

# **GOSPORT AND FAREHAM BRANCH OF THE MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS SOCIETY**

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Dear Member

Just back from holiday and its time for a late summer/early autumn newsletter. We've just spent two weeks in Staffordshire with the family. Not a very exotic location you might think, but it's a beautiful county, rolling countryside, interesting places to visit and best of all extremely friendly, welcoming people. No I'm not getting a "backhander" from the Tourist Board!

Since the AGM the Committee has been strengthened by the addition of 2 new people, Steve Irving as Fund Raiser and Jo Bardall.

## **MySociety Blog**

Jo came to us with the brilliant idea of starting a new Blog as a way of reaching people with M.S. who may not know of our existence or who backed away from making contact.

Jo says :- "Every week I share something new from my perspective of living with M.S. and I hope very much that people within this Community will want to comment and get in touch to share their own views on these subjects. If you would like to visit and take a look at the stories so far MySociety is currently available at the following web address"

[www.mysocietyuk.wordpress.com](http://www.mysocietyuk.wordpress.com)

"Alternatively each weeks post is shared on our Branches Facebook page and there is also a link to the blog on the Branch Website.

I hope you find the articles useful and even a little amusing. If anybody has any suggestions for good discussions please let me know and I will endeavor to have a go at talking about them. I can be reached through the blog site or my email at – [mysocietyuk@gmail.com](mailto:mysocietyuk@gmail.com) “

## Steve Irving

Steve emailed me to say that he had recently retired and had moved to the area to be near his daughter who has M.S. He volunteered his services to the Branch and was “snapped up” When you meet him I think you’ll understand why.

Steve recently attended an update on M.S. Society Research held in Portsmouth on 29<sup>th</sup> June 2016. Here in brief is a summary of what was presented.

There are 23 million people affected with M.S. globally with women 3 times as likely to be affected as men. The main areas of research are

- 1) Immunomodulation (managing the production of white blood cells which attack myelin)
- 2) Repair of myelin (symptom reversal after attack)
- 3) Neuroprotection (protecting the nerves so even if myelin attacking white blood cells are present they will not damage nerves.

From research 110 genes have been identified that are linked in some way to M.S. and research continues to identify risk factors which might trigger these genes.

Some interesting individual projects mentioned were:-

- a) Fatigue management – looking at beneficial effects of Flavonoids in dark chocolate (now in clinical trials) Cant be bad!!
- b) Fatigue management looking at the benefits of resistance exercise (rather than aerobic) which it is hoped will lead to bespoke programmes for individuals.
- c) Seeing if bladder problems can be managed using botox injections.
- d) Research of cognitive impairment called CRAMMS which is now in trials – it’s the largest cognitive trial ever.

1 in 600 people at risk of M.S. in the general population but this increases if there are close relatives who suffer from M.S.

What are the triggers for M.S.?

- i) The virus which causes glandular fever may be a trigger and a project is looking at possible links
- ii) Lack of Vitamin D has been suggested. Vitamin D is produced by exposure to the sun and people in northern climates are more prone to M.S. than people in sunnier countries. Research is attempting to establish a causative link .

Of new approaches – there has been a lot of publicity on the use of haematopoietic stem cells. This involves destroying and then rebuilding the immune system. This was still a high risk therapy. More promising was the use of stem cells from bone marrow and skin which hold the promise of possibly aiding myelin repair.

The new licensed drugs were also shown and Steve suggests anyone interested looks at these on the MS Website.

## **Regular Events**

A reminder that our fortnightly physio recommences on **Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> September** At the Parish Centre, Green Road, Alverstoke PO12 2ET at 10.30am.

The M.S. Nurse has sent me dates when someone from the team will be attending (sickness or meetings allowing).

The dates are:

15<sup>th</sup> September, 13<sup>th</sup> October, 10<sup>th</sup> November , 8<sup>th</sup> December

Yoga recommences on **Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> September** at Hedca, Coombe Rd, Elson, PO12 4JB starting at 10.45am. All welcome. The yoga is great for increasing core stability. We make time for a chat afterwards over coffee and cake.

Craft – Our monthly craft sessions at the Golden Bowler, 122 Stubbington Lane, PO14 2NG start again on **Monday 12<sup>th</sup> September** starting 11am. We will be making Christmas cards! Its never too early. Ring Ruth on 01329 318451/07817 358672 if you would like to attend.

Incidentally the M.S. Society will not be producing Christmas Cards this year – for the first time. Apparently only 13 Branches (including us) ordered them last year

## **Regional Quiz**

After a years hiatus the Regional Quiz event is returning this Saturday October 15<sup>th</sup> hosted by the reigning champions the Farnborough Branch.

The venue is

The Baptist Church Hall

Basingbourne Road

Church Crookham

Fleet

GU52 2TH

Commencing 11.30am

A free ploughman's lunch including tea and coffee will be served. Feel free to bring your own alcoholic or soft drink (plus a glass)

There will be teams of 6 people. If you would like to attend please contact me at [juliettehewitt@gmail.com](mailto:juliettehewitt@gmail.com) or 02392 581406. It would be good if we could make up a team or two.

## **Wheelhouse Chalet** get together

The last of the season is on **Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> September** from 11.30am onwards (until 2.30/3pm). Bring your own picnic or we'll send out for fish and chips. You never know it might prove to be an Indian Summer!

## **Norfolk Disabled Friendly Cottages**

One of our members and his family have just spent a very enjoyable holiday in one of these cottages. There are 8 disabled friendly cottages all converted to a high standard. Each has its own garden and is in a very peaceful setting.

Equipment is available to hire. For more details [lavinia@nd-fc.co.uk](mailto:lavinia@nd-fc.co.uk) Tel 01485 578354

## **Fundraising**

**Alverstoke Michelmas Fair** – Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> September. We thank those of you who have helped in the past with this event but this year because of lack of fit persons (and no Christmas cards, and that Juliette won't be around with her bread pudding) we have had to make the decision to not take part this year

**Collection at Sainsbury's Broadcut** Fareham on Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> September from 9am onwards. If anyone can spare even an hour would they please contact Steve Irving on 07976 054003. We will be under cover in the foyer. Its good fun and you meet some very nice people.

These collections are not just about raising money its an opportunity to give out information and support to the public who might not know that the Society exists.

**Abseil** – We have booked 12 Abseiling places at the Spinnaker Tower on **Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2017**. Six places at 11.30 and 6 at 2pm. 3 places have already been filled. So we are in need of 9 “volunteers” to grab the remaining slots and get the sponsorship up and running. Ideally we would like each volunteer to raise around £500 for the Branch but less or more would be equally acceptable. Names to George on 07825 410680 [george.macaleese@btopenworld.com](mailto:george.macaleese@btopenworld.com)

I hope you will find something of interest in this newsletter and I look forward to hearing from you

Very best wishes

Juliette

Diary to follow