



## Multiple Sclerosis Society

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Dear Friends

Abingdon Flower Club has made a very generous donation to our funds - £1,000.

The club chose our branch as its charity of the year in 2014 and organised various events to raise money, notably its annual flower show at St Nicolas Church in the town centre.

Our chairman, John Chipperfield, attended the flower show preview and was most impressed with the exhibits which adorned the church. Before he left, club officials asked if he would attend the annual meeting in February to receive a cheque.

John duly arrived at the Northcourt Centre in Abingdon, where the club meets, and was staggered to hear members were about to present him and the branch with a four-figure sum.

After the cheque had been handed over, John, still in shock,

## Oxford and district branch Newsletter

March/April 2015

thanked the club and explained that the branch, which received no grants and was completely self-supporting, would spend every penny on people with MS.

Our thanks to all members of the flower club for the wonderful support they have given us.

### **STEM CELL HOPE**

Treatment using a patient's own stem cells has led to "miraculous" results in some people with MS, according to scientists.

Professor Basil Sharrack, of the Royal Hallamshire Hospital in Sheffield, reported that some people previously confined to a wheelchair could now walk, run and even dance again.

But he stressed that more research was needed to prove the patients are not just experiencing a temporary remission which, as we all know, can occur in MS.

The MS Society described the Sheffield work as "very encouraging".

## **OPEN DAYS**

Local historian Malcolm Graham, our speaker at the February Open Day, gave us a fascinating insight into how Oxford was affected by the First World War, producing a series of interesting photographs to illustrate his talk.

We were also delighted on this occasion to welcome Andrew Moss and Vaughan and Peter Haskins, members of the NHS Retirement Fellowship, who gave us a donation of £115 from the proceeds of their regular countryside walks. This is the second year the group has supported us – they previously gave us £100. Our thanks to all members of the fellowship for their generous support.

Most of the March Open Day was taken up by the annual meeting (see separate report), but we were pleased to welcome Claire Brokenshire, healthwise instructor at Abingdon Leisure Centre, who outlined simple steps people with MS could take, at home or in the gym, to keep as fit as possible and give themselves a better quality of life.

Claire circulated a three-page list of ideas – if anyone who was not there would like a copy, please contact our chairman, John Chipperfield, on **01865 374877**.

There will be no Open Day in April as the first Friday of the month falls on Good Friday. On Friday, 1<sup>st</sup> May, we will welcome Richard Westcott, whose talk is entitled the Confessions of a Pantomime Dame.

He has been recommended to us by two Oxford groups, and apparently, we are promised an hour of hilarity as he dresses in various costumes and tells stories of life on stage. A date not to be missed, it would appear!

Brenda Franklin will be holding a Cake Break during the May Open Day, offering cakes in exchange for a donation to the branch.

The programme for Open Days later in the year is given at the end of the newsletter.

## **100 CLUB WINNERS**

The winners of the March 100 Club draw were John Chipperfield (£28), David Blacker (£18) and Shirley Ray (£9).

There are still plenty of vacant spaces, so if you want to try your luck at winning a cash prize and helping the branch at the same time, contact the 100 Club organiser, Brenda Franklin, at one of our meetings or call her on **01993 842076**.





Peter Haskins (standing) and his wife, Vaughan (in red, on the left), with branch members, above, after the cheque presentation from the NHS Retirement Fellowship at our February Open Day. Below, Jo and Brian Hawtin with their Christmas lights – one of many homes in Vicarage Road and Webbs Way, Kidlington, which spread festive cheer.





## **ALL CHANGE!**

As we reported in the last newsletter, the MS Society is reorganising its regional structure, disposing of the titles of Local Support Development Officer and Volunteer Development Officer and replacing them with Local Network Officers (LNOs).

England has been divided into three regions and we are in the central region, to be served by six LNOs under Kim Yallop, the Local Network Officer.

Sue Hannaford, previously our main contact with the society, has left and the LNO serving our branch is expected to be Rosie Schonenberger, whom we have yet to meet.

## **BRIEFLY**

The Northcourt Centre, where we hold our Open Days, is hoping to organise another quiz evening to pay for improvements to the building. We hope that the 'MinnowS', our team in the last quiz, will make another appearance.

Our thanks and sympathy go to Jeff Samways and his family, after the death of his mother Ivy. We have received cheques for £65 for our branch following a collection at her funeral.

Our thanks to John Winn for supplying us with a wheelchair, to be kept at the Northcourt Centre for use in an emergency. The previous wheelchair had to be discarded after the centre committee deemed it too large to be held in the storeroom.

The MS Society has launched a new Shining Star Award, to recognise outstanding contributions by volunteers working with people with MS. If you know of someone who deserves an award, contact any of our committee members and we will put their name forward.

Let us know if you hear of anyone ill or in hospital. Call **0779 237 7178** for all welfare matters. Send correspondence to John Chipperfield at 3 Lambs Close, Kidlington, Oxon OX5 2YD. For the MS nurses, call **01865 234461** or email [ms.advice@orh.nhs.uk](mailto:ms.advice@orh.nhs.uk) Call **01865 231869** for information about ongoing and new MS trials. To contribute to the newsletter, call John Chipperfield on **01865 374877**, write to 3 Lambs Close, Kidlington, Oxon OX5 2YD or send an email to [mjpchipperfield@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:mjpchipperfield@yahoo.co.uk)

**All views expressed in this newsletter are individual and not necessarily the view or policy of the charity or its supporters.**



## **FESTIVE FARE**

There was not one house in Vicarage Road and Webbs Way, Kidlington, that wasn't aglow with Christmas lights.

It is a tradition started by our secretary and treasurer, Jo and Brian Hawtin, which has continued for 21 years.

This year's switch-on took place on a Sunday night in early December, with all the residents joining together for mulled wine and mince pies. Every year, visitors come from miles around to admire the lights which fill both streets.

The display was featured in the Oxford Mail, under the headline: 'Is this the most festive street in Oxfordshire?' No-one challenged the good folk of Kidlington.

Neighbour Bob Taylor told the Mail: "It's not expensive – it is a delight. It brings the community together. Neighbours are busy people and it is the only time of the year we get to talk to people at the other end of the road."

## **ANNUAL MEETING**

Our annual meeting, part of our March Open Day, was well attended, with lively discussion, particularly on the health and

safety measures being imposed upon us by the MS Society.

Our chairman, John Chipperfield, reported a successful 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary year, with the focus again on our monthly Open Days, which had featured talks, music, hands-on workshops and visits by animals and creepy-crawlies. He thanked everyone who had supported branch activities.

Presenting the annual accounts, a copy of which appears later in the newsletter, our treasurer, Brian Hawtin, reported that although we had paid a considerable sum in grants to people with MS, the balance in hand had dropped by only £1,300, thanks largely to fundraising and generous donations.

Collections and sales during the two-year association with the owners of the Westgate Centre had produced £1,815, while collections at Tesco raised £547. Other contributions had come from the Hampden Masonic Lodge at Thame, the BMW charity fund and retired NHS employees.

There were no new nominations for the committee, and the present officers were re-elected en-bloc.





Congratulations to branch members Val and Roy Samworth, of Rose Hill, Oxford, above, who celebrated their golden wedding anniversary. Left, Val Hawkins gets into dancing mood with our secretary, Jo Hawtin, while Ian and Diane Woods, our visitors at our Christmas Open Day in December, provide the music in the background



## **'TREAT ME RIGHT'**

The MS Society is urging members to tackle General Election candidates head-on to press home its 'Treat Me Right' campaign.

With the latest issue of the MS Matters magazine, it has circulated a door hanger, which it suggests members should put on their front door handle, and confront candidates canvassing for votes with its message when they call.

The hanger makes four points – give MS a voice, help me get the right treatment at the right time, make benefits assessments work for people with MS, and fight for me to get the care I need when I need it.

'Treat Me Right' was voted voluntary sector campaign of the year in the Public Affairs Awards in a ceremony at the Park Plaza Riverbank in London in December, beating other leading charities.

The campaign was launched in April 2014 to press for the right treatment at the right time for people with MS. Since then, nearly 9,000 letters have been sent to politicians across the UK. So far, more than 120 MPs, plus 70 members of the Scottish Parliament, 40 members of the

Northern Ireland Assembly and 15 members of the Welsh Assembly have pledged their support.

MS Society chief executive Michelle Mitchell said: "I am thrilled to see the strength of the MS community and the Treat Me Right campaign recognised in this way. We will continue the fight to ensure everyone with MS can access the right treatment for them."

- MS Week takes place from 27<sup>th</sup> April to 3<sup>rd</sup> May, one week before the General Election.

## **NEW GUIDELINES**

NICE, the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence, has published the guidelines that the NHS should follow when dealing with people with MS.

It recommends an annual review with a specialist for all, a properly co-ordinated care package, with one team member as a contact point, and for health professionals to provide more information to people with MS and their families.

The MS Society has welcomed the guidelines, but remains concerned that access to specific medicines, including Sativex, could be blocked.



## **Oxford and District Branch Officers – 2015-6**

President: Prof Derick Wade

Chairman/Newsletter Editor: John Chipperfield 01865 374877  
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MS Support Officer: Paula Mallaghan 01865 378519  
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Open Day Officer: Vacant

Membership Secretary: Stevan Heads 01235 532184  
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Transport Officer: Liz Smith 01865 368774  
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Committee member: Dorothy Warner 01235 554448  
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Information Officer:  
Vacant

## **DATES FOR YOUR DIARY**

No Open Day in April (Good Friday)

**Monday April 27- Sunday May 3:** MS Week

**Friday May 1:** Open Day, Northcourt Centre, Abingdon.  
Speaker/entertainer: Richard Westcott, Confessions of a Pantomime Dame. Plus Brenda Franklin's Cake Break. 10am-4pm.

**Friday June 5:** Open Day, Northcourt Centre, Abingdon. Brenda Franklin leads a craft workshop. 10am-4pm.

**Friday July 3:** Open Day, Northcourt Centre, Abingdon. Wheatley Birds of Prey return. 10am-4pm.

**Friday August 7:** Open Day, Northcourt Centre, Abingdon. Wantage Male Voice Choir entertains. 10am-4pm.

**Friday, September 4:** Open Day, Northcourt Centre, Abingdon.  
Speaker: Malcolm Nelson, My life as a customs officer (Part 2). 10am-4pm.

**Friday October 2:** Open Day, Northcourt Centre, Abingdon. Speaker: John Winn on his hobby of steamboats. 10am-4pm.

**Friday November 6:** Open Day, Northcourt Centre, Abingdon. Brenda Franklin leads a Christmas craft workshop. 10am-4pm.

**Friday December 4:** Open Day, Northcourt Centre, Abingdon.  
Christmas music from Ian and Diane Woods. 10am-4pm.

**Call Alan Cusden on 01865 723420 or Geoff Cowan on 07930 542692 if you wish to help with fundraising or collections.**

**Don't forget to look at our website at [www.mssociety.org.uk/oxford](http://www.mssociety.org.uk/oxford)**

# Income & Expenditure Account for the year ended 31st October 2014

	Open Day	Information Centre	General	Total	Previous Year
	£		£	£	£
Fund Balance at 1st Nov	-1,885	567	20,632	19,314	21,027
Income					
Donations	8,411			8,411	4,672
Raffles	846			846	846
Travel Contributions	180				174
Coffee Mornings				0	320
Subscriptions			953	953	864
Grants			2,203	2,203	
Bank Interest			142	142	145
MSS Trading				0	33
Total	9,437	0	3,298	12,735	7,054
Expenditure					
Grants Given			4,906	4,906	750
Outings & Socials	6,103			6,103	5,667
Transport	1,700			1,700	1,863
Fund Raising			189	189	0
Printing & Stationery			355	355	245
Postage			250	250	124
Telephone		412		412	50
Other			119	119	67
Payments to M S Society				0	
Adjust to Balances				0	1
Total	7,803	412	5,819	14,034	8,767
Fund Balance at 31st Oct	-251	155	18,111	18,015	19,314
Represented By:-					
Stock				100	100
Bank Balance				18,141	19,480
				18,241	19,580
Less					
Sundry Creditors				-226	-266
				18,015	19,314