



West Berkshire Heart Support Group Newsletter

Independent Support Charity Affiliated to the British Heart Foundation.

Associated with the Department of Cardiology,
Royal Berkshire Hospital Trust, Reading, Berkshire.

Volume 9

Issue 1

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February - March 2010

Heartbeats Cardiac Coach to swim the Channel

Patients who attended Phase IV sessions at Palmer Park will remember Chris Pitman who was our original coach. She has always been super fit but had a pacemaker fitted in 1997 when doctors discovered that her heart was stopping while she was asleep.



Chris with her with swim buddy
Mags Brennan.
Photo courtesy Southern Water

The age record for a successful lady Channel swimmer is 58. Chris has always had the ambition to swim the channel and intended to do so in 2011 when she was 60. However, another lady swimmer aged 60 decided to attempt the swim in that year so Chris has postponed her attempt for a year when she will be 61. If she is successful she will have the added distinction of being the oldest to do it with a pacemaker. We certainly wish her luck.

Chris now teaches children to swim in Southern Water's Learn to Swim scheme at pools in Havant and Waterlooville in Hampshire. Southern Water have been very supportive in putting up £500 towards the cost of the venture. Chris thinks the cost of hiring a safety boat and insurance will be £2500 and other costs will bring the total to £5000. Her husband Pete can not understand why she is swimming the Channel when there is a perfectly good ferry service available.

Item from Chris' swimming journal: Today, having left our usual black bin liner on the beach, pretty pink flip flops on top of bag, ventured into the sea for a swim (bright pink hat bobbing away) heading towards the pier about 1 mile and half away. The sea was a bit choppy, but manageable, visibility underneath a little alarming, because at certain times (bear in mind that we are out about 100 yards from the shore) you could see the murky bottom and things appeared to be lurking underneath. Most probably just seaweed, but at times the dark shapes appeared to be shadowing us as we swam. Occasionally getting tangled up in seaweed didn't really help especially as it seems to

cling to your arm and then, having shaken that off, then slides down the back and end up on the legs and feet until having furiously kicked like mad to get it off another piece appears. Oh the joy of swimming in the sea!

Anyway the swim went well, getting into a nice rhythm. arms turning nicely breathing relaxed, still wondering what was that swimming underneath me etc?, we headed back to where we had left the bin bag etc. What's that???? I could see in the distance a small crowd (can you have a small crowd?), anyway there appeared to be a bunch of people milling around where our treasured bin liner was.

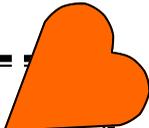
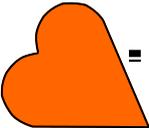
First reaction—Bloody kids, nicking my bag. Swimming even faster towards the ever increasing gang of thugs, we notice that as we got closer the throng of people seemed to get smaller and to my relief the bin bag appeared to still be there. Eventually, now sprinting (after 3 miles in rough seas not bad) towards my destination, I could make out a couple of uniforms, getting closer, noticed that in fact the 'uniforms' were police officers, now looking in my direction, obviously admiring my fantastic pink hat, as I swim towards where they are standing. "Hello, hello, is this your bin liner then?" the very nice looking young officer said. "Yes!" I gasped (I am not sure if that was the effort of having sprinted, disentangled myself from seaweed as I went, or the effect of the appearance of a nice young man in uniform before me). "Someone has phoned in to report a bin bag on the beach with some pink flip flops on top and no sign of a swimmer, and we thought, hello, hello, what's all this then, has someone topped themselves?" And then added "Is your name Reggie Perrin?" Absolutely priceless! Having identified the bin bag as mine and then giggling like some demented person, the policeman then headed off up the beach and disappeared in a flash of blue light. In hindsight that might have been because they had a shout, possibly another bin bag further up the beach.

I suppose next time I will have to leave a note on the bag, 'Mad woman training to swim channel.' That should do.

Anyone fancy a swim in the sea sometime? You never know what you are going to see or what might happen next.

We will try to bring you a progress report on Chris Pitman's progress in future editions.

If anyone would like to sponsor Chris, contributions can be sent to Horizon Leisure Centre, Civic Centre Road, Havant, Hants PO9 2AY Please mark the envelope 'Personal Chris Pitman, Channel Swim.'



WILL TO LIVE

**CARDIAC CONCERT
SUNDAY 14th FEBRUARY 2010**

3.30 pm—5.30 pm

at

**THE FALKLANDS CHAPEL
PANGBOURNE COLLEGE
BERKSHIRE
RG8 8LA**

in aid of

THE CARDIAC FUND

of the

**ROYAL BERKSHIRE HOSPITAL
FOUNDATION TRUST**

featuring

GERALDINE MONTGOMERY, soprano

and

LAURA REINEKE, violin

supported by

**THE PANGBOURNE COLLEGE
CHAMBER CHOIR**

Tickets £12.00 to include wine

Box office 01491 628 269

DENTON DANCING & SOCIAL CLUB

WHY SIT AT HOME ON YOUR OWN?

If you are over 40, come and join Molly and Alan Denton from 7:00pm to 10:30 at the Scout Hall, Armour Hill in Tilehurst for a social evening to meet new friends.

You don't have to be a dancer but if you do enjoy ballroom, sequence, Latin, old time, modern and line dancing, like to listen to some good music or just want to come along for a chat you are very welcome.

We started our club 22 years ago, and now have many members. We have given over £34,000 to various charities in this time.

Admission is £2.50 for members and £3.50 for non-members. Annual membership is £3.00. Also we welcome any items for the raffle. Please bring your own drink.

WEDNESDAY MORNINGS

We have a lovely social morning from 10.30—12.30.

If you would like to dance, or learn a few simple dances this is the place to come. If you are not able to dance but would like to watch and listen to music, make new friends and have a cup of tea or coffee you will be made very welcome. Admission is £2. For further details ring

0118 9453057

Snow on Snow.

The day of the Heartbeat Walkers Christmas Dinner took place at the Toby Carvery. It was a day to remember. The food was as usual very good. When I got up to get my dinner I was surprised to see sitting behind me 2 kings (Peter and Ian) wearing their paper crowns, along with a queen, Elise with her crown on. I thought of the 3 Kings of the Orient, and when I looked out of the window the snow was falling fast. It was a really Christmassy scene. There was a presentation to Peter and June to thank them for all the hard work they do on our behalf throughout the year.

Some of us concerned about the weather left as soon as we could and as it turned out we were right to do so. When we left we decided to go on the Caversham Road up to the Oxford Road. This turned out to be the wrong decision. The traffic was horrendous and as we travelled we heard on Radio Berkshire that the buses were taken off at three o'clock for safety reasons. There were people walking all over the place even in the centre of the road and cars were moving at a very slow pace sometimes not at all. When we did move, it was so slow it took us two and a half hours to reach Grovelands Road. This was nothing to what some of you suffered, it took June and Peter six hours to reach home. Ruby and Mick walked home from the Carvery to Southcote. I should think they were frozen when they got home, but probably didn't take so long as some of us. Our friends Ricky and Jill had to abandon their car in Caversham, as Peppard Road was impassable. Dave managed to get home to Mayfair in 4 hours, Mary took 2½ hrs to Coombe Road, Ian took 3 hours to get to Southcote. He seemed to have managed this without going up any real hills, and Shelia walked from Town to Shinfield, a 2 hour walk. Bill who gave Brenda and Ron a lift, managed to get home to Fairford Road in less than 2 hours. So we all had difficult journeys. I expect most of you also have a tale to tell. I would like to mention some of the good Samaritans that helped a lot of us on our way, without these people some of us would not have made it.

I cannot remember the buses being taken off like this for some years. When we used to get the very bad fogs back in the 1950's it was quite common in the winter for the buses to stop running.

The winter of 1962/3 was a very cold, when water froze in the pipes and water carriers had to be sent out to some parts of Reading.

Then in the winter of 1981/2 we had snow on December the 8th, which lay on the ground for a few weeks. Then we had a thaw followed by more snow, which didn't clear till the end of March.

Thanks once again to June and Peter for all the hard work they put in during the year. We do appreciate it.

Have a Happy New Year.

See you all soon.

Valerie Kearey. 1/2010

Poetry Corner
Contributions by Members

Time passes by.

The Hour when the clocks go back,
Means winters on its way
And shuffling fools climb out of bed
Before the break of day.

Time is the enemy it is said,
It catch's you unaware
The more you run to catch it
The faster it slips away

The clock ticks on the mantelpiece
And there is no time to spare.
Until you realise the clock
Has beaten you again today

Have you ever wondered what we
did?
Before the age of mobile phones
How did we ever manage?
Without those ringing tones,

The watch we wore upon our wrist
Is beaten by modern age
We look at our phone for time and
date
And groan as we turn the page

The simple things of life are gone
Everything needs instruction
Electronic gadgets fill our homes
And we're blighted with deductions

Where have all the old games gone
Like Ludo, Snap and Pit.
We used to play Happy Families
But I hardly remember it.

A log fire burning in the grate
Some Chestnuts for a treat
And a muffin man calling
As he goes on down the Street.

But we can't turn the clock back
Time goes marching on
Once again the clock chimes out
We greet the New Year with a
song.

Valerie Kearey.
December 2009



Letters and Articles for Publication

We welcome members letters, poems and articles for publication. Indeed the newsletter will be much richer for them. Please send your own work and not just a copy of a published work. We want to avoid copyright problems. An 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 attachment to pdrewc@pdrewc.co.uk

**Reading Operatic Society
present**

Gilbert & Sullivan's

**Iolanthe
or the Peer and the
Peri**

**Thursday 18th, Friday 19th
February 2010**

at 7.30pm

and

**Saturday 20th February
2010 at 5.00pm**

at

**The Salvation Army Hall,
Castle Hill Roundabout, Reading.**

Tickets £10. Concessions £9

Tel: 0118 926 7135

www.readingops.co.uk

The Danger of Fatty Foods

Many of us owe our lives to the teams of surgeons and supporting medical staff who work hard in hospitals up and down the country. One of the leading surgeons is Mr Shyam Kolvekar Consultant Cardiothoracic Surgeon at the University College London Hospital and the Heart Hospital. Recently he warned that we should switch from food high in saturated fat such as butter. He also advised that we should eat less red meat and consume low-fat milk. When I saw his name quoted in a tabloid newspaper I realized that this surgeon and his team operated on me in the Heart Hospital London in March 2004. The fact that I am alive and able to write this article is a tribute to his skill. I am very grateful. Mr Kolvekar's advice is not new. In 2004, on release from hospital I was given notes explaining the danger to my heart of consuming the wrong kind of food. Mr Kolvekar said on the BBC News that people needed to think about what they are eating. It is not just calorie intake that is important. Fat is also a worry. Fried snacks, pastries and buttery foods may be enjoyable to the palate, but they are dangerous to the heart. It is estimated that saturated fat causes the premature deaths of 200,000 people a year. This is why Mr Kolvekar wants to see butter banned.

Not surprisingly Mr Kolvekar's views reported in the tabloid press have created a stir among the farming and catering communities. Farmers claim that dairy products are good for you as they contain important minerals. Jamie Oliver was quoted as saying that he was against any form of food policing. He uses butter in his recipes and thinks that butter can be eaten in moderation. By far the most vocal opposition to the surgeon's views was expressed by Clarissa Dickson Wright. She claimed that her godfather made her promise never to eat margarine, saying "Clarissa my dear, you have no idea what goes into it." She claimed that he did know, because he was Rudi Jurgens, member of the Jurgens family who manufactured margarine and later joined up with Lever Brothers to form Unilever. In the *The Mail* Ms Dickson Wright spoke of the joys of eating crumpets soaked in unsalted butter and mixing it with mashed potato. She claimed to have the blood pressure of a three year old and a cholesterol level of a five year old. She claimed that butter was crucially important for maintaining levels of the mood-altering chemical serotonin in a way that can only be otherwise produced by powerful anti-depressants. "If it is a toss-up between Prozac and another pat of unsalted Normandy butter, I know which one I'll be choosing," she declared. Clarissa then turned to Mr Kolvekar's observation that patients who came to him for surgery were getting younger. He said that when he first began, patients were in their seventies. Now they were

In their thirties and forties. Clarissa maintained that this was due to the increased consumption of junk food by the young, especially that sold by fast food businesses. She thought Mr Kolvekar should turn his attention to them and leave butter alone!

These points of view made me do a search of the internet to see what I could find on the subject.

Googling 'BBC hidden harm fatty food' produced an article **Hidden heart harm of fatty foods** and a short video of a triple heart bypass operation on a Bangladeshi waiter, Ahmed Ali Haj As a Muslim, Ahmed does not smoke or drink, but his diet has been rich in ghee, the clarified butter in which many south Asian dishes are drenched. In the video, instead of a healthy pink muscle, his heart looks like a pulsating lump of lard after a lifetime eating too much saturated fat. The layer of fat encasing Mr Haj's heart was so thick Mr Kolvekar and the other surgeons doing his triple bypass could not see his coronary arteries. The operation was being witnessed by Dan Roberts, a reporter for the Guardian newspaper, so I looked to see what he had reported.

Googling 'Dan Roberts never eat fry-ups' produced the article **Why I'll never eat a fry-up again**. In the Independent 26/08/2008 Dan wrote a very detailed report of the operation he observed through a monitor in an adjoining room to the operating theatre. It is well worth downloading if you have the facility. If you cannot do this and would like a photocopy please get in touch with me and I will send you a copy.

Peter Drew-Clifton, 2 Tring Road, Tilehurst, Reading, RG31 6SE
Telephone 0118 9426105. e-mail pdrewc@pdrewc.co.uk

Phoebe Read

A few days ago June received a telephone call from Rachael, Phoebe's daughter-in-law to say that sadly, Phoebe had died following a heart operation last October. At the time of going to press this is the only information we have, but we hope to publish more details in the next edition. Members will remember that Phoebe and her late husband Morris were actively involved in the Group for a number of years both at the Woodley branch and at our annual fund raising events at Battle Hospital.

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

News from The 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 February 10th AGM & Call My Bluff Competition
Wednesday March 10th Travel on a Motorbike, Cynthia Millet
Wednesday April 14th Easter Meeting

Well, here we are at the start of a New Year, and what a start! I hope you have come through this spell of bad weather without too many problems. We managed to survive it with the help of good neighbours and friends.

Our Christmas party went with a swing as always, with an abundance of good food provided by committee and members. This year, at a loss to know what we could afford for small gifts for members, the committee decided to give each one a Scratch Card. This provided a lot of laughs and I am pleased to say a few members struck lucky. No great amounts won. I think the highest was £10 but it was something different.

Unfortunately, as I suspect happened to other branches, we had to cancel our January meeting as we did not expect any members to turn out in the awful weather. Hopefully, now that things have changed we will have a good turnout in February.

Birthday wishes for January 8th go to Isabel Trent; 17th Ray Skelly; 30th Alan Marshall; 31st Gordon Trent

On February 9th to Brian Buckland.

On March 8th Ken Moon; 12th Hilda Bustin; 15th Jo Nobbs and Barbara Martin.

Jeanne.

A special thank you to Tony and Jeanne who are having difficulty with their computer. As they could not send the branch report by e-mail, they made a special journey from Newbury to Reading to deliver it by hand.

Donations gratefully received from:

Chris and Peter Bowyer £15
Pat and Peggy Walsh £10
Peggy Evans £5

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 2nd February - Local Aviation Since 1783, Geoff and Val Becket

Tuesday 2nd March - Illustrated Quiz Night with Brian Bernard

Mary Munday her family, the Reading Concert Singers and friends, entertained us again on December 1st. As usual we were invited to join in better known carols and listen to some new ones. Tim Munday played his flute and then conducted items from Broadway musicals and songs made famous by ABBA. A most enjoyable evening was had by all.

We had to cancel the January meeting due to the snow and ice. Many members had prepared food or bought in supplies for the occasion. This was very unfortunate. We telephoned everyone on the list or left a message on their answering machines.

June also contacted Molly Denton. She agreed that it would be better to cancel the dance as many of her dancers were mature in age and she didn't want them to take the risk of falling. Members wishing to take advantage of Molly and Alan's dancing club will find details on page 4.

The walking group was also a victim of the snow and ice. In the seven years that we have run it in Prospect Park we have only been forced to cancel three or four times. We resumed on Thursday 21st January and 55 walkers took part.

We are looking at the possibility of including Nordic Walking. This is more demanding than ordinary walking, but Dr Will Orr thinks it should be OK for heart patients as long as they have checked that it would be suitable for them. This also applies to patients with other conditions. Check with your doctor. All patients are different. If it goes ahead it will have to take place at the same time as our Thursday walk in order to be covered by the insurance provided by Natural England. Members interested in taking part should contact me. Peter Drew-Clifton

Telephone 0118 942 6105

In view of the proposed increase in the cost of postage in May, members who are connected to the internet are asked to consider downloading their newsletter from our site at www.heartbeats.btinternet.co.uk. This will save the Group the cost of the postage. If you decide to do so please inform the Membership Secretary, Linda Higgs, so that she can remove your name from the circulation list. Her address is on page 21. Thank you.



Photo Bob Powell

Carols
Old
and
New
plus
ABBA

Mary Munday
and
Members of the
Reading Concert
Singers
Entertained
us again this
Year



Photo Bob Powell



Photo Bob Powell

Singing
in
the
Rain

Did
the roof
Leak?



*The
Walkers
Christmas
Party*

21st December

73 attended



*Enjoyment
inside
but
outside
the snow
was
beginning
to fall!
see page 5*

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

Future Events:

Wednesday 27th January 2010 Branch Party

Wednesday 24th February. To be arranged

There was no meeting in December as the meeting date clashed with Christmas week. In November we had a talk on Ghost Stories by Hugh Granger.

I had originally hoped to have this talk on Hallowe'en but suddenly decided we should have a bit of a 'hoolie' and a beetle drive so it seemed a bit much. As it was we had enough to do and had a lot of fun as well. So Hugh Granger was asked to come to the November meeting instead.

He had a few tales to tell but my favourites were these two. A family bought a house but were very disturbed to hear the sound of constant weeping and noticed that the hall was always freezing cold. They eventually asked a neighbour if there was an explanation being, understandably reluctant to move again. The neighbour told them that there had been a Polish girl living there at the outbreak of the war and as the news got worse from Poland, and she realised her family must all be dead, it all became too much for her and she committed suicide in the cupboard under the stairs – which was where the extreme cold was noticeable. So the father of the family, being a practical man, went into the cupboard and said "If there is a spirit in here please give us a sign". At which point the gas meter gave out some flashes and stopped working. They checked everything – ovens and heaters all worked but the meter remained unchanged. This state of affairs remained for several years during which time they never had to pay a gas bill, until one day, Dad again entered the cupboard and said "Be at peace". At which point the meter started up again, the cold disappeared and they started getting gas bills again!

The second story concerned the crashing of an aircraft. The crew had on several occasions aborted landings incurring the wrath of the authorities. On each occasion there was found to be a technical reason which could have caused the plane to crash, then the inevitable happened, the plane did crash killing all the flight crew including the man who had stopped the previous flights. As is the habit with airlines, items like ovens and kitchen equipment were recycled and put into

new planes where possible. And then things got spooky as the crew member who had on other occasions stopped the other flights began being seen aboard some planes and it was usually with some warning. As most crew members had known him, they would often greet him by name. Then someone noticed a really uncanny fact – he only appeared on planes which contained the recycled equipment. Great control is exerted over plane spares, so all the recycled parts were traced and removed and the phantom and caring pilot vanished to the relief of all.

Another Trip to the Far Side! Oh WHY do I DO it?!

Back in the balmy days of June, I went out to spend a few weeks with my Chinese/American contingent. I had hoped for a trip to Vermont to see the new garden improvements – i. e. 2 Large ponds to assist in draining the excessive ground water but they decided that I should be kept quiet and not taxed by long drives – it takes 6 hours on a good day. In the meantime they have negotiated a smaller property in 'The Hamptons' a very up market sort of place Also I was told that the diggers had found signs of bears at the edge of the property. I suppose they thought I could scare them off!

But in the end they didn't go out to the Hamptons either. The house needs a lot doing to it and was not habitable. It seems termites had moved into the woodwork and what seemed like solid beams just crumbled away if they were hit with a hammer!! So New York it was to be. For some reason I had not taken my old scooter with me and the one I was supplied with was too bulky to get into lifts. However I had decided I was going to walk as much as possible – all New Yorkers walk everywhere. Within a short distance of the flat are quite a few places I like to explore including the Essex Street Market. I had heard a lot of tales about Kenny Shopliss and been given his book to read, so was quite eager to try his brunch – 990 items and the menu changes every day – oh yeah? I thought. So we arranged to meet up when Victoria got back from taking Annabelle to pre school. I could do some of it on the bus and wander idly around waiting for Victoria and Sebbie to turn up. After quite a wait I pulled out a chair picked up a menu and sat down. Only to be told that I would have to move on – I said I wanted to order brunch and was waiting for Sebbie and Victoria. Every one in the place knows Sebbie and he is spoiled by them all. I had found a seat near the 'Cheese Daddy' as the kids call him, and he looked very concerned. I left the market fully intending to go into the cafe next door when Victoria and Sebbie showed up. Cheese Daddy had told her all about it – I was furious and really didn't want to eat there but he is an institution and has been around for ages. He won't seat 5 people- if some one asks what is in his recipes as they have allergies, he roundly tells them to go eat in the hospital he runs a restaurant. And people queue to get in at week ends! So that was a non event!

As it was getting really hot we headed back to the air conditioning and Sebbie wanted to go in the playground. I was amazed when I really inspected it The floor is a thick rubbery stuff to resist injury from falls – So why has Sebbie always got a ‘mouse’ under his eye and a lump on his head? This area is shielded from the sun by the tall buildings all around. The equipment is made from thick steel piping painted in gaudy colours and has odd perforations in the structure which puzzled me for a bit until Victoria asked if Sebbie had brought his ‘water shoes’ The kids were all demanding ‘Water on, Water on’ and one of the mums went into the building and the next thing was a stream of water pouring out of what I thought were lights shaped like snakes but which are in fact water jets. All the holes in the equipment squirt water as well. Gradually a hoard of delighted kids were splashing around, hanging off wet climbing frames and having the time of their lives! This play ground belongs to the flats. There is also another one indoors with bouncy things to jump on

Now we had to meet Stacey who is every red blooded male’s idea of the perfect baby sitter. She is drop dead gorgeous, about 6 feet tall with legs that go on for ever and is also really nice. When I was left in her care (yes I mean that!) we would natter about every thing and I was always very impressed by the way the kids did as they were told. She says she really likes working for Victoria and Graham and loves the kids. WE were very glad of her presence this Christmas I had been vaccinated against the swine flu – as had Stacey. So when Victoria succumbed to it she really stepped in.

I had taken my new scooter also known as the broomstick (as I bought it on Hallowe’en, and, with Melanie to keep an eye on me we ventured on the regular bus into town. There is a sliding mechanical ramp which extends right across the pavement and allows you to drive in. Once there encouraged by the other passengers, the driver shackles the scooter in – all for the price of an ordinary ticket

At this point the weather took a turn for the really horrible and I went under to a bug as I had got very cold, so I was confined to the house and told to keep warm while I had a wonderful dose of conjunctivitis – described as severe and serious and warned not to spread it around. I didn’t. I kept it to myself having spent \$80 on eye drops which came in a bottle smaller than the end of my thumb

And then it was time to go home again. WE had booked with BA and wondered how things would be. What with proposed strikes and abortive bomb plots we did rather well as we were both upgraded to Business Class. Mel is getting rather attached to the bonus parking and other unexpected perks that come with a wheel chair.

Keep Smiling!!! Maureen

Out and About Gardening

by Ken Tudgay

I hope the snow in December and January didn't do too much damage to you greenhouses and plants. I didn't have much luck and received a phone call to say that my polly tunnel had been flattened to the ground level. Can you imagine five poles of 1 1/8" tube bent at 45 degrees by the weight of the snow? So now that will be scrap metal!

Now for February and March. Will the ground be soft or hard under the spade? Who knows?

Wisteria must be pruned in winter back to two buds. Treat wood with preservative while the plants are dormant. Check your plant ties and covering around the plants, as heavy snow may have allowed cover to fall down or cause damage.

I hope you have ordered your seed potatoes, onion sets and shallots. Do place your seed orders. Sow broad beans in pots. I feel plants are better. Sow peas in guttering or under cloches.

Check compost heaps. As it has been bad weather so far, and a compost heap makes a good home for some creatures give it a good turn over.

Now is the time to dig up your rhubarb and divide the roots into small clumps. Make sure each portion has buds and roots and replant them in maturated ground for new plants in 2011. Bring pot grown strawberries into the green house for an early crop. Prune established gooseberry bushes and cut out overcrowded and crossing branches and older wood. I like to sprinkle sulphate of potash around fruit bushes and strawberries. Sow seed pelargoniums and dianthus. Sow sweet peas. Start overwintered begonia tubers back into growth or buy new ones.

Household plants can be raised from seed. Cover cold frames with carpet at night and remove it in daytime. Keep your greenhouse heaters filled with paraffin.

Check your bird boxes for strangers. Keep feeding birds with nuts and seed.

In March order or buy gladioli, dahlias and anemones. Plant your shallots in pots under cloches. Trim off lavender flowers. Plant lilies in pots. You may have potatoes by now set in trays for sprouting. If you like early rhubarb cover the plant with a bucket to encourage early stems. Plant dahlias in trays to encourage shoots to form. Use these as cuttings. Sow your tomatoes in doors in a heat propagator.

Before you use your compost bring the bags into the greenhouse to warm up. Warm the soil for broad beans with cloches. Sow your parsnips from now until April.

Sow carrots under frames or polythene to protect them. Sow your leaks in pots under glass. Tender your gladioli.

Wash your watering cans and clean your tools.

Happy spring growing from *Ken*



Welcome to New Members

John and Pat Turner from Tilehurst

Gordon and Anne Lemon from Newbury

Obituary

Lance Conabeare



We are sad to report the death of our friend and Heartbeat member Lance. He regularly took part in our Thursday morning walks and enjoyed a coffee and chat with other members afterwards. He will be missed by us all. He was 79 years of age. His funeral took place at the West Berkshire Crematorium on 14th January.

Our thoughts and condolences are with his wife Jenny, his daughters Elaine and Claire, and grand children Ross, Jemma, Lynsey and Nicole.

Lance was the founder of Conabeare Accoustics Ltd, Theale

Membership of the Group

Our support group is open to patients, their partners and anyone interested in the support of those with cardiac conditions.

We invite you to come along to one or two meetings, at Calcot, Earley or Newbury, to learn more about us ***before*** deciding to join. Please give your local secretary a ring to say you are coming. They are:

Reading for Calcot - Branch Secretary, Peter Drew-Clifton

0118 942 6105

Newbury - Branch Secretary, Jeanne Turvill 01635 861 546

Wokingham Woodley & Earley - Branch Secretary, Maureen Reichelt

0118 926 4260

Subscription

The annual subscription is £7.50 per person.

The subscription entitles you, as a member, to participate in our meetings, social events and to receive our bimonthly newsletter.

If you would like to join, please complete the form on the next page and send it with your cheque or postal order made payable to The West Berkshire Heart Support Group to:

Linda Higgs,
WBHSG Membership Secretary,
13 Bourne Road,
Pangbourne,
Reading RG8 7JT

Please do not send cash

Support Co-ordinator

The Support Co-ordinator is available at 0118 984 4758

APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP PLEASE USE CAPITAL LETTERS

PATIENT'S DETAILS

TITLE: Dr, Mr, Mrs, Miss FAMILY NAME

GIVEN NAME

GIVEN NAME YOU WISH TO BE KNOWN BY.....

ADDRESS

.....

..... POST CODE

TELEPHONE NO

SUPPORT PARTNER'S DETAILS

TITLE: Dr, Mr, Mrs, Miss FAMILY NAME

GIVEN NAME

GIVEN NAME YOU WISH TO BE KNOWN BY

ADDRESS

.....

..... POST CODE

TELEPHONE NO

**THOSE WISHING TO BECOME SUPPORTERS OF THE GROUP ONLY
SHOULD TICK THIS BOX AND COMPLETE THE SUPPORT PARTNER
DETAILS**

SUBSCRIPTION IS £7.50 PER PERSON PER YEAR

Data Protection Acts

Please note that the information you have given is kept safely and confidentially on the Charity's computer. The data is used to correspond with members and to send them the Charity's newsletter. If you would prefer us not to keep your information in this way, please advise us.



Do You Know Frank Feldman?

A guy walks out to the street and catches a taxi just passing by. He gets into the taxi and the cabbie says, "Perfect timing. You're just like Frank".

Passenger: "Who?"

Cabbie: "Frank Feldman. He's a guy who did everything right all the time. Like coming along when you needed a cab, things happened like that to Frank Feldman every single time"

Passenger: "There are always a few clouds over everybody".

Cabbie: "Not Frank Feldman. He was a terrific athlete. He could have won Wimbledon, he could play golf with the pros, he sang like an opera baritone, danced like a Broadway star and you should have heard him play the piano. A truly amazing guy".

Passenger: "Sounds like he was really something special".

Cabbie: "There's more...He had a memory like a computer. He remembered everybody's birthday. He knew all about wine, which foods to order and which fork to eat them with. He could fix anything. Not like me. I change a fuse and the whole street blacks out. But Frank Feldman, he could do everything right".

Passenger: "Wow, some guy then"

Cabbie: "He always knew the quickest way to go in traffic and avoid traffic jams. Not like me. I always seem to get stuck in them. But Frank, he never made a mistake, and he really knew how to treat a woman and make her feel good. He would never answer back, even if she was in the wrong, and his clothing was always immaculate, shoes highly polished too - He was the perfect man! He never made a mistake. No one could ever measure up to Frank Feldman."

Passenger: "An amazing fellow. How did you meet him?"

Cabbie: "Well.....I never actually met Frank. He died and I married his bloody widow....."

Our thanks to Cousin John for this story.

Group Committee Members:

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Treasurer: Ian Clay Tel 0118 958 6915 e-mail clayi@tiscali.co.uk
Membership: Linda Higgs Tel 0118 984 4758 e-mail jlhiggs@btinternet.com
Support Co-ordinators: Reading Tel 0118 984 4758 & Newbury 01635 827 928

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The next Group Committee Meetings will be on 15th February and 19th April 2010

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