

Northern Lymphoedema Support Group Newsletter

Our next meeting: Saturday 10th March 2018 between 2 – 4 p.m. held in Day Care Unit, St Oswald's Hospice, Gosforth

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Welcome

Welcome to the first newsletter of 2018! Hoping you are all well and looking forward to the year ahead.

Have you managed to avoid the flu? It seems a lot of people have unfortunately fallen victim to it. Although we have had the odd virus and cold (probably passed on by grandchildren), we have fared quite well.

The snowdrops and primulas are coming through now and the days are becoming longer and lighter, even if it is only a minute per day, that's 7 minutes a week. Talking of snowdrops, I read an article recently about someone who had paid £1390 for a snowdrop bulb, it was called *Galanthus plicatus* otherwise known as Golden Fleece. This particular snowdrop took Joe Sharman 10 years to create. The name for people who have a passion for snowdrops and are collectors are called Galanthomaniacs..... We bought a new house last year and I have noticed shoots popping up all over the front garden, it will be interesting to see what they transform into? Hopefully *Galanthus plicatus* ☺

Forthcoming Meetings

Just a reminder about the meetings for the forthcoming year:-

Saturday 10th March
Saturday 16th June
Saturday 15th September
Saturday 8th December



Notes from December/Christmas Lunch



Once again thank you to Kathleen Brown for organising a lovely Christmas Lunch at The Brasserie, Nuffield Health in Gosforth which was held on Saturday 9th December 2017. Twenty members were in attendance and a good time was had by all.

Special thanks go to Violet Hart for her beautiful flute playing prior to the meal and setting the festive mood.

It was suggested at the Christmas Lunch that we could maybe consider trying somewhere different this year, possibly Newcastle. Could members please let their thoughts known at our next meeting on 10th March as regards suggestions and venue?

Talking of our next meeting, we were expecting Nick Faulder from Huntleigh Diagnostics to do a presentation, however Mr Faulder is leaving the company on 8th March so will be unable to attend, however Kathleen has managed to find another speaker to attend on the day, a lady called Christine Healy from "Colour me Beautiful". Christine advises on colours to suit and make up which will be a nice change especially that spring is just around the corner and we are thinking about putting away those winter woollies and bringing out our spring attire.

Can I take this opportunity to say thank you to my fellow committee members, you all do a great job. From sourcing speakers, booking rooms, organising events to taking minutes at meetings and ensuring that there are always raffle prizes to be won. There is also the administrative side to oversee as well as finances, wish campaigns to apply etc. Not forgetting the compilation and distribution of a newsletter and all of this is conducted voluntarily, so thank you ladies, you know who you are 😊

On the subject of finance, can I please remind everyone that the annual subscription will be due in March, subscription form to the rear of the newsletter. We have managed to keep the cost at £5 for another year; members please note that your subscription fee is very important as it goes towards the printing of the newsletters as well as envelopes and postage (the latter of which always seems to be increasing). Thank you.

Walking Football

Since moving to Hexham about 9 months ago, my interest has been in finding activities that I could participate in and where I could also keep fit at the same time. One day about 3 months ago whilst I was waiting for Julie to finish up her regular weekly swimming session, I noticed a poster in Wentworth Sports Centre which was advertising a weekly Walking Football group.

Noting the time and day, I eagerly awaited the next session and after searching for suitable clothing and sports shoes, went along at the appropriate time. After changing into the right attire, I made my way into the sports hall and met the fitness instructor from Active Northumberland who was running the class. Introductions were made and we were off; a group of similar-aged men who were 'former' footballers, who wanted to relive their youth and belt a football around for an hour or so.

Walking football is different to regular football in many ways and is aimed at the over 50's age group. It has very specific rules that outlaw all running and allows either no contact or only minimal physical contact between players. Teams are either 5 or 6-a-side. As a result of these rules, games are played at a slower pace, thus reducing the threat of pain, discomfort and injury, with players briskly walking through matches. This allows people who have loved the sport all their lives to once again safely get back to playing and also introduces the sport to people who perhaps have never considered playing before.

Walking football offers a multitude of health benefits to older people such as reducing the risk of cardiovascular disease and stroke while improving blood pressure. Positive changes in postural balance, blood pressure and resting heart rate, lowered cholesterol, improved blood sugar levels, bone density and improving reactions, whilst slashing the odds of suffering from type 2 diabetes – all indicators of general good health. Walking football is an excellent way of staying fit and healthy.

There are also many psychological and mental health advantages to playing walking football – namely high levels of personal reward and satisfaction with reduced levels of stress and exertion while playing, despite working physically hard. The game also gives an often isolated section of the community the chance to become involved in something they really enjoy, make new friends, and generally improve their social circle and overall quality of life.

My involvement has brought much enjoyment, and now, we have entered a team in a competition which is due to take place in Majorca in May. If I survive the trip I will update the Group on our performances!

Sun, sangria and sore shins here we come.

Richard Waters



Anagrams

PRESBYTERIAN: When you rearrange the letters - **BEST IN PRAYER**

ASTRONOMER: When you rearrange the letters - **MOON STARER**

DESPERATION: When you rearrange the letters - **A ROPE ENDS IT**

THE EYES: When you rearrange the letters - **THEY SEE**

THE MORSE CODE: When you rearrange the letters - **HERE COME DOTS**

DORMITORY: When you rearrange the letters - **DIRTY ROOM**

SLOT MACHINES: When you rearrange the letters - **CASH LOST IN ME**

ELECTION RESULTS: When you rearrange the letters - **LIES - LET'S RECOUNT**

SNOOZE ALARMS: When you rearrange the letters - **ALAS! NO MORE Z 'S**

A DECIMAL POINT: When you rearrange the letters - **I'M A DOT IN PLACE**

THE EARTHQUAKES: When you rearrange the letters - **THAT QUEER SHAKE**

ELEVEN PLUS TWO: When you rearrange the letters - **TWELVE PLUS ONE**

Lymphoedema and how it affected me psychologically

Living with a long-term condition like Lymphoedema can make you feel down at times. For me, I was always so conscious of my swollen leg especially in the summer months when the temperature increased, also not being able to wear the clothes or shoes I used to. I felt as though people always used to look at my bandaged leg, it made me feel really self-conscious and I felt it was just best to cover up completely.

The things that have helped me are definitely keeping my weight down (although that's not really going very well at the moment), drinking more water, exercising and coming to the NLSG meetings and having the chance to talk about it and learn from the speakers who visit.

More importantly, I have accepted my Lymphoedema; some days my leg is more swollen than others, but I think that is just the nature of the condition. I never go anywhere without my compression bandage or strong support tights and still occasionally manage to wear a heel (but not for very long). Even when Richard and I went to Gran Canaria a couple of years ago, I noticed a lot of people donning their support bandages walking along the promenade/beach, it wasn't stopping them having their sunny holiday!

LSN

I was looking at the Lymphoedema Support Network and noticed that Lymphoedema Awareness Week is between the 4th and 10th March; the British Lymphology Society and the Lymphoedema Support Network work together to raise awareness of Lymphoedema amongst the general public and healthcare professionals, they also try and raise funds for the LSN. Together they are promoting the LSN's annual 'Sock it to Lymphoedema Campaign' and in collaboration with their members, encouraging them to raise the condition by wearing odd socks.



You knew what was coming next didn't you!

If you would like to participate on Saturday 10th March please come to the meeting in odd socks, they have to be bright and colourful of course; I will understand if you don't want to travel in them but you could always bring them with you and put them on at the Hospice. Alternatively if you can't manage socks maybe a brightly coloured blouse. It would be a bit of fun on the day and we could always make a token donation of £1 to the LSN. We could even send a photograph to the LSN and show some support from the North East.

I also noticed that Dame Judi Dench, CH, DBE is the new Honorary Patron for the LSN, which will hopefully also create more awareness to the condition.

Now if Dame Judi Dench is taking part and sporting her own colourful socks, we can too!



Please note in compiling part of this newsletter, information was taken from LSN website and from the internet.

Newsletter compiled by Julie Waters