

nmc News

Ed's Bits

It's been a busy few months at the NMC and as the dark nights descend upon us again I thought it a good time to bring you up to date with the latest news from the NMC. Probably the hottest news is that we have a new Executive Director. Matthew Lanham joined us in September and has been working with Sarah to ensure a seamless handover. As you can see Matthew and Sarah have both put pen to paper for this edition of the newsletter so I will let them say their own hellos and goodbye's. However I know I speak on behalf of everyone at the NMC when I say how delighted we are to welcome Matthew to the NMC, he has all of the qualities needed to take the NMC forward and continue (and grow) our range of services for people with muscular dystrophy. Sarah's retirement has been planned for quite a while now, however I don't think it's going to make it any easier on 16th December when we finally say goodbye to her. For me personally it will be odd to not sit opposite Sarah and tut at her untidy desk. Despite my complaints of de-cluttering there have been a lot of laughs, some tears but most of all Sarah has made getting the job done FUN and for that she will be missed by us all.



Extra special birthday visitor

As part of our fifteenth anniversary celebrations the NMC was honoured to receive a visit from Her Royal Highness the Duchess of Gloucester. The Duchess was presented with a posy by Debbie Leather who is on our Management Committee and benefits from physio at the NMC. During the visit the Duchess spent time looking around the NMC learning what we do and

meeting some of the beneficiaries. The visit was concluded by the Duchess cutting an NMC birthday cake which was met with cheers by staff, users and guests.



Busy certainly has been the theme of the summer with NMC Design gaining two new graphic designers who have graduated from the training programme and have joined the design team. Similarly the new term has started on the training programme with a combination of some new faces mixed with some we already know. The physiotherapy department is busier than ever as Rosie and her team continues to treat regular clients and carry out new assessments. The fundraising department hasn't been idle either, we have shimmied the night away at our James Bond Casino Night which with an Egyptian theme had guests dreaming of pyramids and pharaohs. There was toe stomping at the Linedance Extravaganza, leg flinging at the Kelsall Ceilidh and fashion through the ages at our Ladies Lunch.

Looking forward to next year, I'm delighted to announce that the celebrity chef for Gorgeous Grub at the Grosvenor 2006 is going to be Ross Burden. Many of you will know Ross from the BBC's Ready Steady Cook programme. Ross will create a culinary delight and in the beautiful setting of the Grosvenor Hotel, Chester it has all the ingredients for a perfect evening. Join us on March 4th 2006 at the Grosvenor for an evening of gastro delights.

The tenth Spirit of Christmas is almost here, Matthew Kelly will be hosting the evening of festive celebration along with some of his celebrity friends, Chester Primary Schools Choir and Cheshire Youth Brass Band, and they will make Chester come alive with Christmas cheer. With the upcoming festivities in mind I'd like to wish you all a very merry Christmas and a peaceful New Year.

Lyndsey 
lyndsey@nmccentre.com



A Fond Farewell

How on earth do I say goodbye to the NMC?

Its nearly twenty years since a small group of us recognized a need, painted castles in the air and then inexorably, yet almost by accident, were drawn into the business of turning those dreams into reality. I am so proud to have been in at the beginning - to have watched the Centre grow in numbers, in size and in success.

Smaltzy it may sound, but we are a family, and over the last fifteen years, I've seen so many people gain so much from, and put so much back into, the NMC. Families affected by muscular dystrophy, friends, staff and all the Centre's diverse supporters are all part of such a thriving positive community which makes a huge difference to the lives of so many.

And what won't I miss? Well - cold calls about utility bills, the wasps' nest in the roof, the responsibility, working weekends, mindless vandalism, nowhere to park my car, sore feet and having to tidy my desk for Open Days.

What will I miss? Christmas carols in the fundraising office in October, Ben's chocolate cake (any time of the year), the team, the responsibility, the excitement, the fun, and most of all the friendship, the extraordinary kindness and generosity of so many of you.

So although I'm moving on and saying a very fond farewell to the job and the Centre, it really is only an anvoir to all those friends I have made through the truly wonderful Neuromuscular Centre.

Sarah

What an exciting time to be joining the NMC!

As the Centre finishes celebrating its 15th year under the inspiring and determined leadership of Sarah there is a lot to look forward to and some exciting and challenging plans to bring to fruition. I have received a wonderfully warm welcome from everyone - thank you!

My background is perhaps surprising for such a role. When I started in September I knew virtually nothing about md. I have a background awareness and personal interest in disability issues - my own 11 year old daughter is profoundly disabled. I had spent 20 extremely rewarding years as a Senior Operational Manager with Royal Mail but am extremely driven by this fantastic opportunity to lead the NMC.

My first few weeks have been spent getting to know the entire team at NMC and meeting as many of the physiotherapy clients and graphic design trainees as possible. In a month I've not become an expert on md - and certainly not the science of it - but what I have gained is a great insight into the range of ways md affects individuals and families. I've learned about the practical needs for support, work, physio and training.

When you see NMC in action, it's hard not to be more than a little angry that there's no Government funding for our core activity. But there isn't!.... so it takes many generous donations to keep it going. For every £10 it takes to run NMC - £6 has to come from donations from a whole variety of sources. That is the mountain the fundraising team successfully conquer every year with help from so many wonderful supporters and helpers.

Only £2 in every £10 comes from the Primary Care Trusts (NHS) and yet the value of the physio team's work is acknowledged by clinicians and clients alike. Some PCT's are reluctant to pay NMC for the treatments given. We continue to work hard to get the worth of this treatment translated into payments from ALL PCT's, not just some.

Our amazing and talented graphic design and print team working in the NMC's own commercially competitive company NMC Design also make a substantial contribution to the costs of running NMC - another £2 out of every £10. This company has the capacity to grow and flourish even more. The plans to incorporate Training in the same part of the building will enhance capacity and enable a more integrated feel. Growth of NMC Design looks to be a key opportunity for the secure future of NMC as a whole.

My role here is all about leading the centre team and managing the day to day stuff. As well as that it's about securing the long term financial future of NMC and developing still further the ethos of "user-led" management at NMC. It's also about enabling more people to learn about NMC in the region and, through that, enabling more people to access its services and work opportunities.



I look forward to updating you as NMC makes progress on that journey. I really would personally welcome your ideas, input and comments at any stage so please don't hesitate to phone me or drop in to see me. Thank you for your continuing and vital support - small or large.

Matthew Lanham

Executive Director

Beadle's Back

Jeremy Beadle was in Northwich on July 1st creating fun and mayhem at the second Beadle Quiz Party. Held at the Grange School and kindly supported by Cheshire Building Society the quiz party had participants dancing on their chairs as well as trying to answer the brain teasers that Jeremy was posing. It was a closely fought competition but with a few extra points ahead were the Grange School Team who conquered to lift the Beadle Cup. The team claims that their secret weapon was the schools Head teacher Chris Jefferys who helped them romp to victory and they really can go to the top of the class now that they've been crowned Cheshire's brainiest brains!

A big thank you to Jeremy for giving up his time so generously, Cheshire Building Society for supporting the event and the Grange School for providing an excellent venue for the event. You helped us raise over £2,000.

Badger Set

I'm sure those of you who read this fine publication on a regular basis will know the unique fundraising group the Badger Set, who do all kinds of weird and wonderful things to raise funds for the NMC. Sue and her merry team make and sell jams and pickles at fêtes and fairs during the summer months, organize collections within their community and most recently have established a weekly car boot sale at the Peacock Pub in Nantwich. The Badger Set has been raising funds and awareness for the NMC since 1994 and I'm thrilled to announce that they have hit the £21,000 mark, which is absolutely tremendous. Well done to Sue and the team who work tirelessly to support our work for people with muscular dystrophy.

NMC DIARY DATES 2006

Saturday 4th March 2006 - Gorgeous Grub at the Grosvenor

Ready Steady Cook's Ross Burden is our celebrity chef who will work alongside Simon Radley, Executive Chef at the Grosvenor Hotel, Chester to create a stunning menu especially for the evening. Ross will be on hand to talk to the menu explaining his menu choices and life as a television chef. Tickets include a bucks fizz reception, a four course meal including cheese and port and half a bottle of wine per person.

Tickets are priced at £59.50.

Sunday 19th March 2006 - Adidas Liverpool Half Marathon

Fulfill those new years' resolutions to get fit and run the Liverpool half marathon to raise funds for the NMC. Simultaneous events will be taking place in London and Birmingham so be part of a truly national race.

Monday 20th March 2006 - Italian Evening

Labella's Italian restaurant in Kelsall is the venue for this evening of Italian fun. Try your hand at tossing pizza dough, blind wine tasting, get to grips with a squid (!) and discover the world of pasta. An Italian buffet meal will be served with wine for guests to enjoy and what better way to support the Centre - by sampling superb Italian food and wines!

Friday 31st March 2006 - Linedance Extravaganza

Grab your Stetsons and join us at Winsford Civic Hall to dance the night away to live music by renowned linedance band Magill. Tickets are priced at £6.50 and £4.00 for concessions.

Sunday 23rd April 2006 - London Marathon

The NMC has four runners in the 2006 London Marathon. If you are able to sponsor them or would like to take part and run for NMC in 2007 please get in touch.

17th May 2006 - Ladies Luncheon

Join us at the beautiful Bridge Hotel, Prestbury where our guest speaker will entertain you whilst you enjoying a two course lunch.

June 2006 - Ladies Lunch Event (Crewe)

July 2006 - NMC - Open Day

An ideal chance to see for yourself the training suite, adapted design studio and the physio department and to meet some of our beneficiaries. Even if you have been to the NMC before, come back and see what's been going on since your last visit, everyone is welcome. Please get in touch if you would like to attend our open day.

Sunday 2nd July 2006 - London 10k Road Race

Enjoy the sights of London's finest attractions by running past them in the 10k road race whilst raising vital funds for the NMC.

12th October 2006 - Ladies Lunch Event

We will return to the Bridge Hotel in the picturesque village of Prestbury with a different speaker and a tasty menu to help beat the winter blues.

September 2006 - A Night with Ted Robbins

Phoenix Night's Ted Robbins will be your host for one night only at Warrington's Parr Hall. Prepare yourself for the unique opportunity to see Ted with his stand up routine which is entertainment at its very best.

Sunday 1st October 2006 - Great North Run

Are you up to the challenge? Take part in the Great North Run to raise money for people with muscular dystrophy in the North West.

October 2006 - Liverpool 10k

A little closer to home this brilliant race takes you past the spectacular waterfront in Liverpool and gives you the chance to raise vital funds for the NMC.

6th October 2006 - Linedance Extravaganza

So good we are doing it twice! Same time and place join us and get toe tapping.

November 2006 - NMC Christmas Celebration

Wander through the festive stalls for Christmas gifts, cards and yummy festive treats. Mulled wine and mince pies will be available so hunger won't stop you from shopping till you drop!

Friday 1st December 2006 - Spirit of Christmas

Chester Cathedral will once again play host to Matthew Kelly and his famous friends as they toast the start of the festive season with our annual carol concert.

For further information and tickets please call the NMC on 01606 861733, email Lyndsey@nmcentre.com

The third James Bond Charity Casino Night at Tatton Park

Was everything you'd expect with glitz, glamour and laughter! Hosted by Phoenix Night's Ted Robbins the evening got off to a sparkling start with champagne and canapés and with an Egyptian themed menu created by Heathcotes Outside Caterers, guests were ensured of food to thrill. After dinner, guests had the chance to bid for a selection of amazing auction prizes including a Day with the Royal Navy, the chance to be wined and dined at the renowned Berkley Hotel in London and the once in a lifetime opportunity to go to a Stars in Their Eyes live final as guests of Ted. With Roulette, Black Jack and Craps guests tried their hand at winning a fortune on the gaming tables and for those who thrive from competition the Bond themed Donkey Derby caused friendly rivalry as everyone wanted to take the winners trophy! As well as bopping to a sixties disco guests could buy weekend breaks, rounds of golf and the specially designed Bond teddy bears. One lucky guest won flights to Marrakech in the British Airways flight raffle and will soon be jetting off in traditional Bondesque style!

The evening was a huge success and massive thanks are sent to everyone who supported the event, whether it was donating an auction prize, weekend break, round of golf or joined us on the night; you all helped to make the event the success it was and raised £11,500 towards the NMC.

Fabulous Fashion

Exclusive boutique, Jays of Chester held a lunchtime fashion event in aid of the NMC, showing some of the seasons must have pieces. Champagne and canapés were served which along with the exquisite clothes made for a perfect afternoon. A special thank you to Yvonne, her staff and Michele who really made the event come alive.

Huge thanks to...

Su and Di Paver for running the Great North Run in aid of the NMC, their mum Rosie is our Head of Physiotherapy and no doubt Rosie used her unique powers of persuasion to encourage Su and Di to run for us!



Swimming in Money

The Rotary Club of Northwich held a swimathon earlier this year and the NMC was fortunate enough to be one of the nominated charities to benefit from this watery fundraising challenge. We entered a team of water babies and were delighted when the NMC were presented with a cheque for £3,160. A huge thank you to everyone at the Rotary Club of Northwich.

Road Runners

Thank you to all the wonderful runners who ran in aid of the NMC in the London and Liverpool 10k races. We had 22 runners in the London 10k in July including a team from BT Warrington. The NMC had 25 runners in the Liverpool 10k in October including teams from Hill Dickinson Solicitors, Cheshire Constabulary and Cheshire Building Society. We hope to raise around £4,000 for the NMC, so a big thank you to all of our athletes.

Thank you's

- Cheshire County Council bike ride team, Vale Royal Strings Orchestra, Ann and Bob Carter, Glossop Golf Club, Anne Hooker, Hillcrest Grammar School, Rotary Club of Macclesfield Castle, Everyone who collected at Morrison's and Tesco's, Jonty Godfrey, Caldley Valley Neighbourhood Church and Barclays Premier. As ever this list is not an exhaustive one and thanks are sent to all those who support us in whatever form that support takes.