



Multiple Sclerosis Society

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Dear Friends

Members of Abingdon Flower Club have decided to give the proceeds of their annual show to our branch. We hope as many of our members as possible will go along and support the event.

The show will be held over three days at St Nicolas Church in the centre of Abingdon - on Friday, 26th and Saturday, 27th September from 10am to 5pm and on Sunday, 28th September from 1 to 5pm. Entrance is free, but the club will ask for donations.

The club is 55 years old this year and meets at the Northcourt Centre in Abingdon, where we hold our monthly Open Days. Please make an effort to support the club's generous gesture.

Another group supporting our branch is the congregation at St Mary's Church, Iffley. Patricia Michael suggested our branch should become the church's 'mission of the month' and her

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fellow churchgoers agreed. We will receive at least £357 in each of the next three years.

The money from the flower club and St Mary's will be a welcome boost to our funds. Our thanks to them for thinking of us.

100 CLUB

Winners of the September 100 Club draw were Carolyn Cope (£20), James Spence (£12) and Jo Hawtin (£7).

Some members have been slow to renew their subscriptions. If you are one of them, please do so immediately.

There are still vacancies for others to take part, so if you wish to try your luck, please contact the club organiser, Brenda Franklin, on **01993 842076** or at one of our meetings.

Four draws a year are held, and not only do you stand a chance of winning some extra money but you will be helping branch funds as well. It costs just £12 a year to become a club member, with pro rata rates for those joining during the year. Give it a go!

OPEN DAYS

Hands-on craft workshops at our Open Days are proving very popular – and the latest, in August, was no exception.

Pauline Allen brought along lots of attractive bits and pieces for members to create their own cards and as you can see from the pictures, the room was a hive of activity for a hour or so. Our thanks to her for giving us such an excellent session.

The visitors at our September Open Day were Emilie Clack and her friends from Amate Animalia, an animal rescue group in the Cotswolds.

We were introduced to Darwin the panther chameleon, Oakie the skunk, Nagini the boa constrictor, Kiyo the coati (South African raccoon), Sally the tarantula and Jabba and Orlando the tree frogs.

Under Emilie's watchful eye, members stroked and handled the mammals and reptiles – and some were brave enough to have them crawling on their arms and around their necks!

The guest at our October Open Day will be Malcolm Nelson, who will talk about his life as a customs officer and the attempts people make to smuggle goods into the country.

In November, Brenda Franklin will lead another of her popular

craft workshops while in December, we will welcome back Ian and Diane Woods, who will entertain us with music in the run-up to Christmas.

Any ideas for future Open Day speakers or entertainers are always welcome. Please contact our chairman, John Chipperfield, on **01865 374877** or email mjpcipperfield@yahoo.co.uk

IN MEMORY

Margaret Crumly, who died earlier this year, was a member of the 50-Plus Club at New Marston, Oxford, as well as being a member of our branch and a regular at our Open Days.

So when club members were deciding what their charity of the year should be, they didn't hesitate to nominate MS.

At one of their August meetings, they had a talk from David Harsant, from the MS Therapy Centre at Milton Park, near Didcot, and handed him a cheque for £330 to support the work of the centre. The money had been raised through donations and table-top sales.

TESCO COLLECTIONS

The branch has applied for another batch of collections at Tesco stores next year, but we've requested that they are not all on the same day, as happened this year!



Pauline Allen led a workshop at our August Open Day, helping members to create birthday cards and cards for other special occasions. As you can see, it was a popular session, with a full house!



QUIZ EVENING

The Northcourt Centre in Abingdon, where we hold our monthly Open Days, is organising a quiz and supper evening on Friday, 24th October, and inviting members of groups which hire the building to take part.

Our committee is likely to form at least one team of six. If any members would like to join us and put their brains to the test, please contact our secretary, Jo Hawtin, on **01865 373907** or email jo.hawtin@ntlworld.com Even if you don't want to take part in the quiz, you are still welcome to attend.

Tickets cost £8 per person and supper will include fish, sausage, fishcake or burger. Celiac and vegetarian food will also be available.

Money raised during the evening will go towards maintaining the centre, focusing particularly on security and safety around the main entrance.

DRUGS BLOCKED

The MS Society is challenging a decision to block access to two treatments that have improved significantly the quality of life for people with MS.

Fampyra has helped people to walk more easily while Sativex has helped ease painful muscle spasms. But in its draft clinical

guidelines for MS, NICE (the National Institute for Care and Health Excellence) has decided not to recommend the two treatments.

The guidelines also fail to recommend that people with MS be reviewed by MS specialists, such as an MS nurse or neurologist.

The MS Society has urged NICE to reconsider its decisions on the drugs and stressed the value of MS specialists in the treatment, care and support of people with MS.

NICE is reviewing responses to the draft document and expects to publish its final guidelines in October.

MS WINDFALL

The MS Society's two-year partnership with Land Securities, owners of the Westgate Centre in Oxford, proved hugely profitable.

Thirty-one branches, including our own, took part in a wide range of fundraising activities at 20 of the company's shopping complexes and raised a total of £216,312 for MS. Some branches went to town, with events including swimming with sharks, fire walks and abseils.

As we reported in the May/June newsletter, our share of the proceeds from collections and sales at the Westgate was £1,816.49.



BRAVE SOULS

Making friends at our September Open Day – left, Angela Cusden with Nagini, the boa constrictor, and below, Karen Bellinger handling Oakie the skunk. Pictured with Karen is Emillie Clack, left, of Amate Animalia, who brought along a selection of rescued species to show members.



BRIEFLY

The MS Helpline is there for everyone affected by MS. Whether you have an important question or simply want to chat, you can seek help on **0808 800 8000**.

We still have plenty of stocks of our newly-printed leaflets giving details of branch activities. We would like to see them widely distributed at hospitals, health centres and doctors' surgeries. If you can help, pick up some at our Open Days or call our chairman, John Chipperfield, on **01865 374877** or email mjpchipperfield@yahoo.co.uk

A barbecue organised by the Friends of the Oxford Centre for Enablement raised £549.73. The event was held at the OCE on the Nuffield Orthopaedic Centre site at Headington and the money will be used to provide equipment and other amenities for patients not available from NHS funds.

Congratulations to branch members Val and Roy Samworth, of Rose Hill, Oxford, who have celebrated their golden wedding anniversary. They were married at St Mary's Church, Iffley, in 1964 and celebrated by taking their wedding vows again.

Scientists in Washington have been studying why three times as many women as men develop

MS. Their work suggests a gene known as S1PR2 is more active in women, particularly in the regions of the brain which are affected by MS.

Members will be asked to endorse the MS Society's strategy for 2015-19 at its annual meeting on Saturday, 20th September. The ultimate goal is to find a cure for MS. Meanwhile, the aim is to enable people with MS to live life to the full, with the promise of treatment, support and high quality information. The meeting takes place at the MS National Centre, 372 Edgware Road, London NW2 6ND.

Let us know if you hear of anyone ill or in hospital. Call **0779 237 7178** for all welfare matters. Send correspondence to John Chipperfield at 3 Lambs Close, Kidlington, Oxon OX5 2YD. For the MS nurses, call **01865 234461** or email ms.advice@orh.nhs.uk Call **01865 231869** for information about ongoing and new MS trials. To contribute to the newsletter, call John Chipperfield on **01865 374877**, write to 3 Lambs Close, Kidlington, Oxon OX5 2YD or send an email to mjpchipperfield@yahoo.co.uk

All views expressed in this newsletter are individual and not necessarily the view or policy of the charity or its supporters.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Friday September 26/Saturday September 27/Sunday September 28: Abingdon Flower Show in aid of our branch, St Nicolas Church, Abingdon. Opening times – Fri/Sat 10am-5pm, Sun 1-5pm. Entrance free, but donation requested.

Friday October 3: Open Day, Northcourt Centre, Abingdon. Speaker: Malcolm Nelson on My Life as a Customs Officer. 10am-4pm.

Friday October 24: Quiz evening at Northcourt Centre, Abingdon

Friday November 7: Open Day, Northcourt Centre, Abingdon. Brenda Franklin leads a craft workshop. 10am-4pm.

Friday December 5: Open Day, Northcourt Centre, Abingdon. Christmas music from Diane and Ian Woods. 10am-4pm.

No Open Day in January

Call Alan Cusden on 01865 723420 or Geoff Cowan on 07930 542692 if you wish to help with fundraising or collections.

Call Alan Cusden on 01865 723420 if you wish to go on a boat trip

Don't forget to look at our website at www.mssociety.org.uk/oxford

Oxford and District Branch Officers – 2014-5

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