac, celecoxib, etoricoxib and two others not used in England, called rofecoxib or Vioxx, and lumiracoxib.

It was found that compared with placebo, rofecoxib and lumiracoxib were associated with twice the risk of heart attack, while ibuprofen was associated with more than three times the risk of stroke. Etoricoxib and diclofenac were associated a fourfold risk of death from a heart attack or stroke. Naproxen appeared least harmful in terms of cardiovascular safety of the seven, the researchers said.

The study, whose findings were published online by the *British Medical Journal* only looked at people taking the drugs continuously and not those taking the odd painkiller for a headache or other minor ailment.

## Wholegrain foods cut stroke risk...

*In a December issues of the DT, we read that...*

Eating more wholegrain bread, rice and oats is as effective as drugs at reducing the risk of stroke, according to a study.

Researchers asked 200 people to eat a diet with three portions of wholegrain foods a day or none. It was found that the diet rich in wholegrain reduced blood pressure. A diet high in fibre is

known to reduce blood cholesterol and improve digestive health.

Dr Frank Thies, a senior lecturer at the Rowett Institute of Nutrition and Health, University of Aberdeen, who led the study, said: "We observed a decrease in systolic blood pressure in the volunteers who ate the wholegrain foods, and this effect is similar to that from using blood pressure-lowering drugs.

"This drop in blood pressure could potentially decrease the incidence of heart attack and stroke by at least 15 and 25 per cent respectively."

*On the other hand, another December story warned of...*

## Stroke Risk in a Sunday Joint

High levels of salt in Sunday roasts are putting Britons at risk of deadly heart disease and strokes, according to a study by health campaigners. A survey of 600 roast lunches in supermarkets and pub chains found that they can contain up to one and a half times the maximum recommended adult daily intake of salt.

"Sunday lunch is an iconic British meal but filling it with salt puts both adults and children at risk of developing high blood pressure," said Professor Graham MacGregor, a leading expert in cardiovascular medicine and chairman of *Consensus Action on Salt and Health* (CASH), which carried out the research.

"I don't want supermarkets and restaurants to add the unnecessary amounts of salt still being hidden in our food... eating one less gram of salt per day would save 6,000 lives a year."

The study found that a 'peppered beef brisket joint with mustard & pepper stuffing' from Asda's new 'Chosen By You' range contains 2.3g of salt per portion, one third of the recommended adult daily maximum of 6 grams and more than the 2.1g found in a McDonald's Big Mac.

*Foodstuffs from other leading retailers were also cited in the DT report and it was observed that...* If the saltiest ingredients found in the survey were used to make a Sunday lunch it would add up to 9.6g per person, 60 per cent higher than an adult's recommended daily maximum. However, Peter Sherratt, of the *Salt Association*, which represents the salt industry, described CASH as "extremists", adding: "There is not enough evidence to prove a link between salt and high blood pressure."

*As briefly noted on the facing page, a December issue of the Daily Telegraph also saw the headline...*

## World's first stem cell trial for stroke...

Doctors have injected stem cells into the brain of a British stroke patient in the world's first trial of its kind. The elderly man was injected with roughly two million neural stem cells at Southern General Hospital in Glasgow. They hope the stem cells will help the man recover from his stroke, by transforming themselves into mature neurons and also stimulating the brain to harness its own recuperative powers.

His progress will be monitored over the next two years.

The method controversially uses neural stem cells grown in the lab from those taken from the nascent brain of a discarded 12-week-old human foetus.

Laurence Dunn, a neurosurgeon, successfully injected the stem cells into the first patient, who has since been discharged.

Professor Keith Muir, a neuroscientist from Glasgow University, who is leading the Pilot Investigation of Stem Cells in Stroke (PISCES) study, said: "We are pleased that the first patient in the PISCES trial has undergone surgery successfully.

"Stroke is a common and serious condition that leaves a large number of people with significant disability. In this trial we are seeking to establish the safety and feasibility of stem cell implantation, which will require careful follow-up of the patients who take part. We hope that in future it will lead on to larger studies to determine the effects of stem cells on the disabilities that result from stroke."



# The Pendulum Effect

or One Conflagration, two Museums and three days of enforced rest

by David Worsley

IT HAS been one of those special years. I achieved the biblical span of three score years and ten, despite several heart attacks, a stroke, and two illnesses that were extremely unpleasant. though not life threatening. So every year now is a 'freebie', to be enjoyed with panache, laughter, and total irresponsibility. I can still dream.

On the Saturday arranged for a family party, an ambitious Jari decided that the occasion warranted the full 70 candles on the family's traditional walnut and coffee layer cake. He lit them all, but the heat generated welded the candles together and it took grandad and all the children blowing at the same time to put the cake out. Glad he did it, but shan't do it again.

Sunday dawned and we set off on an expedition to London to visit the Old Bones museum, which the children had seen before and liked. I wanted to go instead to the Science Museum, where I could happily stay for a week. After negotiations, we decided to visit old bones first, have a picnic lunch in their canteen, and then move on to the real museum. Jari was overcome by the excitement of the occasion, and tried to emulate Stirling Moss. He paid the price. The lurching around corners set off the middle child, who lost her

breakfast in the middle row of seats of his people carrier. After the pit stop, we continued in a more sedate manner, as befits a septuagenarian.

Every child in Greater London and the Shires, along with their mums and dads, chose this day to try to get there first. It was half term and St. Valentine's day. I blame my parents for the bad planning.

The staff were brilliant. I arrived in state, pushed in the wheelchair by Jari, and we were all ushered directly to the front of the queue. We had no such special treatment, however, once we were inside. It was a scrum and the chair more of a liability than help. We had our picnic lunch in the Snack Bar and Picnic Area (crowded beyond belief – with some other children even more excited and out of control than ours), and decided to make a break for the Science Museum.

It is just next door, but you have to go outside to get there and this time, while we were being taken from the queue and moved to the front, an enterprising young chap and his daughter attached himself to our party with a "You don't mind do you?" and saved themselves 45 minutes of

queueing time.

The Science Museum was only half full, and we were able to run around everywhere without hindrance. I took the chance to walk around quite a bit, which left the chair unoccupied. Not for long! The kids leapt in and grinned as they were pushed around. There has always been a high level of pathos about wheelchairs and scooters. Very young people would love to drive them, while the elderly would love NOT to be in them. Hey ho!

I filled up as I saw my son and grandson begin to show my own fascination for the exhibits.

"After the Lord mayor's show" come the street cleaners. In my case, I had three days of downside. I honestly could barely move, and Kaarina, my ever present and uncomplaining carer, waited on me hand and foot. It was only on the morning of the following Thursday that I began to again feel human.

It's the pendulum effect. Catches me out every time. Whenever my batteries are charged up, I think that nothing is impossible. Then there follows a day or two of the reckoning.

Still, never mind, Eh. We've got the memories to enjoy.



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# Christmas at Howfield Manor

December 14th  
2010



THIS YEAR saw a change of venue for the EKS Christmas Lunch, with a move just outside the Canterbury city boundaries to Howfield Manor. Over 50 EKS members, family and friends or carers, came along for a memorable occasion on which we met for a chat and coffee (or something stronger) in Howfield Manor's comfortable lounge (or bar) before settling down for lunch. No formal poll has been conducted, but we get the general impression that the choice of venue and the Christmas repast was a success.

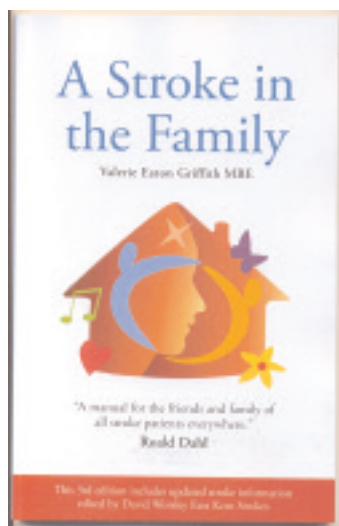


Special thanks go to Geraldine Wyant and Sue Waple for organising the event, and supplying the seasonal table displays (later sold to benefit our funds!).



Thanks also to our very own photographer, David Worsley, who took all bar one of the photographs reproduced here.





A BOOK on stroke recovery techniques for family and friends of stroke victims. In the 1960s, Val Eaton Griffith designed a series of simple, interactive techniques to help Patricia Neal, the celebrated actress and wife of author Roald Dahl, to make an almost full recovery after a series of massive strokes.

Her success resulted in a full mail bag of requests for details and help, and she wrote this book in 1970. It led to the creation of national volunteer schemes that are still in existence; and to today's Stroke Association.

Now, David Worsley of *East Kent Strokes* has, with the author's permission, republished the original and updated it with links to Stroke organisations.

**Price: £7.20 plus £2.75 p&p**  
**To order online - go to**  
[http://eastkentstrokes.com/buy\\_the\\_book.html](http://eastkentstrokes.com/buy_the_book.html)

### Cost of Stroke Watch

*Stroke Watch* costs about **£1 per copy to produce – and this doesn't include the cost of postage, etc. This major outgoing for EKS is reduced slightly by the contribution of advertisers, to whom we are very grateful. We currently produce and distribute 400+ copies, so it is clearly a big operation for us. It would help us greatly if you could either – let us know if you no longer wish to receive a copy of *Stroke Watch*, or pay (if you haven't already) the annual EKS membership fee of £10.**

## JOHN B.S.MANLEY (1919-2010)

IT IS with much sadness that we note the passing of someone who did much 'behind the scenes' to help EKS in earlier days. Whilst Mr Manley Senior was not known personally to many of us, his help and guidance via his son John (our Treasurer at the time) was invaluable and led to the granting of full charitable status – without which EKS would not be what it is today.

We will always be indebted to him and send our condolences to his family for their great loss.



## Settle down with a Talking Book

FOR ANY of us that now find it difficult to read and/or hold a book, *Talking Books* do offer an easy and enjoyable solution readily available through your local library or the RNIB.

By making a phone call to your main local library you can obtain a library card and they can tell you what they have available to suit your taste on either CD or tape.

They will also advise the on the collection

and delivery service, which is free!

The RNIB scheme is available to those who are partially sighted as well as the blind – offering over 18,000 high quality audio books paid for by annual subscription and delivered post free. They can also loan or sell a suitable Daisy Player as part of their package, if required.

To find out more call 0845 345 0054 or visit – [www.rnib.org.uk](http://www.rnib.org.uk)



## EKS NEEDS YOU!

EKS continues to offer help and guidance to Stroke Survivors and their carers/family, so that their quality of life may be improved – but with an ever increasing membership, we really could do with some more help.

We realise that the majority of survivors and their carers may have little chance to help directly, but if any of us could introduce a family member, a friend or a neighbour, with perhaps an hour or two to spare, that really would make a valuable contribution towards the work and further development of EKS.

Special skills/experience would be a bonus,

of course, but there are so many ways in which we could benefit from extra help in the day-to-day running of EKS.

So, if you, or anyone you know has that very special gift – a little time to spare – do get in touch with a committee member. And you can assure any likely candidate that they would find helping out at EKS very rewarding and fulfilling.

With some extra help, the range of activities that we know would benefit and be welcomed by our members could become a reality – sooner rather than later.

### Health & Safety First

IT IS necessary to review our Health and Safety Procedures on a regular basis, and please can you note and act on the following.

We are advised that members attending our club events should carry with them details of:

- \* any medications they are taking
- \* any allergies they might have
- \* the name and telephone number of someone who should be contacted in the event of an emergency.

Please can such information be held in a handbag, wallet or pocket, so that in the unlikely event that such information is needed it is readily accessible.

### Current EKS Committee

**Robin Cant** (Chair)  
**Hugh Ellison**  
**John H. Manley**  
**John Moir**  
**Mary Oliver**  
**John Towner**  
 (Deputy Chair & Acting Treasurer)  
**Brian Waple**  
**Sue Waple** (Secretary)  
**Marian Warner**  
**Geraldine Wyant** (Welfare Officer)

The views expressed in this newsletter do not represent those of East Kent Strokes. They are the personal views of the writers. We hope that they will generate responses from members (and others) that might be published in future editions of this newsletter.

Please send your comments, views ideas, and criticisms to Robin Cant.

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