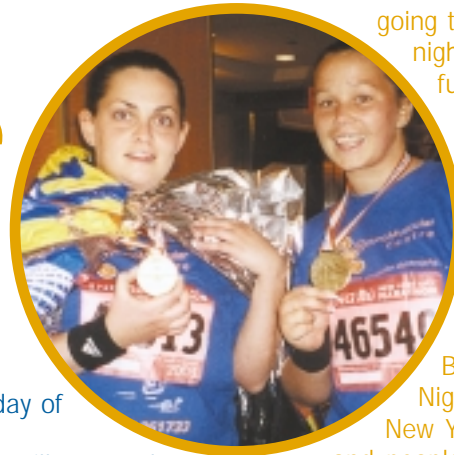




They've Done It!



It's been talked about for months and when the day of reckoning arrived, Cath and Aideen triumphed despite illness and injuries. For those of you who don't know Cath and Aideen they are both managers at BT Call Centre, Warrington from whom the NMC has received a great deal of support. Cath and Aideen attended the NMC Thank You Night in November 2002 and were so impressed with the services on offer they pledged there and then to run the New York Marathon to raise funds to enable the Centre's services to continue. Almost twelve months to the date Cath and Aideen found themselves on the starting line on a balmy day in New York waiting for the starting pistol to signal that all the training and hard work they'd put in was finally going to be executed. The route which took in all five New York boroughs and many of the famous landmarks meant that there was the chance for the girls to catch up on some sightseeing as well as breaking through the pain barrier.

The weather was unusually warm for November and this added to the girls challenge, running in 70 degree heat is more what you'd expect in sunny California rather than the Big Apple. Throughout out it all the girls kept focused and they successfully completed the Marathon along with their 36,000 competitors. Aideen completed the race in 6 hours 59 minutes and Cath was right behind her and finished in 7 hours 5 minutes. A HUGE WELL DONE and THANKS to Cath and Aideen, Phil Cain and all of the kind folks who sponsored the girls.

Ed's Bits

A warm welcome from the Ed who as we speak is stuffing herself with mince pies and hollering to 'White Christmas' – what an attractive picture I hear you sigh, but when you've been listening to Christmas carols as long as I have you would understand. Yes folks it's that time of year again we are just a few weeks away from the eighth 'Spirit of Christmas' and it looks like its going to be another fabulous night for both raising vital funds for the Centre and boosting awareness of what the centre does. As ever it's been a hectic few months with the successful launch of a brand new event in the shape of a James Bond Charity Casino Night, our totally fantastic New York Marathon runners and people throwing themselves off tall buildings. As ever we are continually stunned and delighted by the amazing levels of support the Centre attracts and without which we simply wouldn't be able to reach the people we do.

The services at the NMC continue to go from strength to strength. In October the students were welcomed into the training suite, some of them for the first time and there were a few familiar faces. Similarly the physiotherapy department continues to assess new clients and often after the initial assessment people visit the centre for regular physio treatment. Of course not to forget NMC Design I think given the fact that the printers are barely allowed to cool down between jobs is a significant indication that the design team continue to be very busy.

A huge thank you to all those who have supported the centre over the last few months and if you are not mentioned within this novel we haven't forgotten you, I promise – it's just the newsletter would go on for ever! I'll stop rambling and let you get on with reading about all the exciting goings on at the NMC. On behalf of everyone at the Neuromuscular Centre I wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a peaceful and contented New Year.

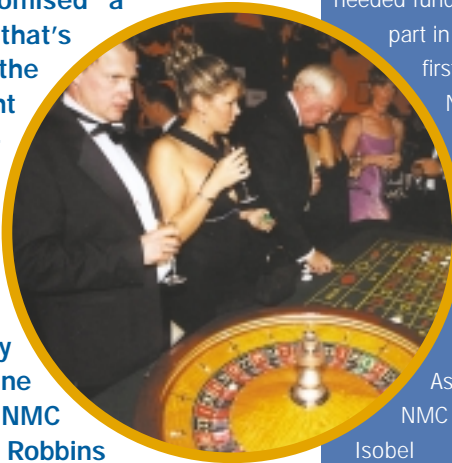
Lyndsey ❁



JAMES BOND

Charity Casino Night

Guests were promised a night to remember and that's exactly what they got at the James Bond Charity Casino Night held in September in the beautiful surroundings of Tatton Park. Secret agents from all over the North West gathered in the Tenants Hall where the evening commenced with a Vodka Martini or a glass of Taittinger Champagne which was kindly sponsored by Taittinger and Edencroft Fine Wines. After a warm welcome from NMC President Matthew Kelly and comedian Ted Robbins guests enjoyed a sumptuous seven course menu designed and prepared by the renowned Bespoke Catering Company. The post-dinner games began with the excellent auctioneer John Hallman of Gascoigne Halman who very generously donated his services and encouraged guests to part with their money during the Grand Charity Auction. The fabulous auction prizes which were up for grabs included a diamond bracelet comprising of fifty twinkling diamonds, an exclusive shopping trip to London staying at the luxurious Athenaeum Hotel and afternoon tea at Harrods and the opportunity of a lifetime for two lucky people to fly to Reims for a tour of Taittinger's fourth Century Champagne Cellar's accompanied by the Taittinger Ambassador for the UK, Justin Llewelyn. And, if all of that wasn't enough guests could gamble their shirts away playing blackjack, roulette or craps and the competition between the boys (and girls) on the giant scalextric was fierce to say the least!



Cheshire diva Gwen Oakden performed well known Bond themes throughout dinner and for those guests who'd blown the bank, there was a sixties disco which had guests dancing into the wee small hours! As well as Matthew and Ted we were delighted to welcome Justin Llewelyn the Taittinger Ambassador, Suzanne Dando who was in Octopussy and Sally Lindsay who stars in Coronation Street as Rovers Return barmaid 'Shelly'.

This was the first time for this event which had been in the planning for almost two years and was such a success that you notice it's already in the diary for next September. A big thank you to everyone who was involved including management and staff at Tatton Park, all of the guests, auction prize donors, Weekend break and Golf break donors and the relentless efforts by all of the NMC staff and volunteers who made it happen!



Avid Abseilers

The 20th September saw the second Chester Cathedral Abseil and another fantastic turn out of support for the Centre. In spite of the rain, sixteen eager volunteers abseiled successfully down the 170ft West Window of the Cathedral. Every abseiler made the descent look easy and any nerves on the day were well and truly hidden. Nicola Davies who has md and comes to the Centre for regular physio made the abseil look easy as she glided down the West Window with her cousin Lee Kenna and raised much needed funds for the NMC. Others who took part in the Up and Over abseil and know first hand the importance of the NMC and the vital services it provides are Lise Mitchell, who's brother Neil Thompson comes for physio, Michael Bather, who's Mum Liz comes for physio and hydrotherapy, Stu Walker who's mum works as a Business/Care Assistant at the NMC as well as



Isobel McConnell who's good friend Heather Murrant also attends for physio and is also enrolled on the Training Course. Mother and Daughter, Joanna and Georgina Allman shimmied down the Cathedral in true professional style, raising a fantastic £1000.00 for the Centre.



Huge thanks also to Stephen Targus and Chris Tomlin from MBNA, Simon Roberts and Ross Vernon from Tesco Superstore, Chester, Emma Whittle and Katrina Bolger from Aim Academy, Howard Owens and Kathryn Sharratt. Sponsorship money is still coming in but over £4000.00 has been collected so far so a huge thank you to all the brave abseilers and willing sponsors.

Jolly Ole' Jazz

I know it seems like a distant memory but we did have a summer this year and it certainly brightens up my day to think back to June and Jazz at Hall Green. Tina and Jim Jennings who have supported the Centre for years opened up their garden and were gracious hosts to over two hundred guests. Every inch of Tina and Jim's garden was filled with gazebos and picnic tables which were bursting with culinary goodies ensuring feasts fit for kings. Whilst enjoying the al fresco dining guests were entertained by the Salt City Jazz Band and the Old Fashioned Love Band who had people jiving all Tina and Jim's newly laid patio! As well as having a really good time guests helped Tina and Jim to raise just over £2,000 for the NMC, this fantastic amount of money has made a huge contribution to the Centre's service provision to people with muscular dystrophy. Heartfelt thanks are sent to Tina, Jim and their family and friends who made the evening a huge success.

Fabulous Fashion

Di-namite Designs run by Diana Mather launched its latest striking creations during the summer and chose to preview the new range in conjunction with the Neuromuscular Centre by holding a fashion show with a difference. Poetry 'n' Motion was held at Cransley School, Great Budworth in July and as well as a chance to catch the frock of the season, 5's Company a light entertainment group performed a variety of music and readings. The weather was so sultry that the models would have been cooler if they had been strutting down an open-air catwalk but everyone agreed that Pimms in the quaint little courtyard was the highlight of the evening giving guests the chance to enjoy the evening sun. As well as a fantastic evening of entertainment Poetry 'n' Motion raised over £900 for the Centre. A huge thank you to the stunning models, individuals and organisations who donated tombola prizes, everyone who bought tickets and of course Diana for all of her hardwork.

NMC Update

For those of you who don't know what the Neuromuscular Centre does or to refresh the memories of those of you who do, here's a brief reminder of what the NMC does:

The Neuromuscular Centre (NMC) opened its doors thirteen years with the objective of providing a range of palliative and practical services to people with muscular dystrophy (md) throughout the North West. The services include three broad areas including; Training and employment opportunities in IT and graphic design, ongoing physiotherapy and hydrotherapy and an information and support network which can be accessed via the phone, email/ internet and in person.

Key stuff about us:

- There are sixteen places on the training course this year
- Currently 130 clients are treated by our team of physiotherapists on a regular basis
- Our Physiotherapists assess one new client per week
- Twelve people with muscular dystrophy are part of the workforce at the centre
- The NMC has its own adapted transport system which runs throughout the region
- A Family Support Group operates out of the Centre for everyone affected by md
- The Centre needs to raise £500,000 annually to continue its services

Dates for your Diary

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 five 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 May 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 Charity Casino Night

If you've read all about this year's James Bond Night you'll definitely not want to miss out next year. In 2003 there was a golden theme and this year's theme will be unveiled and will feature a specially designed menu to tantalise your taste buds and delight your senses. For ticket information and sponsorship opportunities contact the fundraising team.

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. Tickets are on sale from 1st July 2004.

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

Thank You to you, you and you too!

Here at the Neuromuscular Centre it can be very difficult to let supporters, donors and friends know exactly how much they mean to the centre and thank you often doesn't go far enough. To let people know how much we appreciate the support they give us we opened our doors on a chilly November evening to say thank you. Cheese and wine was a plenty there was the opportunity for people to have a good look round at what the centre does and meet some of the centre's beneficiaries.

HUGE THANK YOU

to; Ruth Scudamore, BT Call Centre Warrington, the Michael Thomas Book Fund, Sam Sloan, Bredbury and Romiley Inner Wheel, Wharton Conservative Club Bingo Night, Norma Edge, City Concert Orchestra, Northwich Ladies Guild, Justin Llewellyn and Tattinger Champagne, Malcolm and Elaine Goy, Cllr Dee Cook and Miss Vale Royal, Majorchem and F J Need (Foods) Ltd.



NMC Makeover

Those of you who study this publication (and I should hope so!) may recall that last year employees from Barclays Bank plc based at Gadbrook Park gave our physiotherapy and client waiting area a new look. Of course when one area has had the changing room experience, the other parts tend to look a bit dull. We need not have worried ourselves as Barclays Bank plc have once again saved the day, this time its employees from Radbroke Hall who have given us much more than a new look. A team of 25 Barclays employees rolled up their sleeves and tackled the chaos that is NMC Design, the adapted print design company which is run by people with md. Within a

matter of hours the design studio, kitchen and bathrooms were all freshly painted and everywhere looked positively gleaming. The Centre was nominated for a Barclay's makeover by Stephen Clough who works for Barclays and comes to the Centre for physiotherapy. The decorating team was led by Terry Ferguson the 'make a difference' coordinator at the Radbrooke Hall site and sincere thanks are sent to Stephen, Terry and everyone who took up a paintbrush!

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 there 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, or contact lyndsey@nmcentre.com

Give us your Old Postcards and Stamps

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.

Badgering You!

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 jam jars for their jams, pickles and chutney's. If you can help please call Sharon on 01606 861733 or sharon@nmcentre.com