

Gorgeous George

It was with some sadness but with more admiration and thanks that the Branch last summer saw George Maloy step down as an Association Visitor and Branch Contact. George has been with the Branch from its beginning and has since been a dedicated and caring Visitor and active and supportive committee member.

George will remain on the Committee so the Branch will still



George (right) with his woodturner brother Bill at the Autumn Fayre

benefit from his years of experience, conviviality and kindness. The Committee members did host a small

thank you evening for him and are both glad and somewhat relieved we managed to convince him to stay on.

This is a thank you and tribute to him on behalf of all those families that have benefited from his expertise and kindness over the years.

Branch AGM

It's that time of year again! We would like to invite you to our Annual General Meeting which will take place on Sunday 13 March at 2.30pm at Harry Rice Hall, Hargreave Park, N19. This provides the Branch Committee with the opportunity to present formally our accounts and give an update on the work of the Branch over the last 12 months.

We are delighted to have as our guest speaker Sadie Vile from National Office. Sadie is the Research Grants Manager from National Office who will talk to us about the new research projects that the Association will be funding. She is an experienced speaker and has worked in the pharmaceutical industry before joining the MNDA.

The afternoon gives everyone, Members and their family and friends as well as local healthcare professionals the chance to meet informally and talk over a very pleasant afternoon tea. All are welcome.

forum.mndassociation.org

In December 2010 the Association launched its new **online forum** – an internet discussion area which will be a safe place for people affected by MND to share experiences and support each other with the challenges of living with the disease. The forum which can be found at forum.mndassociation.org – has been developed as a direct response to requests from people living with MND who recognise the benefits of online forums. It will offer an alternative way of people living with MND and their carers to seek support and interact with each other without having to leave their home, so reducing the isolation MND can bring.

The Association hopes that the forum will provide an important addition to the website and will complement the MND Connect advisory telephone and email services as well as the information and support provided locally by the Branches.

You do need to register to join in and contribute to the forum, but the registration process is relatively straightforward and there are separate discussion areas for people to introduce themselves, to discuss life with MND, and for carers.

There is also an 'off topic' area for non-MND related discussions and a section for news and announcements from the Association. Registered users can also send private messages to each other if they wish. Give it a go! Visit the forum now.

Fundraising for MNDA

Singing in the snow

The Branch has found itself in the lucky position of being the recipient of some wonderful fundraisers.

The Highgate Choral Society chose the Branch as its nominated charity for his Christmas Carol concert which was held on 18 December. You will remember that was the day the snow fell. Beautiful as it was, it did cause a great deal of disruption but the Concert went ahead despite a much reduced turnout.

A number of us hiked up various hills to Highgate for what was a suitably festive and atmospheric event and we raised over £200 for the Branch in a retiring collection. In addition committee members attended two

short carol recitals by members of the Chorus in the Prince of Wales Feathers pub in Warren Street collecting in each around £100 making a grand total of some £450 for the Branch.

A big and sincere thank you to the Chorus and to Carolyn for choosing us and to all the Chorus for their support and of course their rather fabulous singing.

A youtube link from Brent Cross shopping centre is rather fun showing another side of the Highgate choristers who proved to be unlikely, but rather effective, flash-mobbers.

www.youtube.com/watch?v=bR8z6NYmdXI.

Supermarket sweep

Our support from local supermarkets continues. We now have the third Waitrose store to choose the Branch as one of their three recipients for the charity green tokens following Holloway and North Finchley, Temple Fortune have added us as for the month of February. A big thank you to them and their customers.

Marks and Spencers in Temple Fortune chose the Branch as their designated charity and at the end of a month's hard fund raising handed us a cheque of £1,278

DONATIONS & FUNDRAISING

Waitrose Mill Hill	£325
M Jackson.....	£100
D Pye	£500
LMO concert	£687
Inner Wheel	£1,850
E Bowran.....	£50
A Frier/D Dunlop	£50
In memory of Thelma Edwards	£140
J Ettinger	£120
M&S	£1,278
B Hatt.....	£50
S E Keep Fit	£53
Howard Goldsobel	£250
Renee Cooper.....	£100
Pat Randall (Kilimanjaro).....	£1,107

Grateful thanks to all donors and fundraisers

She did it!



At the top of her game! Pat Randall (centre)

Super fundraiser Pat Randall and her friend Hazel are safely back in the UK, having completed their amazing climb of Kilimanjaro. Pat told us:

'It was a fantastic experience and knowing how much was raised for MND makes it all the more special. The people we climbed with were all so inspirational – our oldest lady was 70 and absolutely amazing. The climb has raised £183,000 so far and that's not the final total'

In the end, Pat and Hazel managed to raise more than the amount needed to climb Kilimanjaro and have donated £1107 to the North London Branch. We would like to thank Pat and Hazel for their amazing effort.

Branch Activities

The latter half of the year was a busy one for the Committee. We held our first Autumn Fayre in October in the increasingly familiar Harry Rice Hall (near Archway/Dartmouth Park area and it proved to be a great success raising nearly £1,200. We had a number of stalls including Beryl's jewellery stall, cards, Osbourne books, a second hand book store, wood carving and home made cakes.

In addition the café did a roaring trade in yet more of Phil and Gaye's homemade baking (see left: Masterchef eat your heart out) and it was great to see through the day friends and family as well as a number of locals and Branch supporters.



Phil and Gaye's sharp cooking!

Thank you to all the stallholders who kindly donated a prize for the raffle and donated a percentage of their takings to the Branch and to all those that came, ate and of course spent their money.



Beryl's bling

Support Meeting

On November 22nd last year a successful Support Meeting was hosted by Gay, Caroline and George. It was a wonderful opportunity for people with MND to come and meet others and their carers and to share experiences. Due to popular demand Gay has agreed to host another one on 3rd March at 11am - 12.30pm. Refreshments will be served. Please contact Gay if you would like to attend (020 8882 2233).

A Thank you from Haringey Multi Disciplinary Team

One of the ways in which the Branch raises awareness is to engage with healthcare professionals and back in October the Branch funded two places for a Association Conference held at St Joseph's Hospice back in October. Sarah Padfield, the Neuro-conditions lead from Haringey community therapy team (ICTT) reports back for us:

'To ensure that as many members of the team as possible across both the health and social service sectors, four different members attended for one day each. The topics were varied and included talks on alternative health and MND, cognition in MND and advanced planning with MND. There were also very useful stands on new equipment and available services.

Within Haringey we have a monthly complex conditions forum which with permission we discuss our residents with a diagnosis of MND, attendance at the conference has meant that we all have been kept up to date with developments and changes within the field of MND

and enabled us to disseminate what we learnt.

As well as the information gained, as with any large event the networking was also as useful. Our regional advisor Frances Carroll was present along with colleagues from specialist units such as Queen Square and other community services. We were able to explore ideas to improve joint working, ideas to optimise our efficiency as a service in changing times and help us to develop both as a community therapy team meeting the needs of people with MND and their carers but also as a wider health and social services team within the borough.

The funding for the two places was entirely funded by North London MNDA and without this funding the four of us would not have been able to attend and thank the branch for their generous contribution to our services and development."

The Branch is keen to further support healthcare professionals and assist them in their knowledge of MND.

Update on National Strategy for MND

We reported last time on the Association's ongoing campaign for a National Strategy for MND. The petition was finally signed by over 18,000 people and handed to No. 10 Downing Street by Chris Woodhead, former Chief Inspector of Schools who was diagnosed with MND in 2006. The government gave a disappointing but perhaps not surprising response in that it has not agreed to a National Strategy for MND. Health and social care is about to go through a radical period of change over the next few years and the Association is well placed to lobby the decision makers to make sure that MND is a priority and that the reforms in health and social care will improve the care for people with MND.

To keep up to date on the campaigning go to www.mndassociation.org or www.twitter.com/mndcampaigns; or www.facebook.com/mndcampaigns. Or read the blog on mndcampaign.wordpress.com

Clinical trial results revealed

The results of a phase two clinical trial of a drug called CK201 7357 were revealed at the International Symposium in December, showing the drug to be safe. Within six hours of taking the drug, people had increased muscle strength and endurance which was responsive to the dose given. This is positive news but, we welcome the results with caution as a much larger clinical trial using multiple doses (a phase three clinical trial) is now needed to determine the true effectiveness of this drug.

iPAD

The Branch recently funded an iPad for the National Hospital for Neurological and Neurosurgery at Queens Square. It is to be used as a communication aid assessment and demonstration tool to see if people living MND find it helpful.

They are currently looking at the various available applications to decide which would be most helpful. Louisa Gilpin, a Speech and Language Therapist at Queen's Square passed on her thanks to Branch and commented, 'we are all very excited about the prospects'. We look forward to hearing about how this goes.

Dates for your diary

3 March.....	Support Meeting starting at 11 am 133 Fox Lane, N16
13 March	Branch AGM Harry Rice Hall Dartmouth Park Hill
15 May	Regional Conference (South) Reading
15 May	Regional Conference (East)
11 September.....	Annual Conference and AGM Nottingham

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