



Magic of the Musicals



A truly glittering West End and Broadway Gala was held at the Birmingham Symphony Hall in aid of the Neuromuscular Centre in February. The evening was organised by City Concert Orchestra whose board of directors include Adrian Jackson, the orchestras conductor and Alasdair Harvey who played the 'Beast' in 'Beauty and the Beast' at The Dominion Theatre, London. Adrian and Alasdair kindly suggested that the NMC should be the beneficiaries of the evening. Having an event in Birmingham was fantastic as a whole new group of people were introduced to the vital range of services offered at the centre and it is also ironic that the event coincided with a wave of people visiting the centre from the West Midlands, to utilise the range of services available. Songs from the West End were performed by Alasdair Harvey, Claire Moore and Anna-Jane Casey who are all stars of musicals both nationally and internationally. Matthew and Sarah were there on the night and were delighted to collect a cheque for £1,500 for the centre.

Spirit of Christmas 2001

The 7th of December dawned sunny and I knew that it had to be a good omen for my first Spirit of Christmas. Lucky for us the twelve celebrities all made it, with no last minute Hollywood screen deals we had stars from screen and stage, a west end singer oh and that nice man from ITV's 'Stars in Their Eyes' The sixth Spirit of Christmas (major sponsor was MBNA Bank Europe) was truly glittering, from the spine tingling rendition of Silent Night performed by Alasdair Harvey to the last drop of champagne consumed in the Town Hall, it was a magical evening. Phillyda Law almost caused a fatality amongst the brass section when one of her hairclips came loose and ended up at the bottom of a trombone. However the band played on and Alasdair wooed the females of Chester with 'the Music of the Night' from Phantom of the Opera sending yet more shivers down the audiences spines.....

A staggering £19,800 profit was made which was a Spirit record, the financial reward is always tremendous but the chance to meet our supporters is fantastic -



Thank you all for making it a very special night. Can you believe that tickets for Spirit 2002 go on sale July 1st!

Hello to everyone near and far, its summer - yes it certainly is, one day of sun and then its back to the grey and rainy conditions we all know so well. Don't despair, this special Jubilee edition of NMC News is bound to bring a smile to your face whilst you enjoy the World Cup, Wimbledon and the Commonwealth Games. Can I just point out whilst many of you enjoy glasses of Pimms and think of forthcoming summer hols, the fundraising team is busy thinking about Christmas carols, festive readings and Snowmen! Yes tickets for this year's 'Spirit of Christmas' carol concert go on sale on July 1st. It's been another fun filled six months with a Gourmet Dinner, a Queens Jubilee Gala Evening and a new face in fundraising. The centre threw open its doors on 12th June and we welcomed guests from far and wide to see exactly what the centre does. We were fortunate to receive the support of several local mayors who visited from the boroughs of Crewe and Nantwich, Congleton, Macclesfield, Ellesmere Port and Neston, Halton and Warrington. Cllr Bert Grange the Chairman of Cheshire County Council also visited the centre along with a number of local groups, individuals, trusts and companies. It really was a brilliant occasion and looks set to be an annual event. Once again I could so easily fill the whole of this newsletter with thank you's, there are so many people who give up time, effort and money to help the centre and although raising funds is never going to be easy, our tremendous supporters always manage to make even the bleakest day sunny!

THANK YOU

Lyndsey 



Kilimanjaro Challenge

Do you fancy climbing 5,895 metres? Well I know a man who does, David Kennedy, NMC Design's Print Consultant has taken on this extremely punishing challenge. He is planning to climb the highest mountain in Africa, Kilimanjaro - The Mountain that Glitters. He will trek for up to 14 hours a day, for 9 days, overcoming dramatic temperature changes and as the altitude increases health problems often set in. The higher up the mountain you go the less oxygen there is and climbers can experience Acute Mountain Sickness (AMS) a particularly nasty condition which causes breathing difficulties, mental confusion, headaches and nausea - and what's worse the higher you go the worse the symptoms become. Of course if David can overcome these small problems he's in for a great view! David's aim is to raise £5,895 - a £1 for every vertical metre he has to climb to reach the top. If you can help him to do this please call the NMC, if this target is reached it will be a truly phenomenal amount of money, which will have a huge impact on our work at the centre.

Oh What a Night!

The NMC's first event of 2002 really was something special, Gorgeous Grub at the Grosvenor was held on the 9th March Nigel Smith from Sky Television cooked up a storm of culinary delights at the Grosvenor Hotel, Chester. A black tie occasion, the evening began with a Bucks Fizz Reception and as dinner was announced the guests took their seats in the fabulous Westminster Suite. We were treated to a sumptuous feast which began with a tuna and red mullet dish prepared Mediterranean style, followed by loin of venison with vanilla apples and the best till last was a trio of desserts - my personal favourite! Cheese and Port was the perfect end to a wonderful meal, we were fortunate to have the cheese and port donated. Joseph Heler donated a selection of Cheshire Cheeses and House of Town End donated a fine Port for our guests to enjoy.

Between courses our President, Matthew and Nigel entertained the guests and when the auction got going people were extremely generous. Auction prizes included dinner at the Feildens Arms', (Nigel's Restaurant) Blackburn with a chauffeur driven BMW, tickets for a Blackburn Rovers football match, a Manchester United football, an ink and watercolour picture by Julia Midgeley, golf at Potal Championship Course for four people, a cookery class with Nigel Smith at his restaurant and a custom made porcelain 'chef' doll donated by Gloria Steggel of Daydream Dolls. Just as we were about to enjoy the cheese course a guest offered to donate £500 if three other guests were prepared to match him. Within seconds four people had matched Duncan Fishwick's overwhelming offer and even more money was raised for our unique workplace. A HUGE thank you to all the £500 donors, guests, auction prize winners and the fantastic team at the Grosvenor Hotel. And of course, thanks go to Nigel and Emma Smith and our President Matthew Kelly who made the night such a success and an awful lot of fun.

Family Support Group night

The Support Group held a discussion forum in March which focused on issues relating to Independent Living and Direct Care Payments. Sandra Welbourne from the Centre for Integrated Living made a presentation about direct payments giving people information and explaining how to go about accessing the service. John William's from Cheshire Carers talked to guests about the services and options available for people requiring care. The evening was hailed a success with over 30 attendees, there were plenty of opportunities for people to ask questions and gather information. The 2002 diary has not yet been finalised, but there is something in the pipeline for September.

NMC's Marathon Man

It took just 5 hours and 9 minutes for Paul Need to complete the 26 gruelling miles of the 2002 London Marathon. As well as being a 'Speed Demon', Paul who is a huge supporter of the centre has raised somewhere in the region of £5,000 for the NMC. Paul is the Managing Director of F J Need (Foods) UK and how he ever found the time to train is a complete mystery, but he obviously did and that is why he was able to play football the day after the Marathon! If it's that easy Paul, I'm sure we can find some more running challenges for you. Sarah Kelly (Centre Director) was in London to cheer Paul on, along with his wife Alison, who is on the Fundraising Committee, their children Charlotte and James and Tracy Need, Paul's sister. The team of supporters did cheat a little though by finding a restaurant, so whilst Paul was pounding the pavements, scrambled eggs and cappuccinos were the order of the day for the Need Speed team.

Stop Press.....

Our website has been re-designed and re-launched by Matthew Cundall one of our Business Managers, there is up-to-date information about what's going on at the centre and news about our recent events. I strongly recommend that you take a look for yourself - you can read this newsletter online for a start, how fab is that?! Same address www.nmcentre.com

News From NMC Design

The NMC Design team have got a lot to be proud of as in 2001 they enjoyed an 180% increase in turnover, this signifies the amount of sheer determination and sustained effort which the whole team have shown to reach such an increase in turnover.

THANK YOU.....

Huge thanks to..... Urmston Rotary, News International (Knowsley) Ltd, Little Budworth P.C.C, Sandfield Park School, Asda Winsford, Rotary Club of Tarporley, Girobank Plc, Sandbach Inner Wheel, BT Call Centre Warrington, Bramhall and Woodford Rotary Club, Life Insurance Association, Cllr Nick Harris and many, many more.

Training

You've heard of changing rooms, the training scheme is more like changing faces, Terry our trainer left at the end of last year for London - what is it about NMC staff and London?? However, we can't be too upset with Terry as he landed himself a top photographers job which is his true passion and his real vocation. We all wish Terry well and he certainly hasn't been a stranger as he's already done the photographs for Spirit of Christmas and Gorgeous Grub at the Grosvenor. Tania Konstant has just been appointed as Training Co-ordinator and she will be starting in July.

A special thank you goes to Mandy Johnson who has been doing an admirable job as stand in trainer, this has meant that all 11 students have been able to complete their studies and this is all thanks to Mandy's hard work.

The NMC training programme received a real boost in April when we received a grant for £10,000 from Britannia Building Society, this grant has had a huge impact on the training programme financially. It was wonderful news and it acts as a motivator to students - and also makes them work hard as we have to provide regular progress reports!

Variety Gala Evening

We held an event at Clonter Opera Farm near Macclesfield which was hosted by our wonderful President, Matthew and featured some brilliant friends of the centre including Brigit Forsyth and Claire Moore. The event was a collaboration between us and St Lukes Hospice. Diana Mather the Vice President of St Lukes was very much the leading lady as she led the performers with her rendition of 'You Can't Hurry Love' and continued to woo the audience with her fashion show featuring creations from her aptly named Fashions 2 Di For range. The Gala came at the end of the Queens Jubilee Celebrations and there was only one possible finale, led by Claire Moore the audience boomed out 'Rule Britannia' and flag waving was the order of the day - as you can see from the photo. During the interval guests enjoyed a picnic supper, and from standing on the door the volumes of food bought in by guests constituted a feast rather than a picnic! Although a final figure on the amount raised is yet to be confirmed we guesstimate that we should each receive about £2,000. Special thanks goes to Fifield Glyn, Chartered Surveyors who were the main sponsors. Thanks also goes to everyone who contributed by attending, advertising in the programme and very importantly, performing.



Physio Facts

The physiotherapy department at the NMC offers individual physical management programmes to about 130 clients on a regular basis and the number continues to grow as more people discover the centre. This bears testimony to the fact that the NMC is getting its message across and we are achieving our goal of covering the whole of the North West and beyond. This has a lot to do with us being the only centre in the UK who offer specialist services to people who have muscular dystrophy. The physiotherapy department costs around £105,000 to run annually and currently we get about one third of physio clients treatments funded by statutory bodies and the balance, is down to us fundraisers, as physiotherapy is offered free of charge to anybody with md.

The physiotherapy department has been lucky enough to secure some new pieces of equipment, BNFL have kindly funded a tilt table which will allow more people to be treated. The Penny in the Pound Charity Fund have also made a significant impact on the physio department this year as they have issued grants for a Floatstation - an inflatable therapy bed to be used in the hydrotherapy pool and a Paraffin Wax Bath - enabling people to exercise hands and feet in warmed wax encouraging circulation. These donations are very much appreciated and sincere thanks is conveyed to all donors.

Diary Dates

21st July 2002 - Queens Jubilee 10K Road Race

Congratulations to those who took part in this years extra special Jubilee 10k race. Thank you very much for your efforts and the fantastic amount raised. We had a terrific team of 10 runners this year and if you would like to join them next year please let us know.

22nd September 2002 - Abseil at Trevor Quarry, Llangollen

Ever wondered how it would feel to descend a 90ft cliff face into a quarry, well now you can. Trevor Quarry, Llangollen has a 90ft vertical cliff face just waiting for you to abseil down. It doesn't matter if you are experienced or not, there will be professional instructors on hand to help you descend safely. What's more, you don't have to raise tons of money as we have a new sponsorship system. If you raise a minimum of £50 and bring it with you on the day we can refund the £15 booking fee required to secure your place. Of course it would be wonderful if you were able to raise more money, as every single penny goes towards providing services for people with md.

6th December 2002 - Spirit of Christmas

Tickets for the seventh Spirit of Christmas go on sale on 1st July and we strongly recommend that you don't leave it till the last minute to buy your tickets as you don't want to miss out on Chester's prestigious Christmas occasion. Although we are unable to confirm the names of the celebrity readers yet (well, it is only July!) we can guarantee a truly glittering evening of celebrity readings, Christmas carols and an almost endless supply of Champagne.....Well nearly. Ticket prices are Silver tickets are £45.00, Red tickets are £17.50 and Blue tickets are £12.50.

8th March 2003 - Gorgeous Grub at the Grosvenor

Now I know its over nine months away but this is definitely a date for your diary. Gorgeous Grub at the Grosvenor is held at Chester's prestigious hotel The Grosvenor who provide the perfect backdrop for a celebrity chef to work his or indeed her culinary magic and create a sumptuous feast.

Telephone Sarah or Lyndsey for more information on 01606 861733.

100 Club Update

We now have 174 members who raise over £4,000.00 per annum for the Centre

**4 x £10 weekly prizes
£50 monthly jackpot
£250 Quarterly prize
and a mystery annual prize
- last year £400**

To join call Dawn 01606 861733 for a 100 Club application form.

User Profile :

This is a very special user profile. Lorraine Woolley who as many of you will know has been a regular centre user for the last 11 years. Lorraine has worked in most of the various departments at the centre and in the last few years has been our IT Troubleshooter/Co-ordinator and has managed the antiquated network which the centre so relies on. As well as working three days a week on therapeutic earnings, Lorraine gets her physiotherapy as part of her working day and has made many really good friends at the centre. Now I've described how wonderful Lorraine is and how much she has contributed to the centre I have to explain that she's leaving the centre to work at BT Call Centre in Warrington. This is a fantastic achievement for Lorraine and Access to work have arranged any adaptations required which will enable Lorraine to do her job. We are all really sad to see Lorraine leave because she really does light up everyone's day, but as she's still going to be having her weekly physio at the centre, she's not really leaving. Lorraine will of course receive dozens of phone calls from the fundraising department whinging about the fact that the computers don't work or the printer won't print, which is a daily occurrence when it comes to the 17th century computers in the fundraising office..... Everyone at the centre is absolutely delighted at Lorraine's brilliant news and wish her the very best of luck in her new career.



Lorraine

New Faces



There's a new smile in the fundraising department, Sharon Griffiths is the new Community Liaison Officer. Sharon joined us in February. Sharon has a degree in American Studies from Manchester University and spent last year travelling and working in Australia. Sharon's role is to work with the local community and assist with event organisation as well as being another pair of hands in the fundraising office. If that's not enough Sharon's even running the Queens Jubilee 10K Road Race in London for us in July - does that show commitment or what!?!?

Linedance Extravaganza

The 2002 Linedance Extravaganza was truly fantastic and the best yet - Yes I know we always say that but it really was! Cheshire Building Society supported the event which now in its fifth year has grown phenomenally and without the generosity of Cheshire Building Society the Linedance wouldn't be the success it is. This year's Linedance was a sell out and the dancefloor barely got a break from the stetson stomping dancers.

Lorraine, Jackie and Liza who are the organisers of the linedance secured an excellent live band - Magill, who as well as being a fabulous band proved a hit with the ladies too! A huge thanks goes to 'Magill' and Ann Hewitt and Mike Hitchen from 'Toe the Line' who worked so hard and made it a really fab night. Thanks also to the many kind folk who donated raffle prizes, the raffle tickets completely sold out which is amazing as I thought everyone would be too busy

NMC's Alan Titchmarsh



The NMC has its very own Alan Titchmarsh in the form of Jim Collins. Jim really is a special guy and each week visits the centre with his wife Di who comes for physio. Whilst Di is having her physio, Jim, never one to be idle makes the outside of the centre look colourful and welcoming. Jim don's his gardening gloves, grabs a spade and he's off ensuring that all year round the bedding plants are deadheaded to encourage more flowers and that the roses are greenfly free. If Jim didn't keep the garden under control it would certainly turn into a jungle because we simply couldn't afford to pay someone. Everyone at the centre sends thanks to Jim, I hope you realise how much we appreciate your hard work.

Bon Voyage

As many of you know the NMC has a group of seven fantastic people who make up our fundraising committee and they are invaluable when it comes to our fundraising challenge. John Naylor has been involved with the centre for over 10 years. John has been a valued member of our management committee and a tireless member of our fundraising committee. John sells tickets to friends, family and enemies, obtains raffle prizes from weird and wonderful places and opens his garden to us for an annual Jazz Night. All in all we

think he is a really special guy and both he and his wife Pam have offered unfaltering support to everyone at the centre and although we don't want them to leave, we wish them well in their new home in France and hope they remember us when they are sampling wonderful wines and tremendously stinky cheeses.

Thank you both so much for your support and hard work.

