



Alzheimer's  
Society

Leading the  
fight against  
dementia

# Swings and Roundabouts

## The Milton Keynes Branch Magazine

### Easter 2009

Dear Carers,

Well hello again, isn't springtime a lovely time of the year.

In this issue we will tell you a bit about our visit to Ashby House and a bit of news from the branch. And by a special request two profiles on us, Patrick and Rebecca the brother and sister team that write your Swings and Roundabouts. We start with a profile I have written about Patrick and next edition will be a profile of me by Patrick. If you would like to share your life story, or that of the person you are caring for please send it to Lynne at the branch office. (Maximum of 600 words if possible).

"Ashby House" As you may already know the relationship our branch has with Ashby House is very good. They always attend the annual memory walk raising funds for us on that day and at other times. Lynne, Patrick and I went there a few weeks ago to receive a big cheque, money raised from the Memory Walk. We were made so welcome and we had a grand tour of the home aptly named, as it is so homely! We were very impressed. One of the units, you will find the halls all around is full of Reminiscence. There is a Hollywood lane, a Second World War lane, a Family lane and everywhere you go, one can pick up and touch or cuddle items that attract or prompt your memory. There are units of shelving and drawers to open and rummage around. It's a great way to engage their residents for periods of time. Karen Welsh showed us around and we also spoke to Alison Walsh who was instrumental in setting up the memory lanes. She also showed us the accessible Tea and Snack bar, which can be used at all, times. It is popular when family members visit, as they feel free to make a drink and join their loved one in the cosy sitting areas. The enthusiasm of the staff and the happy faces of the residents was very heart warming.

Profile

Re/ Patrick McDaid

Patrick joined the committee a few years ago and has been involved with some of the activities at the branch office and he is also joint producer of this newsletter.

He is very much the family man married for forty plus years to Pearl, they have three adult children and eight grandchildren. Patrick was born in Northern Ireland and was a favourite son. He had two brothers and four sisters. Back then his hobbies were cycling, music and learning the Irish language. Following College he entered the nursing profession in Derry City. He moved to London and obtained further qualification at Edgware Hospital then concluded his nurses training as a post-graduate nurse in Psychiatry.

He and his wife Pearl who is also a nurse, moved to Woburn Sands to take up two good nursing positions at Edgebury hospital. Alas it was closed down some years ago.

*Alzheimer's Society • Milton Keynes Branch*

*The Stables • Vicarage Rd • Stony Stratford • Milton Keynes • MK11 1GA*

*Tel: +44 (0)1908 261750 • Email: [miltonkeynes@alzheimers.org.uk](mailto:miltonkeynes@alzheimers.org.uk)*

*Website: [www.mkalzheimers.org.uk](http://www.mkalzheimers.org.uk)*

From there he worked as a successful sales representative in Medical Supplies. He returned to nursing before his retirement.

He now enjoys a happy retirement; still involved with music as a hobby (not the cycling though) some of you may remember him at the Branch Barn Dances playing his accordion in the band, and his wife Pearl played the Mandolin. Three generations of his family are musicians and often have musical sessions. One of his daughters has written a song dedicated to him on a special birthday, it is called "The Sun the Moon and the Stars" the words are very touching. I have attached a copy for you to read.

Rebecca.

**The sun, the moon, the stars**

**by Rebecca Parmar**

We have been loved so much by you

The sun , the moon, the stars

Goodnight little girl in the mirror

Precious moments that were ours

Say bye bye to being three

When you wake up you'll be four

Squeeze into the chair next to me

There's a space for just one more

Little children grow so fast

How soon the years go by

"Comb your hair before you go"

I'd often hear you cry

Yet say bye bye to twenty one,

You'll awake to twenty two

You can still squeeze in next to me

I've kept a space for you.

*Instrumental*

We have loved you too, so much

As into adults we have grown

With husbands, wives and our own children

We are rarely on our own

We say bye bye to our twenties

To our thirties and forties too

Still squeeze in tight, there'll always be  
A special place, in our hearts, for you

Still squeeze in tight, there'll forever be  
A special place, in our hearts, for you

---

WHAT ABOUT THE CARERS? By Patrick McDaid.

Everyone will be aware of the recent spate of publicity given to dementia, not only by the launch of the National Dementia Strategy for England, but also in the press and on TV. Of particular interest were the programmes by Sir Terry Pratchett, John Suchet and Kevin Whately. Each presentation was excellent in their different ways. Sir Terry traveled widely and concentrated on research projects into Alzheimer's, giving great insight into possible treatments and perhaps a cure or at least a means of limiting the symptoms.

Both Kevin Whately and John Suchet presented the issue as caring relatives for mother and wife respectively. Kevin's mother is now in a Nursing Home and John is looking after his wife Bonnie at home with help from an Admiral Nurse. Bonnie has Early Onset dementia, that which affects individuals under the age of sixty.

It was sad to hear Terry state that any cure in the near future would be too late for him, but this is a fact which must be faced by all current sufferers. On the plus side it was revealed that there are over two hundred accredited research programmes ongoing globally. Accredited being those carried out by recognized Medical Institutions, as opposed to those sponsored by drug companies in private laboratories. These, in their own way can contribute a lot towards possible treatments. Having said that, these companies are in it primarily to make money eventually and are not averse to massaging results to suit their own agenda! As your editor is well aware having spent nearly thirty years in this field.

John Suchet struck a chord on his broadcast, when he mentioned misleading reports in the press relating to aspects of dementia treatments. We have read about all sorts of possible "cures" One must bear in mind that the press too have their own agenda and tend to extrapolate and sensationalize reporting, from coffee to curry to red wine and various foodstuffs. We must be aware of the effect these stories have upon both patients and their carers. John Suchet pointed out that it grossly unfair to these vulnerable people to have their hopes raised unnecessarily. We would urge anyone in any doubt about media stories to contact our local branch. If we cannot help immediately, we will find someone who can and get back to you.

The purpose of the Alzheimers Society is to support carers and their loved ones. Please do not hesitate to lift the phone.

\*\*\*\*\*

SMILE: *FROGGIE WENT ACOURTING.....*

Once upon a time there was a young frog who was convinced that if he was ever kissed by a beautiful human maiden, he would be transformed into a handsome prince. He visited a Sooth-Sayer and sought her help. The Sooth-Sayer gazed into her Crystal Ball. "Why yes"! She exclaimed, "I do see such a maiden, she is staring at you intently, smiling and really interested" "I knew it!" Said the frog, "and where do I meet her, in the park or in the woods?" "Alas! Neither" Said the Sooth-Sayer, "You meet in her biology lab at her college, and she is holding you in a glass specimen Jar!"

Patrick.

-----

Please remember any taxpayers making a donation to the branch, please do so by Gift Aid. Please speak to Lynne for details. Thank you. *Reg Middleton*, Branch Treasurer.

-----

Branch News.

A lovely lunch of Bangers & Mash and excellent entertainment was enjoyed by 70 branch members on 9<sup>th</sup> April at Abbey Hill Golf Club.

The next social meeting will be a Summer Buffet at Abbey Hill Golf Club on Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> August 2009 at 2pm. Tickets are £7.50 and available from the branch office.

A Charity Evening will be held at Abbey Hill Golf Club on Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> August. Tickets cost £5.00 and are available from the branch office.

Thanks to Lin Goddard for arranging all these events.

The Milton Keynes Annual Open Meeting will be held at Abbey Hill Golf Club on 9<sup>th</sup> July 2009 at 12.30. Everyone is welcome.

The Art & Craft group has proved so popular it will now meet twice a week, Tuesday and Fridays 10am to 12.30, at the branch office.

If you have any wool, paints, pencils, materials or anything we can use at the group we would be delighted to receive it. Thank you. *Kit & Frank*.

Monthly Coffee & Chat will now be held at the branch from the next meeting, 25<sup>th</sup> June 2009.

If you would like details of any event, group or would like support please do not hesitate to contact Lynne or Dee on

01908 261750 Branch Office.  
07934441235 Lynne Stoodley (Branch Manager)  
07759358145 Dee Cope (Branch Support Worker)  
[miltonkeynes@alzheimers.org.uk](mailto:miltonkeynes@alzheimers.org.uk)  
[lynne.stoodley@alzheimers.org.uk](mailto:lynne.stoodley@alzheimers.org.uk)

[dee.cope@alzheimers.org.uk](mailto:dee.cope@alzheimers.org.uk)

### **Branch Web Site**

We are launching an update to the branch Web Site.

[www.mkalzheimers.org.uk](http://www.mkalzheimers.org.uk)

Please take the time to view it. We would appreciate your comments and/or suggestions.

*Frank & Michael Wagstaff.*