



West Berkshire Heart Support Group Newsletter

Independent Support Charity Affiliated to the British Heart Foundation.

Associated with the Cardiac Care Unit of the
Royal Berkshire Hospital Trust, Reading, Berkshire.

Volume 8

Issue 2

Circulation 500

February - March 2009

An Adventure on the Island of Twin Peaks

By Bert Tinsey

How about volunteering? Wait a minute, how about volunteering for two years; not only that, but two years abroad in, perhaps, a third world country?

Following their retirement from teaching in 1989 Bob Court and his wife decided that they could still contribute more and perhaps give something back to society. They heard about the Voluntary Services Overseas (VSO) schemes and put themselves forward for consideration. They were accepted and sent to St Lucia in the Windward Islands. St Lucia is a small subdued volcanic island covered in lush tropical vegetation and beautiful trees. A notable natural feature is the Twin Peaks or Pitons. These soar 2000ft up from the sea.



Petit Piton, one of the Twin Peaks

Although now an independent country within the Commonwealth, St Lucia alternated between British and French rule for 150 years. Reminders of those times can be seen in the old fortresses and naval bases. A particular reminder is the old French capital of Soufriere which still had a French colonial look about it with some houses having elaborate and decorated cast ironwork to their long balconies. Locally these are referred to as 'gingerbread Houses'.

English is regularly spoken but on a day to day basis, is used with a mixture of French patois. Bob told us that at least they drive on the left and play Cricket!

As elsewhere in the West Indies, St Lucia was, in Bob's time, developing an important tourist industry on the north west coast of the island and cruise liners had started to visit on a regular basis.

On their arrival, back in 1989, with a few other new VSOs, Bob and his wife spent a week in a hostel next to the British High Commission in the capital Castries acclimatising themselves to the town and surroundings. They had arrived at night and their first daylight view from their bedroom window was across a glorious bay to a place called Windjammer Landing; a view Bob and his wife said was 'worth a ransom'.

There was a local produce market and other shops where Bob and his wife were able to get

the necessities of life. They were surprised to see a Cooperative Penny Bank and found the Post Office which would be an important link with the U.K.

As 90% of the population are said to be Roman Catholics, it was no surprise to see the Catholic Cathedral, but there was also an Anglican Cathedral; both large churches by our standards.

As retired teachers, Bob and his wife were interested in the sizable Carnegie Library. This was daily filled with school children doing homework. It seems that the children's homes were often not suited for studying whereas the library had the facilities and the right atmosphere.

The VSOs had to find their own accommodation in Castries. Eventually Bob and his wife rented a small basement flat, with a gas cooker and a small fridge running off Calor gas. They declined to have a television set. Water was metered but kept deliberately cheap to discourage the poor folk from using river water and risking diseases.

Bob's wife was to teach a group of young women shorthand and typing to City & Guilds exam level. The group had the use of a normal classroom with older but efficient typewriters. The only real problem was a breed of termites munching away in the wooden roof and showering everything with wood dust! The group made good progress and by the time Bob and his wife left, they nearly all had obtained good jobs.

Bob's own work involved teaching, over the two years, City & Guilds Advanced Craft to a group of ten teacher-students. Their features reflected the past history of slave labour in the island and their mixed origin. Due to the influx of Asian labour, most of the businesses in the St Lucia were now Asian run.

As Bob expected, his students had various levels of craft and woodwork experience, so he had an immediate task to bring the least experienced 'up to scratch'. The originally intended workshop had been wrecked by the last hurricane and, having recovered what they could of the contents, they reassembled them in a derelict old hut which also had termite activity in the roof!

There was a sufficient assortment of basic tools and an electric cross-cut saw, which with attention, became a useful tool. There were also two band-saws which had been out of action for a long time. Bob was able to obtain replacement parts for one but he never managed to get the other one to work.

During the early part of the course Bob and his students were able to improve the workshop by making all the basic woodwork equipment, saw horses, bench hooks, shooting boards, tool racks, saw racks and shelving to make the workshop presentable.

Bob was pleased that, once his course got going, his teacher-students made great strides and achieved their eventual goals

What did the VSOs do in their spare time? By contributing together as a group they were able to hire a bus and have the occasional sightseeing trip around the island. As the roads were poor a full day was needed each time but was well worthwhile.

Rodney Bay with its marina was well remembered, as was the view across Marigot Bay where there was a bar/restaurant called Doolittles. The bar was well known for its range of rum cocktails. Close by is a rum distillery; despite the fact that St Lucia no longer has sugar plantations and the sugar is imported from other islands. We were assured that if we bought a bottle of "Windward Island Rum" from our local supermarket, it would have been distilled and bottled at the Marigot Bay Distillery.

Apart from the tourist trade, which has vastly increased since their VSO tour, bananas, grown by the smaller farmers, are an important export. The GEEST "banana boats", who bring in supplies, visit weekly and are quickly turned around. Readers will be pleased to know that Waitrose particularly feature the tasty Windward Island bananas.

Bob and his wife felt that they were lucky to be posted to such a lovely island, and that their past experience as teachers had been put to good use. With willing students, a vast amount had been achieved during their two years stay.

Abridged article on the VSO scheme kindly written by member Bert Tinsey

Time For Leisure

Four old retired guys are walking down a street in Bournemouth. They turn a corner and see a sign that says, *Senior Citizens Bar – all drinks 10p*. They look at each other, and then go in, thinking this is too good to be true.

The old barman says in a voice that carries across the room, 'Come on in and let me pour one for you! What'll it be, Gentlemen?'

Each of the men asks for a pint. They are quickly served by the barman who says, 'That'll be 10p each, please'

The four men stare at the barman for a moment. Then look at each other. They can't believe their good luck. They pay the 40p, finish their beers, and order another round. Again, four pints are produced with the barman again saying, 'That's 40p, please.'

They pay the 40p, but their curiosity is more than they can stand. They have each had two pints and so far they've spent less than a pound. Finally one of the men says, 'How can you afford to serve beer as good as this for this price?'

'I'm a retired tailor from Stepney,' the barman said, and I always wanted to own a bar. Last year I hit the Lottery for £7 million and decided to open this place. Every drink costs 10p - wine, spirits, beer, it's all the same.'

'Wow!!!! That's quite a story,' says one of the men. The four of them continue to drink their beers but can't help noticing seven other people at the end of the bar who don't have drinks in front of them, and haven't ordered anything the whole time they have been there.

One man gestures at the seven at the end of the bar without drinks and asks the barman, 'What's up with them?'

The barman says, 'Oh, they're all old retired farts from Glasgow. They're waiting for happy hour when drinks are half price.'

Our thanks to the anonymous reader who sent the above to us.

This newsletter can be downloaded at www.heartbeats.btinternet.co.uk

Out and About Gardening

By Ken Tudgay

At this time of the year we wonder what to do in the garden or allotment. Here are a few reminders even if its cold:

Winter Baskets: Keep watered to prevent drying out. Pick dead heads and check for hidden aphides which infest plants that are dry.

Hellebores: Remove dead leaves so they don't infect new leaves, as this will result in leaf spot.

Alpines: Sow seeds in well drained compost and place in a frame.

If the soil is not too wet or the ground hard, some herbaceous plants can be divided. Pot up small pieces and keep in a cold frame.

House Plants: Move delicate plants away from windows on cold nights. Place them in the warmth of the room.

Seeds: If you forgot to order seeds from catalogues or were let down, try your local garden centre for seeds at good prices

Clearing: Keep clearing dead plants and rubbish from your garden or allotment as unwanted guests will hide.

Hardy Fuchsias: Check the protection is still in place around the crowns

Broad beans: Sow in pots. These can be planted under cloches or fleece, February - March.

If you have a greenhouse or poly tunnel and have plants in them, for example dahlias, check for mildew, aphids and mice. Clean old leaves from pot plants and dead leaves. With these hard frosts check for condensation. Open windows on sunny days to allow circulation, but don't forget to close them before evening.

Compost and pots: Turn your compost over. Have you washed your pots ready for seeding? Clean Pots make good plants

Note for 2009

Did you make a New Year's Resolution? Well what better than to join your local horticultural association? They need you help and provide talks, outings, compost and all your needs for gardening at good prices. Happy gardening!

KT.



Obituaries

We are very sad to report the death of the following Heartbeat Members:

Caerwyn Roberts, known as Taffy, died on the 28th September 2008. Taffy was a good supporter of Heartbeats and occasionally attended the Calcot Branch.

Jan Cusworth died on 3rd December 2008. She leaves Jim, her husband and two sons. Jan and Jim attended meeting at our Calcot branch. They were also supporters and keen leaders of our Walking Group in Prospect Park.

Victor Kirsop died on 8th January 2009. Victor was regular supporter of Heartbeats at our Calcot branch. He leaves his brothers Harry and Richard

Our thoughts are with the members of their families

Articles for Publication

We would welcome members articles for publication. Indeed the newsletter would be much richer for them. Please make it your own and not just a copy of a published work. We want to avoid copyright problems. The article should be about 450 words long to fit on a page. Please send contributions by post to me, Peter Drew-Clifton, 2 Tring Road, Tilehurst, Reading RG31 6SE or by e-mail to pdrewc@pdrewc.co.uk Contributions will be acknowledged, but please note that articles may be edited or omitted entirely depending on the space available. The Committee does not accept responsibility for views of contributors, or for the claims of advertisers.

The following was sent to us by Maureen's granddaughter Sophie in the USA:

Not copyright we hope!

LOOK OUT!

The witches mumble horrid chants,
you're scolded by five thousand aunts,
A Martian pulls a fearsome face
and hurls you into outer space,
you're tied in front of whistling trains,
a tomahawk has sliced your brains,
the tigers snarl, the giants roar,
you're sat on by a dinosaur.
in vain you're shouting, "help" and "stop",
the walls are spinning like a top,
the earth is melting in the sun
and all the horror's just begun.
and, oh, the screams, and thumping hearts
That awful night before school starts.

News from Wokingham, Woodley & Earley Meetings held on the 4th Wednesday in the month starting at 7.30pm at St Nicolas Church Hall, Sutcliffe Avenue, Earley

Forthcoming Events:

24th December – no meeting

Wednesday 28th January – belated Christmas party

Wednesday 25th February – 'Beyond My Wildest Dreams' Gwen Barton

Wednesday 25th March – Plant Paradise – David Leary

On the 28th November we all gathered in the hall as usual to hear Matt Taylor from the Fire and Rescue Service talk to us about fire safety. We are all – or so we thought – well informed on the subject and settled back in the expectation of hearing 'what good children' we were. This was true for most of the precautions that are needed, but some of what we had believed was out of date and some advice has been improved on or altered. Matt was pleased to hear that no one deep fries anything, but asked us to invest in a proper thermostatically controlled fryer and make sure they ARE safe ones. He had some spectacular footage showing the reaction that occurs when a pan fire is incorrectly treated and the speed with which it all happens is very alarming. He was also pleased to hear that we seemed to be non smokers until a little voice at the back of the room confessed to smoking - and smoking in bed! We had some more scary pictures of that too! It was a most informative talk and very well done. He handed out forms for us to fill in if we wanted a security check and was very amused when he was asked to send someone young and handsome to one address – I will say no more!

I'm off to check the loading on my extension leads before the holidays. I think I can still count to 13 – which is the maximum loading that should be applied to any plug. As he pointed out, most of us have given up on those box shaped multi-plugs with a dozen wires dangling from them. The newer bar shaped extensions are better but each should not be carrying more than 13 amps, the maximum loading. He also advises that we spend the extra and get one that has individual switches for each of the items plugged in. AND switch everything off when you're not there. (See centre pages for picture of Matt)

Our December meeting should have been on the 24th. There are problems getting hold of the hall at this time of year as the church has several events to organise. We have held a party in the past but not quite so close to Christmas. We have also

found that other groups have their social gatherings too and for members to squeeze everything in and cope with Christmas is hard; besides – most importantly – I will be away and I don't want to miss out.

Once again, I'm heading across the 'pond' to the 'Big Apple' for a New York get together and then we'll be off to Vermont. to stay in my son's 'ski lodge' This is his own; not as grand as the ones he has rented in the past and, thankfully, will only contain my daughter-in-law's Chinese relatives and ourselves. That is still a few people, 4 children under 4 and a dog. At least the numbers seem to be fixed. One year we expected 4 of Graham's friends and then 5 more invited themselves. When we arrived at the house (in four feet of snow) we found a couple of others had decided to stay on and then a sad looking lad turned up because his girl friend had dumped him and he was going to be alone over Christmas. Luckily, skiers get up early in the mornings so most of the odd places like landings, lounge floors, bathrooms and utility rooms were clear to walk across! There wasn't a spare blanket or pillow in the house. This visit looks as if it will be quieter but not quite as much fun. But I do not want to be putting up tents for visitors in deep snow with more forecast and a howling gale blowing. (*see visit on page 12*)

Wish me luck!! And a Happy Christmas to one and all and let's hope the New Year is a good one. Best wishes, Maureen

News from The West Reading Branch

Meetings held on the 1st Tuesday in the month starting at 7.30pm
At Calcot Community Centre, High View, Tilehurst, Reading

Forthcoming Events:

Tuesday February 3rd – Talk by John Howes
Tuesday March 3rd – Spencer's Wood Songsters

Our December meeting was a visit by Mary Munday and the Reading Concert Singers, who as in past years gave us a wonderful evening of carols old and new and solos by members of the Munday family especially Tim and Charlotte. Also taking part was the talented trombone player Ian Barlow who played a piece entitled The Acrobat. Ian also has a good tenor voice and sang The Sussex Carol for us, 'On Christmas Night all Christians Sing'. The amusing Flanders and Swann duet was presented by Robin and Tim Munday, both wearing appropriate peaked caps. In all we were treated to 16 enjoyable items. (*see centre pages*)

At the end of the concert your Treasurer turned the tables on Mary by presenting the group a cheque from Heartbeats for £25 for Church funds.

Our January meeting was our New Year party, which despite a very cold night was well attended. Our thanks go to Beth Blackwood whose persuasive endeavours got members to bring in food for our enjoyment, and what a table it was.

Once we had taken our fill we turned to the entertainment for the evening. The chairs and tables were pushed back so that Molly and Alan Denton and friends could demonstrate their skills at the fine art of dancing. There was a slight problem; Molly was unable to attend as she had been taken ill. So in the true spirit of entertainers 'The Show Must Go On', Alan as MC for the evening soon had us applauding his friends as they performed for us. With a bit of persuasion some of the member were tempted to get up and join in the dancing, especially our Editor. He didn't know the steps but cajoled members to take part.

It is pleasing to report that the raffle raised £71

Birthdays etc. I would like to take this opportunity to say a big thank you to my wife Shirley, who on the 7th March 2009 will have put up with me for 50 years (I know; Ronny Biggs only got 30!)

Regards to you all, and keep safe,

Graham

See pictures on centre pages

News from Newbury Branch

Meetings held on the 2nd Wednesday in the month starting at 7.30pm
at St John's Church Hall, St John's Road, Newbury.

Forthcoming Events:

Wednesday 11th February - Programme to be advised.

Wednesday 11th March - Programme to be advised.

Well here we are with another New Year and with thins as they are sincerely hope they can get better.

We had a very good Christmas Party with masses of lovely food provided by members; with plenty of wine and soft drinks to accompany it and, despite the fact that the hall was a bit cramped (the Church is having a new roof fitted and part of the hall was scaffolded which reduced the space a bit) we all managed to fit in.

After we had all eaten, exchanged Christmas cards and had a good chat, we were entertained by Gordon, Jeff, Fred & Tony who sang a couple of Christmas songs, Fred then gave us a couple of jolly good solos, and we finished off with Carols sung by all the members.

To end the evening all members received a small gift from Santa's Sack and everyone agreed a good time had been had by all.

I'm sorry we don't yet have a programme for February and March, but we are now making a concerted effort to get some speakers and hope to have news for you soon.

Belated Birthday Greetings for December go to Anita Buckland on 3rd and Stephanie Skelly on 10th.

January; we send greetings to Isabel Trent on 8th, Ray Skelly on 17th, Alan Marshall on 30th and Gordon Trent on 31st, and for February we send Greeting s to Brian Buckland on the 9th

Our January meeting was well attended despite the weather, the Committee were all re-elected to serve for another year with the exception of Fred Lamport who is having a rest and his place has been taken by Jo Nobbs who kindly volunteered to join the committee. Welcome Jo, and thanks Fred for your efforts over the last year.

After the business of the evening was concluded we had a Quiz which went down well, rounded off with tea and cakes which we all enjoyed.

Finally, all of us at Newbury wish all members a very Happy, Healthy and Peaceful New Year.

Jeanne.

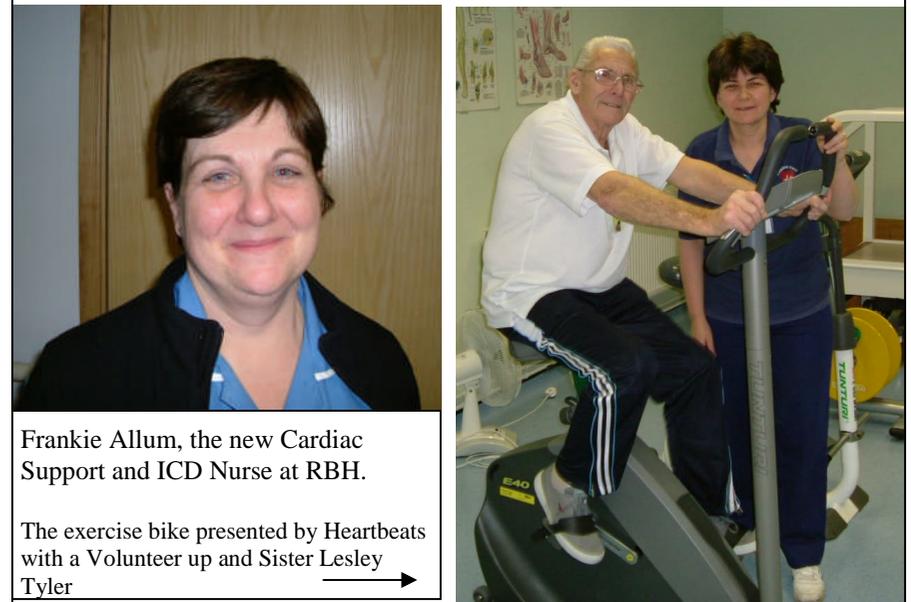
Did You Know? Facts About Reading

979. Foundation of St Mary the Virgin Church by Queen Elfrida. A wall plaque in the church also tells us that on or near this site was an abbey for nuns. In 1066 the abbey was sacked buy the Danes.

1121. Reading Abbey was founded by Henry 1. He was also buried in the Abbey before the High Alter in 1136. The Abbey dominated the town until it's dissolution in 1538. *These and many other facts were given to us by Valerie Kearey. If members of WWE and Newbury Branches would like to give us some of their local facts we will try to include them in later editions*



On the 28th November 2008, Paul and Joyce Bamford presented 4 heart monitors to Colin Maclean, Chairman of the Hospital Trust in memory of the late Geoff Bamford. Behind them were Dr Charlie McKenna and Sue Westlake



Frankie Allum, the new Cardiac Support and ICD Nurse at RBH.

The exercise bike presented by Heartbeats with a Volunteer up and Sister Lesley Tyler →



*Photos
By
Bob
Powell
and
Brian
Hayter*

Brian Hill demonstrated Tai Chi, for Mature Movers at WWE



Matt Tayler who spoke to WWE about Home Safety



Tim & Robin Munday's Transport of Delight



The Choir and Ian Barlow performing at the Carol Concert at the Calcot Meeting

**A Month Across the Pond
(or How not to spend Christmas!)**
by Maureen Reichelt

A couple of years ago I was banned from flying anywhere as I managed to get a pulmonary embolism and was a bit poorly for a while. The family was growing and in the end put pressure on me to bully the medics on this side of the Pond. Opinions were divided but in the end the American Contingent had the idea of pooling all their Air Miles and treating me to First Class travel!!! The medics, having scanned and tested and poked and prodded and re-prescribed and generally done their best to dissuade me, gave in. I could go but it was suggested that I do the 'wheel chair' route to save me excess stress. I managed to get insurance that didn't make me re-mortgage the house and set off with a medium case and a huge package containing the doll's house of Annabelle's dreams. We will draw a veil over the transporting of that lot and me but it all went better than expected and I arrived in New York (having crossed the Pond with Stephen Fry), full of the 'Oh be Joyfuls' to be greeted by the other half of the family. Melanie (my daughter) was to follow in a week or so and bring me home after Christmas.

So far so good. We had a week of gadding about shopping, buying Annabelle (age 3) a party dress, and seeing just how much fun I could have when turned loose in New York on a mobility scooter before we set off for Vermont for Christmas in the snow. In case you were unaware of the fact – Vermont is where the snow is AT and I mean that!!! We have spent a few Christmases up there with skiing parties and the consequent broken limbs. This time it was to be just family. What could go wrong?

Our first venture out with the scooter in New York was a great success. Annabelle decided that riding with Grandma was the way to go. This caused quite a lot of amusement and chatting especially when we ran into a film crew recording the next episode of one of the crime series. 'Sweet cheeks!! Will you take a look at this Hank' said a cameraman. 'What a doll' and 'Do we need a kid?' 'Isn't this great?'. We finally escaped with my vanity sadly damaged and Victoria (daughter-in-law) muttering darkly, 'Did I know I was in the Big Apple and you don't just chat up everybody? – even if they look nice and smile.' We got home, made a cup of tea and planned the next day – Annabelle's party dress. The scooter was put on 'charge' ready for the next day and Annabelle spent the evening deciding what colour she wanted. Poor Sebastian (age 15 months) was sadly excluded from all this so contented himself by driving us mad climbing all over the scooter, switching the light on and off and sounding the hooter.

Morning came and with it, great excitement. We piled on to the scooter, Seb in the push chair and set out for 'Sons And Daughters' (THE place to go) En route Victoria got a worrying call from her friend Ann, so told her to meet us as she seemed to need cheering up and there was no telling 'what this mad woman she was with was likely to do next!' Ann found us and we went on to the shop. Seb was let out and caused mayhem as it had construction toys – luckily they have a kids area in a sort of Wendy house. The rest of us looked at dresses - until Seb got loose again. We bought the dress and set off to the next

shop. I managed to collect a scruffy chap with a huge dog who escorted us for a bit, then there was the 'alleluia' man with his 'message to the world' and the chap who fed pigeons, all of whom seemed to want to come too. They, of course, attracted other odds and ends, so we were quite a gang as we went on our way (Ann in hysterics, Victoria still muttering, Annabelle and I chatting and laughing, everyone else doing their thing).

At this point the scooter suddenly refused to move. The power registered zero. It is supposed to do 17 miles and take apart to fit in a car boot. In you dreams! It is too heavy. I couldn't find the free wheel lever, so it was stuck in drive. I started to laugh and after a moment they all joined in. At that point Victoria realised we were outside a restaurant/bar so she marched in and started poking around looking for a power point, joined by Ann and the mystified owner. She found one, dragged the owner and a waiter out on to the pavement and demanded that they pull the scooter inside. They began to chuckle, Ann was in hysterics and Victoria determined, so the scooter was manhandled into the bar – helped by the gang and the odd drunk – it was plugged in and we all sat down for a meal. Luckily the hangers on had left by this time, We just hoped it would charge up enough to get me home. After Annabelle was relegated to the pushchair, I had a lot more oomph and we did manage to get home – complete with Ann who was still mopping her eyes. She wanted to know what we had on the agenda for the next day as she had never had such fun or talked to so many odd balls all on the same day.

But next day was raining and the scooter had not charged up at all. The company was contacted and came and replaced the battery eventually. And then I fell over, Victoria refuses to believe that the NHS can cure anything so decided this was a good opportunity to get me looked at by a Real Doctor. Well – what a surprise that was. My son, Graham, had said he was eccentric and had started out when that area of Soho was home to artists. They often couldn't pay their bills, so he would accept various art works in lieu. The entrance is a little scruffy and like a shop front with rickety metal steps leading up to the door. When you get inside, the walls are covered with canvases, photos, carvings, mobiles and glass work. The examination rooms have rows of photos in black and white some of which are quite stunning. Smart it is not, but how interesting it all is! And the doc himself? He is not one of your smart TV medics but an untidy small rather tubby chap who I found totally captivating as he was so open and candid. He ended up asking why I hadn't had an MRI scan when I started toppling about and told Victoria she should take me to a particular lab and argue the price down as I had no insurance, in the meantime he didn't like this drug I was taking so he would do some 'bloods' and see me next week. In the event he was very happy with the 'bloods' and said I should carry on but get the MRI scan done. He then looked at me, a little puzzled, and said 'You have the same name but is Victoria your daughter? She looks Chinese.' So I explained she was married to my youngest son and that they'd funded my trip out. I got a lovely smile and 'Good good' At that point I felt wonderful and then I got home and heard how much Victoria had beaten the lab down but how costly it was, I protested; only to be told by my son it was only what they had to spend to keep their 4x4 on the road. What did that mean?

Am I rated alongside their old 'banger'? Hmm!

The party was next day so everyone had to have a major clean-up, including hair wash. And this was when I met the Naked Baby Syndrome. First Seb escapes from the bathroom with a rowdy eruption, a shriek from Annabelle of 'Naked baby – help-' Two small wet babies dripping wet and shedding towels rush past, hotly pursued by a barking dog and an enraged adult. If lucky, Seb will be caught before he wrenches the front door open and escapes into the corridor connecting the flats and, more importantly, before he gets to the lifts – he can now reach the buttons. Now the symptoms are recognised it happens less often. The kids and the dog love it and, I'm ashamed to say, so does Grandma!

Fast forward to the Party. In Chinese families, the patriarch seem to control things – in this case Victoria's father. He had decided his 3 year old granddaughter's party would not be complete without the addition of a Chinese banquet and a suckling pig! The pig arrived on a platter, with it's little feet sticking sadly up in the air and covered all over with a delicious looking crisp glaze. At the sight of it most of the children freaked out and some of the mothers had to leave until it was hidden. Victoria hastily moved it to a less conspicuous position and set up a cookie making contest. Things were returning to normal when – at last - Tom, a dreamy theatrical, arrives with the promised pink elephant cake. The kids all cheered with delight and piggy was left quietly on his own until devoured by insensitive adults. He was scrumptious!!

At this point I managed to catch a couple of viruses in quick succession. To go up to Vermont, you either drive for 6 hours, or you fly from New York to Burlington in a little plane and hire out a car to drive to the house. The kids thought I ought not to fly and the car journey could be broken off whenever necessary so Melanie, Victoria and Seb went by air with the intent of doing shopping when they arrived. Graham, Annabelle, Willy the dog and I with all the baggage loaded into their 'Elephant' and set off by road in a light drizzle., We made good time out of New York and were doing well. Or so I thought, and said as much to Graham who just grunted. Annabelle and I chatted and Willy said he had to travel on my lap no matter what the rules said. By then Graham decided we should have a 'pit stop' and I again asked how we are doing and to my horror was told we were about an hour behind schedule. The drizzle and traffic were both a bit heavier so we set off again ASAP. As we went further north it got colder and the drizzle looked a bit like light sleet, until, after another hour, it wasn't sleet or drizzle, but light powdery snow. It got heavier and heavier and windier and windier. The wind screen was completely opaque. Graham could not see where he was going and dare not stop as he could hear other traffic behind him – we could not see them so it was a fair bet they could not see us. In those northern states the ploughs are out almost as soon as the snow arrives. This is a dubious blessing as they throw the snow up, the wind then picks it up and whirls it around to settle where it will – usually on a windscreen.

We needed 'gas' and saw a vague glow at the side of the road, managed to find the slip road and crept into a service station. The snow eased off for a while and we decided to carry on after a hot drink and a snack. Our good luck continued until we hit Vermont itself. We had passed many cars which had slid off the road and were being towed back on by this time, but the gritters were out and we had traction, so kept going. Victoria and

Gift Aid

Now that we are a Charity, the West Berkshire Heart Support Group (Heartbeats) can claim a tax rebate on membership subscriptions under the Revenue and Customs (formerly the Inland Revenue) Gift Aid Scheme.

The tax rebate can only be claimed if the member concerned pays Income Tax and if that amount of tax is equal to or greater than the amount Heartbeats can claim on each membership subscription

To allow Heartbeats to do this, it is necessary for each member to complete a Gift Aid Declaration (overleaf) if they are currently paying UK Income Tax.

The Treasurer could then claim back 25p currently for each £1 of the subscription you pay, so your £7.50 could be worth £9.37 to Heartbeats, **but you will still only pay £7.50**. This could make a big difference to our subscription income funds as we will receive another £1.87 each time your annual subscription is paid/renewed.

We recommend every member who **pays income tax** to sign the Gift Aid Declaration and forward it to Linda Higgs, Membership Secretary, 13 Bourne Road, Pangbourne, Reading, RG8 7JT

This form can also be used by anyone who is not a member of Heartbeats but who would like to make a donation and is willing to Gift Aid that donation to Heartbeats; forms should be sent to Linda, as above.

Gift Aid declaration

Name of charity West Berkshire Heart Support Group (Heartbeats)

Please treat

- The enclosed gift of £ _____ as a Gift Aid donation; **OR**
- All gifts of money that I make today and in the future as Gift Aid donations; **OR**
- All gifts of money that I have made in the past 6 years and all future gifts of money that I make from the date of this declaration as Gift Aid donations.

✓ *Please tick the appropriate box*

You must pay an amount of income tax and/or capital gains tax in each tax year at least equal to the tax that the charity will claim from HM Revenue & Customs on your Gift Aid donation(s).

Donor's details

Title _____ Initial(s) _____ Surname _____

Home address _____

Postcode _____ Date _____

Signature _____

Please notify the charity if you:

1. Want to cancel this declaration.
2. Change your name or home address.
3. No longer pay sufficient tax on your income and/or capital gains.

Tax claimed by the charity

- The charity will reclaim 28p of tax on every £1 you gave up to 5 April 2008.
- The charity will reclaim 25p of tax on every £1 you give on or after 6 April 2008.
- The Government will pay to the charity an additional 3p on every £1 you give between 6 April 2008 and 5 April 2011. This transitional relief for the charity does not affect your personal tax position.

If you pay income tax at the higher rate, you must include all your Gift Aid donations on your Self Assessment tax return if you want to receive the additional tax relief due to you.

CLEAVER CARS Ltd
Independent Citroën specialists

All makes of cars serviced and MOT

67 Loverock Road,
Reading
Berks
RG30 1DZ

Tel/fax 0118 9576 405



AIRAMBULANCE
BERKS | OXON | BUCKS

WE RELY ON YOU, SO YOU CAN RELY ON US

Did you know that in July 2008 we are taking delivery of our new helicopter, the EC135, and because of increasing fuel and leasing costs we must work harder to maintain our income levels to ensure we can provide our 365 day service to all three counties.

This is why we need YOU ... to support us, there are many ways to do this.

Win a £1000.00 every Wednesday and save a life? Then join our TVAC Lottery or perhaps become one of our volunteers, interested? Then please do call us on: 0300 999 0135 or visit our website: www.tvacaa.org

Charity Number 1084910

CAVERSHAM SOLICITORS

We're here to help

POWER OF ATTORNEY = Peace of mind

Let us advise you how to deal with the latest
Legislation as economically as possible

Telephone 0118 947 8638



REDUNDANCY ISSUES
Do you know your rights?
Email info@cavershamsolicitors.co.uk

www.cavershamsolicitors.co.uk

Telephone 0118 947 8638

We regret we are unable to assist with criminal cases

CAVERSHAM SOLICITORS

over 80 years experience

FREE ADVICE SESSIONS
of 15 minutes

First and Third Thursday of every month
from 4.00pm to 7.00pm

Telephone 0118 947 8638



For an appointment at Caversham Solicitors
Prospect House, 1 Prospect Street,
Caversham, Reading RG4 8JB
Email info@cavershamsolicitors.co.uk

www.cavershamsolicitors.co.uk