



Food Glorious Food

Gorgeous Grub at the Grosvenor was a complete sell out this year and no wonder given that the renowned culinary genius Brian Turner was the celebrity chef. Brian's task was to create a unique menu especially for our guests, and he did just that, the food was quite literally out of this world. Guests were welcomed to the Chester Grosvenor Hotel with a Bucks Fizz Reception, Dinner at Eight was announced, and guests took their seats in the Westminster Suite. To make your mouths water I can't help but relive the menu; Quail with a waldorf salad and granny smith dressing to start, followed by spiced fillet of beef which was so good it was talked about not just on the night but in the weeks that followed. The desert of white chocolate trifle with crushed macarons and raspberries melted in the mouth and for those of us who had elasticated waistbands there was a cheese board which was generously donated by Pendrill Ltd and the Port which accompanied the wonderful selection of cheeses was donated by House of Townend.



The event was hosted by Nigel Smith who was last year's chef as Matthew was treading the boards in 'Of Mice and Men' and both Brian and Nigel made it a very successful evening which raised vital funds for the centre. Sincere thanks is sent to everyone who made the evening possible, including Brian Turner CBE, Simon Radley and his team at the Grosvenor, Nigel and Emma Smith, all of the organisations who donated gifts and to everyone who attended and made the night so enjoyable. As you can see from the photo Matthew, who had performed that night dashed across from Blackpool after the curtain had gone down, to say hi to everyone. Matthew is pictured with Brian Turner CBE, former chairman of Cheshire County Council Bert Grange and Nigel Smith.

Roman Runners!

Congratulations and a huge thank you to Paul Need and Brad Pike who ran the Rome Marathon in March in aid of the NMC. Not only did Paul and Brad have to face the cobbled streets which stretched for the entire 26 miles, but the blazing sun also added to the challenge. Paul ran the London Marathon for the Centre last year, but for Brad this was his first marathon and when they strolled home in 4 hours and 31 minutes it was truly fantastic. As you can see from the photo it looks as though they have both just enjoyed a stroll round the park rather than a 26 mile marathon. Paul and Brad raised a very impressive £3,500 – Well Done to Paul and Brad and everyone who supported them.



Ed's Bits

Welcome to the summer installment of NMC News, a fine publication which brings everyone up to date with the latest news from the Neuromuscular Centre. It's been a busy few months at the NMC, with another fabulous Spirit of Christmas event last year, Brian Turner cooked up a storm at our Gorgeous Grub at the Grosvenor dinner and as ever people have been running, dancing and strutting down catwalks all to raise money for our fantastic centre. Whilst many of you have been crying into your strawberries and cream over Tiger Tim's Wimbledon washout and counting down to the new football season, the fundraising office is fully into the Christmas spirit and we've got a list of potential performers to whet your appetite for this year's "Spirit of Christmas". Of course before that prepare to be shaken and possibly stirred at our charity casino night at Tatton Park in September where the Miss Moneypennys amongst us will be seeking out our very own secret agent!

As I'm sure you will appreciate the highs and lows of the first half of 2003 could not have been survived if we didn't have the amazing army of supporters who make sure that the NMC continues to reach as many people affected by md as possible. Thank you to everyone who's been involved with the Centre either this year or in the past.

I hope you enjoy reading about what's been going on at the Centre and if you think you can help in any way please do get in touch.

Sarah and Matthew would like to thank everyone for their letters, cards, e-mails and phone messages of support that so many of you sent at a very difficult time for them at the beginning of the year. Now happily all is resolved, but it was support such as yours that made such a difference to them. THANK YOU.

Lyndsey

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It's Good to Give

The Centre relies on a number of various sources of income and one such area is corporate donations and boy is this a donation! BT Call Centre in Warrington has supported the Centre for many years, two employees are running the New York Marathon for the centre and they even poached one of our centre employees,

Lorraine now works at BT but she still comes back for physio. Anyway, you can imagine our shock (some of us really did fall off our chairs) when we received a phone call to say that because of the commitment and hard work of the staff at BT Warrington in ensuring that customer complaints were under 5% for a specific period of time, they were awarded £25,000 to give to charity and they chose us! It is one thing to make a donation, but for hundreds of employees to work their socks off so that a charity benefits, really is something else.

Sarah and Matthew went to Warrington to collect the cheque in June and everyone at the Centre wants to say a HUGE, GIGANTIC Thank you to everyone at BT for all of their hard work and congratulations on reaching your goal whilst benefiting a charity at the same time. Pictured above is Dave Dysart (BT), Matthew Kelly, Beverly Blevins (BT), Lorraine Woolley (BT) and Sarah Kelly.

Annual Open Day

Every year the Centre opens its doors and welcomes guests who can get to understand what the centre is all about by having a look around and meeting some of the people who work, and study benefit from the centre's services. This year was no exception, on 18th June over 150 guests visited the centre, some where existing supporters of the Centre and many people who had never been to the centre before. We were very fortunate to have many mayor and mayoresses and their deputies, the new Chief Constable for Cheshire Mr Peter Fahy and his wife, the High Sheriff of Cheshire Diana McConnell, Chairman of Cheshire County Council Nora Dolphin, Stephen O'Brien MP and Mike Hall MP and a whole host of representatives from local groups and many other people who got to see what the centre does. If you would like to visit the Centre you don't need to wait until the next Open Day, simply give the centre a call and there is always somebody who will be more than happy to show you around, contact Sharon, Sarah or Lyndsey on 01606 861733.

London Marathon

Gareth O'Sullivan flew the NMC flag when he ran this year's London Marathon in 4 hours 56 minutes. As well as the fantastic personal achievement of completing the marathon – something I could never do, Gareth raised about £1,000 which will be used to continue the brilliant work we do here at the NMC. Thank you Gareth for the hours of training and supporting the centre.

Stop Press

Can you help the Badger Set, you may, or may not know but the Badger Set spend a great many of their weekends selling home made jams at summer fete's and fairs all over the county. This year they are so busy that they desperately require fruit to make their jams and jam jars to put the fruit in. If you have got any trees which are due to be harvested or berry bushes laden with fruits, it would be great if you could donate some fruit to the Badger Set ladies who will make very good use of it and it's all for a very good cause. And whilst the begging bowl is out if you have any wool the Badger Set can also make use of it. Call Sharon on 01606 861733 or sharon@nmcentre.com

Money for Mobiles – Do you have an old mobile phone hanging around the house? If the answer is yes then can you donate it to the NMC, by collecting old mobile phones and their accessories the Centre could earn money through a scheme being run in partnership with the Link and Fonebak. The mobile phones will be recycled and in return the NMC will receive a donation. If you are able to help please drop your unwanted phone into the fundraising office.

If you have any unwanted postcards and used postage stamps there is a volunteer at the centre who can make good use of them. Please drop any postcards and stamps into the Fundraising department or send them to The Neuromuscular Centre, Woodford Lane West, Winsford, Cheshire. CW7 4EH.



Spirit of Christmas 2002

I know that we boast that Spirit is a success every year, and I'm delighted to say that last years was no exception with the tickets selling out and that's before people knew which famous faces they could expect to see at the Cathedral. We were lucky enough to be supported by MBNA Bank Europe Ltd (main sponsors), Manchester Airport who sponsored the Children's Writing Competition and Edencroft Fine Wines. Our President, Matthew was our gracious host and guests were treated to a feast of words read by Estelle Kohler, Stephen Moore, Nerys Hughes, Clive Francis, David Neilson, Bill Homewood and Liz Crowther. We were entertained by Cheshire born soloist, Gwen Oakden, who stunned people with her performance, especially Stings' emotive 'Fields of Gold'.

Clive Francis completely blew the audience away with his 'one man show' of Dickens' 'A Christmas Carol' and Estelle Kohler read a hilarious piece from Jenny Éclair, describing the faces we all want to pull when we receive a 100th box of initialled hankies on Christmas Day!

The seventh Spirit of Christmas raised a staggering £21,500 profit, more than ever before and it's all thanks to the fantastic performers who donate their time to us, the energetic team of supporters who ensure that everything goes smoothly (!) and all of you who get involved whether it's buying tickets, advertising in the programme or sponsoring the event.



Lunch with Matthew

The NMC is very fortunate to receive a great deal of support from companies who recognise the tremendous benefits the centre provides to people in the md community. To reach even more organisations, our President Matthew Kelly hosted two Luncheons, one in the splendour of Liverpool Town Hall and the other was at the lovely Victoria and Albert Hotel in Manchester. The Luncheons were attended by many new and existing supporters and it was a good opportunity to allow Matthew and Sarah to explain why the Centre is so important and how close it is to both of their hearts.

The luncheons enabled us to meet many interesting people and raise the profile of the centres services to organisations throughout the North West, and more are planned for 2004 if your organisation would like to learn more about the centre please let

Diary Dates

27th September 2003 - James Bond Charity Casino Night
Join us at Tatton Park to enjoy a truly glamorous evening fit only for the very best secret agents. Enjoy a Vodka Martini Reception with captivating canapés and enter the Tennants Hall to enjoy a seven course Golden Feast designed by Bespoke Catering. What's more every table will have Champagne on it. Guests will be serenaded by our Golden Diva and can be shaken and stirred by the 60's Disco. There will be Roulette, Blackjack and Craps and the boys (and girls) can take a chance on the Giant Scalextric. All in all a phenomenal experience awaits. Tickets are £60 per person and each guest receives £5 worth of complimentary gaming chips.

5th December 2003 - Spirit of Christmas
The eighth Spirit of Christmas will be at the same place but with lots of different faces, to guarantee your seat at this prestigious event please note that tickets are on sale now. The concert starts at 7.30pm and Silver ticket holders are invited to Chester Town Hall for a Champagne Reception with Matthew and the celebrities. Ticket prices are Silver tickets £50, Red tickets £17.50 and Blue tickets £12.50

6th March 2004 - Gorgeous Grub at the Grosvenor
Our annual gastronomy feast will be once again taking place at the stunning Chester Grosvenor Hotel. A celebrity chef will be designing a unique menu and all as we ask our guests to do is to eat, drink and be merry. Tickets are £50 per person, which includes a Bucks Fizz Reception, a superb four course meal (designed by our celebrity chef) and half a bottle of wine per person

18th April 2004 - London Marathon
Are you fit enough to run the London Marathon? Well you've got nine months to train for it, if you decide to take up this challenge. Not only would you be raising money for the NMC, but you would be achieving a very personal goal.

30th April 2004 - Linedance Extravaganza
Grab your Stetsons and dance on down to Winsford Civic Centre to strut your stuff to Magill and Toe the Line. Tickets will be available from the NMC in the new year.

16th June 2004 - Annual Open Day
The Centre will be opening its doors and inviting people to come and see the fantastic services which aim to enable people with md throughout the region. If you are interested in visiting the centre please do let Sharon know. sharon@nmcentre.com

1st August 2004 British London 10K Road Race
If the London Marathon is too much of a challenge then the 10K Road Race could be for you. Running past some of the capitals most famous landmarks, the 6.2 miles will simply fly by and before you know it you will be at the finishing line. If you would like to take part, please get in touch with Sharon. sharon@nmcentre.com

25th September 2004 - James Bond Casino Charity Night
The wonderful surroundings of Tatton Park will once again be the venue for this dazzling event. Put the date in your diary and watch this space for info.

3rd December 2004 - Spirit of Christmas
I know this is absolutely ages away, but it's such a brilliant event that the more notice you get the better. The combination of a traditional Christmas carol concert and readings performed by Matthew and his celebrity friends makes this wonderful Christmas event a sell-out every year.

For further information about all of the above events, please call the Neuromuscular Centre 01606 861733, or e-mail Sharon@nmcentre.com or Lyndsey@nmcentre.com
Telephone Sharon or Lyndsey for more information on 01606 861733

Dancing in Lines!

The annual Linedance Extravaganza took place at Winsford Civic Hall on June 6th and it was yet another great event which raised over £1,000 for the Neuromuscular Centre. Cheshire Building Society very generously supported the event and two of Cheshire Building Society Managers joined us on the night and did their own fair share of toe tapping! Dancers were entertained by 'Magill' and 'Toe the Line' both of who were fantastic. The Linedance was organised by Lorraine, Jackie and Liza all of whom work and receive physio at the centre, a huge thanks goes to the three girls for ensuring that the night was a huge success and to everyone who attended and donated raffle prizes.

Fantastic Firs School

The Firs School recently held a Dressed to Thrill evening at the Grosvenor Hotel in Chester. The event was organised by the schools charity committee which includes Deborah, Louise and Imogen who worked tirelessly to ensure that the night was a huge success and it was – a fantastic donation of £13,465.35 was made to the NMC, which will make a huge difference. For example a donation of this size will go a long way towards covering the cost of providing care to the many students and employees at the centre who have got muscular dystrophy. Many, many thanks goes to the whole committee who made this phenomenal donation possible.

A Whopping THANK YOU to;

Winsford Shopping Centre, Inner Wheel of Macclesfield Castle, Rotary Club of Tarporley, Margaret and Paul Hughes, Steve McGarry, Catenian Association of Stockport Circle No. 71, Rotary Club of Northwich, Mr and Mrs Woolley, Graham Bayliss, Dr and Mrs Wood, Asda – Winsford, Soroptimist International Nantwich and District, Bentley Motors, Stan and Maureen Humphries family and friends, the Macclesfield Castle Rotary Club, Dixon's Group and Di-namite Designs.



British 10k Road Race

As this novel goes to press I'd like to congratulate the runners who took part in the Road Race and raised funds for the Centre. Thank you to the runners and I hope that you didn't suffer too much in the sweltering heat

New York New York.....

Not only do BT Call Centre Warrington ensure that customers are happy they also employ very fit and generous people. Cath Murray and Aideen Costello who both work at Warrington are running the New York Marathon in November and all of the money they raise will be donated to the Centre. The girls are training really hard and the training alone would be enough to put me off, but along with the help of Phil Cain they are hoping to get tons of sponsorship which will be a huge motivator when they are sprinting through Central Park – Good Luck to Cath and Aideen, we know you can do it! Pictured with Matthew is Aiden (left) Cath and Phil Cain.



Fond Farewells

You may remember in my last novel that I announced the fab news that Dawn Wilbur our Centre Receptionist had given birth to baby Graham, well seven months on he's grown into a strapping little man who is very much the apple of his parents eyes. Understandably Dawn had a difficult decision to make when it came to the end of her maternity leave and sadly, for us, Dawn has decided that she wants to dedicate her time to Graham and be with him at every stage of his development and has decided to step down from her position at the centre. Everyone at the NMC is very sad to say goodbye to Dawn, but she will be back each week for her physio treatment and will still be involved the Family Support Group, so it's not as though she's going for good. Everyone wishes Dawn the very best of luck for the future and I completely agree that we were no competition for baby Graham!

More Goodbye's...

Many avid NMC News readers will know that the Centre's fundraising challenge is supported by a fantastic team of volunteers who make up the Fundraising Committee. This brilliant group of people help us to organise events, sell raffle tickets and do a lot of bread buttering at our Open Days. Last year John Naylor jetted off to live in sunnier climes and this year Cynthia Ordish and her husband Bill have moved to Wales (not quite so sunny) but no less beautiful. As a result Cynthia has had to step down from the Fundraising Committee. On behalf of everyone at the Centre, I'd like to say a huge thanks to Cynthia and Bill for all the support you've given the centre and we know they won't be strangers.

Happy Retirement

In September Kath Booth will be retiring from her position in NMC Design after thirteen years, in fact since the day we opened our doors. Kath has seen the centre develop from just a small group of people with big ideas to a big group of people with even larger ideas. Kath has insisted that we don't do anything to make her cry when she leaves but I don't think there will be a dry eye in the house. Lots of love and luck to Kath for a very Happy Retirement.