

# nmc News

## Ed's Bits

Hello to all NMC News readers far and wide. I hope that this fine publication can coax you away from Euro 2004, Big Brother and Wimbledon so you can catch up with all the goings on at the Neuromuscular Centre.

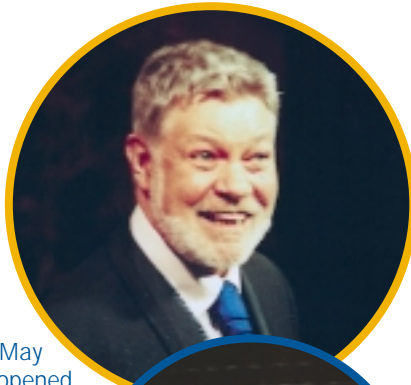
As ever the first six months of the year have been chaotic with fabulous food at our Gorgeous Grub at the Grosvenor event, fun and laughter at the Clonter Opera Farm 'Variety Evening' and a team of six fit runners who completed the Flora London Marathon to generate funds for the NMC.

As well as the all important fundraising news I'm also pleased to report that (fingers crossed) all of the students will successfully complete their graphic design qualifications this summer. Following the same positive theme NMC Design (our in-house design and print company) is attracting more customers, which is absolutely fantastic in the often unpredictable business world small organisations find themselves in. Of course there is no better publicity tool for promoting NMC Design, if you want to know the quality of the work - you are currently holding it! NMC Design can undertake just about any design and print challenge you can throw at them, contact dan@nmc-centre.com with any print requirements you have.

There's tons of events taking place later this year so be sure to check out the diary dates, there's something for everyone with the glamorous James Bond Charity Casino Night at Tatton Park in September, the chance to be crowned Cheshire's brainiest brain at the Jeremy Beadle Quiz Party in October, learn more about the fascinating world of the St Petersburg Collection whilst enjoying a Russian themed meal at the Grosvenor Hotel and Grosvenor Spa and of course the ninth Spirit of Christmas carol concert on 3rd December. Be sure to book tickets for all of these events early as tickets are already selling fast! In August I'd like you all to spare a thought for the 36 people who will be running this years British 10k Road Race in London in aid of the Centre, and whilst some are regular runners many of the participants will be going the extra mile to complete the 6.2 miles to raise money for people with muscular dystrophy.

I know I'm always thanking people in my Ed's bits, and this edition will be no exception as I've only got gratitude and praise for all of the wonderful people who donate time, money and energy to the Centre. Thank you all, we couldn't do it without you. Have a good summer and lets all keep everything crossed for some sunny weather!

**Lyndsey**   
lyndsey@nmc-centre.com



## Perfect Production

On a warm and balmy May evening, Clonter Opera Theatre opened its doors to a glittering array of Cheshire Society as they arrived, picnic-laden, to enjoy the delights of the second Variety Evening, organised by tireless Di Mather, to raise money for the NMC. The spirit of the evening was well and truly entered into as guests turned their dining areas into a space fit for Homes and Gardens. Cool boxes were unzipped with alacrity, champagne corks popped, the candlelight flickered and the canapés were savoured.

As the curtain went up, NMC President Matthew Kelly welcomed the audience who were then royally entertained by a feast of talent from near and far. Young local songstresses Phoebe Fildes and Emily Barlow and West End stars Claire Moore and Alasdair Harvey, pianist Paul Miller and others produced wonderful music including boogie and blues piano, rock and pop from days gone by and soaring songs from the musicals to enthrall the audience. Matthew, joined by actress Helen Atkinson Wood and actor Matthew Rixon, with Charles Fifield and Five's Company provided the 'words' which had the audience rolling in the aisles.

The ninety minute interval was enlivened by a sensational fashion show, and the whole evening was rounded off by a rousing, flag waving, if not always tuneful, rendition of Rule Britannia.

Throughout the evening, one person at the heart of the event had her mind on an entirely different production of her own. During the morning rehearsals Di Mather got a message to say that her daughter Leonie had gone into labour - two weeks early! During the show, every time Matthew announced the next act he kept the audience in as much suspense as Di herself, by saying 'Ladies and Gentlemen, Di Mather is ..... still waiting. The rafters were well and truly raised, therefore, when after the interval, Matthew was able to say 'Ladies and Gentlemen, Di Mather, the world's most glamorous granny'. A memorable night for the NMC, for Di and family, and a warm welcome to the world to baby Sasha.

## NMC Dream Team

The NMC was fortunate enough to have a team of six runners in this years London Marathon and I'm delighted to report that everyone completed the 26 miles. Our runners were Zoe Maycock, Paul Need (Marathon Man), George Cichosz, Michael Harte, Keith Newnes and Steve McGuirk. Steve is Chief Fire Officer for Cheshire and Keith is Deputy Chief Fire Officer.

A HUGE well done to all of our runners who between them look set to have raised about £10,000 for the Centre in sponsorship. Thank you to all of our runners whose tremendous efforts will make such a big difference to the Centre.

If you'd like to be part of the NMC's 2005 Marathon Team get in touch with the fundraising department.



## Food Glorious Food...

If you've not managed to get to Gorgeous Grub at the Grosvenor then you really have missed out! This annual culinary fest is held in the Westminster Suite at the prestigious Chester Grosvenor and Grosvenor Spa and earlier this year Simon Rimmer was the celebrity chef who bowled everyone over with his wonderful menu. Guests were welcomed with a bucks fizz reception and then enjoyed a sumptuous four course meal which featured poached sole and asparagus with sweet pepper essence to start, breast of gressingham duck with crispy pancetta and Madeira, desert was a wonderful mousseline of pear with caramel sauce and to finish a selection of cheeses with port.

The evening was hosted by our President Matthew Kelly and television and radio presenter Peter Wheeler who along with Simon encouraged guests to get involved with the Head and Tails game and the last women standing in this case was Alison Need who was presented with a Fortnum and Mason Hamper. The auction was conducted expertly by our volunteer auctioneer Michael Verity from Strutt and Parker, Chester who motivated guests into bidding for a fantastic weekend break in Aube en Champagne, a week in a magnificent villa in the hills of Tuscany, a session with a personal trainer, Simon Rimmer cooking in a guests own home and tickets to the live final of 'Stars in their Eyes' which was Matthews finale as host of the show. The staggering success of the auction and peoples generosity generated over £10,000 profit which will go a long way to providing our services here at the Centre. Thank you to everyone for making it a wonderful occasion.

## Can you Do It Once a Month for the NMC?

As I'm sure many of you are aware the Centre needs to generate about £500,000 annually to continue our work with people affected by muscular dystrophy. We receive fantastic support from all different sources including people launching themselves off buildings for us, local organisations sponsoring our fundraising events and generous individuals who donate to the Centre.

Regular donations are absolutely vital to the Centre as it helps us with budgets and if we know we have regular monies coming in each month then it also creates stability. The 'Do it Once a Month' campaign promotes regular giving and asks our wonderful supporters whether they can pledge a regular amount of £5, £10 or whatever they can each month to the Centre. What's more if a donor is eligible for gift aid (if you are a UK tax payer) then a donation of £5 per month will equate to over £76 annually, but still only costing the donor £60! Now that would make a difference to the NMC and the people who benefit from its services.

Thank you to all of our existing 'Do it Once a Monthers', you are making such a difference to the NMC.

If you or somebody you know could commit to giving a small amount to the Centre (whilst making a BIG difference) then please contact the NMC fundraising department on 01606 861733.

## STOP PRESS

The Hammond and Queens Schools are presenting a sparkling evening of musical entertainment, performed by pupils from both Schools. The production of 'Three Part Harmony' is on Thursday 4th November at the Gateway Theatre, Chester. Tickets are priced at £10 and the curtain goes up at 7.30pm.

Tickets are available from the Gateway Theatre Box Office. All proceeds from this evening will be divided between the NMC and the Queens and Hammond Schools.

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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 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. Thank you to all of the people who have already donated their old mobiles, but we need more! If you are able to help please drop your unwanted phone into the fundraising office. You've already helped us to raise £300 to date and that's all from your old phones - Special thanks to BT Call Centre, Warrington who are topping the poll of top phone donors to date!

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If you have any unwanted post-cards 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 2004

The eighth 'Spirit of Christmas' was once again hosted by NMC President Matthew Kelly, who along with his celebrity chums including; Corin Redgrave, James Cosmo, Sue Skipper, Anthony Valentine, Greg Wise, Marcia Warren and Simon Williams entertained a packed Chester Cathedral with seasonal readings. Chester Primary Schools Choir and Cheshire Youth Brass Band filled the Cathedral with songs and sounds which echoed right up to the rafters and had the audience in fine voice to well-loved carols. In short 'The Spirit of Christmas' is a fantastic event which brings Christmas cheer to Chester, in fact the cheer starts at the beautiful Chester Cathedral and travels across the road to the Town Hall where guests quaff champagne till the midnight hour and all in aid of our unique charity. 'The Spirit of Christmas' was supported by MBNA Europe Bank who have extended phenomenal support to the event which has become synonymous within Chester and indeed Cheshire as 'the' Christmas event.

As part of 'The Spirit of Christmas' Manchester Airport kindly supported a Children's Writing Competition which is open to all schools in the county. Last years literary challenge was 'the Night Before Christmas' which generated a huge amount of interest and resulted in over 300 entries. The first prize winner was Georgia-May Paros from Cranberry Junior School who was delighted when Matthew read out her piece of work and presented her with a combined television and video for her well-crafted piece of work. If you want to see talent then 'The Spirit of Christmas' is the event to see it at, Matthew Andrews from Abbeygate College was the guest soloist and although only 10 years old his performance was nothing short of remarkable.

The success of 'Spirit' is totally reliant on the generosity of many organisations who are kind enough to sponsor, advertise or donate prizes; similarly the many hundreds of you who purchase tickets and support us on the night. And of course the huge ruck of people who donate their time by acting as stewards, drivers and of course performers. Thank you to everyone who helped to raise £31,500!



## NMC DIARY DATES 2004 - 2005

25th September 2004 – James Bond Charity Casino Night  
In 2003 there was a golden theme and in 2004 there is an Indian theme with tantalizing food to tempt your senses. Hosted by popular comedian Ted Robbins (subject to work commitments) the evening will commence with a Vodka Martini Reception and sumptuous canapés, guests will then be treated to a feast fit for a Maharaja and after dinner guests can risk their shirts on the casino tables and dance the night away to the disco. Tickets are priced at £60 per ticket, for ticket information and sponsorship opportunities contact the fundraising team.

8th October 2004 – Jeremy Beadle Quiz Party  
Hosted by TV's Jeremy Beadle, test your wits against Cheshire's top minds and see if you can be awarded Cheshire's brainiest brain at Northwich Memorial Hall. Teams of six are able to enter and there will be some top prizes up for grabs as well as the all important Biggest Brian award! For further information please contact the fundraising team.

26th October 2004 – Russian Dinner  
The Grosvenor Hotel is the perfect venue for a rare opportunity to enjoy a specially designed Russian themed menu and listen to Phillip Berkenstein Chairman of the St Petersburg Collection talk about the design of the famous Faberge eggs and a stunning jewellery collection. Tickets are priced at £49.50 per person which includes a drinks reception and a four course Russian inspired menu designed by Simon Radley (Executive Chef at the Grosvenor).

3rd December 2004 – The Spirit of Christmas  
This Christmas institution is one of our most popular events, hosted by our President Matthew Kelly, who along with his celebrity friends will perform seasonal readings and no doubt fill Chester Cathedral with lots of laughter. This event is a sell-out every year and to avoid disappointment please note that tickets go on sale on July 1st. Tickets are priced at £50 for Silver tickets which include seats in the central nave and the Champagne Reception at Chester Town Hall after the concert, Red tickets are £17.50 and seating is on the West Steps and Blue tickets are £12.50 and are on either side of the Cathedral.

26th February 2005 – 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.

15th April 2005 – 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.

17th April 2005 - 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.

24th September 2005 – James Bond Charity Casino Night  
Tatton Park is the phenomenal setting for this wonderful night of fine food, excellent company, a selection of gaming tables and live music for guests to boogie on down to. Further information will be available in the Winter edition of this newsletter.

7th October 2005 – Linedance Extravaganza  
Another chance to 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.

*For further information about all of the above events, please call the NeuroMuscular Centre Fundraising Department 01606 861733 or e-mail [Sharon@nmcentre.com](mailto:Sharon@nmcentre.com) or [Lyndsey@nmcentre.com](mailto:Lyndsey@nmcentre.com)*

## ***Y'all Ready to dance!***

If dancing in lines is your bag then the Centre's annual Linedance Extravaganza is for you and whilst you've missed out on this years, it proved so popular that next year we're holding two! Back in April Winsford Civic Hall was awash with Stetsons with some serious toe-stomping to music performed by 'Magill' and 'Toe the Line'. Many, many thanks to everyone who supported the event either by donating gifts, getting on down with the music or donating their time and helping us to raise £1,000 which will go directly to providing services at the Centre.

## ***Volunteer of the Year***

*The NMC is fortunate to have many kind people who volunteer their time to the Centre and this year one gentleman who has worked tirelessly to raise awareness and monies for the Centre is Ted Hawker, pictured below.*

*Ted volunteers on the Fundraising Committee and as a group they help to sell tickets for our events, represent the Centre at local events and source auction and raffle prizes for our different activities.*

*As well as being involved with other charitable organisations Ted has been a really fantastic ambassador of the Centre and when Vale Royal Borough Council started its search for local volunteer of the year we could think of nobody more deserving than Ted. Well done and thanks are sent to Ted for all of his tremendous assistance.*



## ***Magnificent Mayor***

Cllr Anne Hooker was unveiled as Mayor for Vale Royal Borough on May 13th 2004. Anne has been a supporter of the NMC for many years and has hosted her famous Magical of the Musicals in aid of the Centre. Therefore you can imagine how delighted we were when Anne announced that the Centre was to be the Mayors Charity during Anne's term of office. I'm sure you'll all join me in wishing Anne best wishes for what will inevitably be a fulfilling and successful twelve months.

## ***Generous Groups***

As I'm sure many of you know the Centre relies on donations from many different areas and one of the most important is the generous support the Centre receives from local groups. Such generosity was exemplified by the Inner Wheel Club of Northwich when Daphne Hawker the Clubs President 2003-04 nominated the Centre as her chosen charity of the year. After twelve months of commitment and hard work Daphne and the Clubs members presented a cheque to Sarah in May for a staggering £1,700 which really will make a difference to the Centre.



Sincere thanks are sent to Daphne and all of the members of Inner Wheel Club of Northwich. As you can see from the picture Sarah was delighted to collect a cheque from Daphne and some of the group's members.

## ***Fall for the NMC***

Fall Fashion is a ladies boutique in Knutsford who, in May kindly hosted a fashion show unveiling their fabulous summer collection. Ladies were greeted with a Pimms Reception at the boutique on Kings Street and enjoyed canapés by local caterers 'Foodies' whilst mingling with the models and discovering the key styles of the season. Fashion house Caractère generously donated the first prize in the raffle which was an outfit of the winner's choice and the runner-up prizes were as you can imagine stylish and a welcome addition to many a wardrobe.

A special thanks goes to Pauline Tyrer from Fall and Michele Ellis who along with Pauline made the day such a success and resulting in a very generous donation of £1,200 for the NMC.

## ***Big Thanks***

*Thank you to everyone including and beyond this list; Ken Hester, Malcolm and Elaine Goy, Macclesfield and District Lions Club, Harrods, Betty Manford, Olivia's Party Place, Rotary Club of Tarporley, Fortnum and Mason, Meena Meanu, Rotary Club of Holmes Chapel, City Concert Orchestra, Mrs Joanna Wood, Mr and Mrs John Carmichael, Rebecca Layton and family, Dee Cooke and Sanjay Vaja.*

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