

# Take Heart

(Derby)

A social support group for heart patients, their families and carers.

[www.takeheartderby.co.uk](http://www.takeheartderby.co.uk)



## Newsletter September, 2013.

There are more members responding to this Newsletter than previously, which is terrific. Please continue to take part.

Please accept my apology for the late arrival of the August

Newsletter to those who receive it through the post. Those on email received it on time.



Derby  
Heart City

Love our city ♥ Love your heart

**September speaker.** This month's meeting took on the form of an EGM, initially. Our treasurer, Kevin Noon, has been forced to stand down due to health reasons. A long search has unearthed a new candidate in Richard Flatman, who was proposed by Michael Flude, seconded by Marilyn Thompson and voted for unanimously by the meeting. He will take up his post during September. Then it was back to normal, with Michael outlining the events for the remainder of the month, whilst we waited anxiously for our speaker to arrive. Dr Kamal Chitkara timed his entrance perfectly, with no wasted time and set up his presentation.

Then it was full speed ahead as he reminded us of what had happened during the past two years at the RDH. As is usual when we have a talk of a medical nature we had a large number of our members (39) attending. Dr Chitkara is a Consultant Cardiologist at the Royal Derby Hospital and he spoke on cardiovascular disease, which is



the number one killer in England, causing the death of one in five men and a one in seven women. We were told about the causes, symptoms and treatment of heart attacks and how it is essential that treatment be begun within 150 minutes of the onset of the attack. We were told that 30 per cent of the adult population suffer from Atrial Fibrillation, which if not treated is the major cause of strokes. Doctor Chitkara stressed how important it was that we regularly check our pulse to ensure that our hearts are not pulsating irregularly. If the Heart fibrillates and does not pump efficiently blood clots may form and travel down to the leg where they will block an artery, or up to the brain where they will cause a stroke.

Atrial Fibrillation is also associated with high blood pressure for which there are no symptoms - hence the need for regular blood pressure checks. High blood pressure (hypertension) and Atrial fibrillation cause approximately 35 per cent of people over 80 years of age to suffer a stroke. We were told that the main single cause of heart disease is tobacco, followed by a poor diet, inactivity and an excessive intake of alcohol.

Prevention is better than cure and we were told that by taking regular exercise 40 per cent of heart diseases could be prevented. We were advised to take half an hour of regular exercise each day, eat sensibly - cutting down on salt, sugar, and fat, eating plenty of fruit and vegetables and watching our weight. Dr Chitkara had a rapt audience. There was time afterwards for members to ask questions, which he answered confidently and in full, to the satisfaction of those assembled. We now have a much better understanding of heart disease, its causes and its treatment and it with a hope that one day Dr Chitkara would come and talk to us again. Thirty nine members went away having experienced an

informative and enjoyable afternoon (not before a cuppa and a chat). See you next month for ...

**Next month's meeting.** Our speaker for October is well known to us all. He has already spoken to the group about "The Origin of Sayings" and also gave a talk on "The Girls of the Big House", which ended up with audience participation causing great amusement. On Monday October 14th at our monthly meeting, Ian Hingley's topic will be "Bring Your Memories Along" - so get ready to do a bit of reminiscing? Ian comes from Burton on Trent, where he arranges tours of the Brewery. Perhaps we should make that the next Take Heart walk and talk!

**Coffee in a Cube!** Our great coffee morning gathering continued apace this month with thirty-six members with lots of apologies being received due to holiday trips elsewhere. Trisha and her team put finishing touches to the Viceroy Banquet & Auction plans, whilst Michael enjoyed his coffee. It was 12.30 before we all departed, proving once again that we are very good at talking. See you all again on 29 October.



**Member news.** Since the last Newsletter was published, we have learnt that several members have been ill. Betty Hassell has still not recovered from her fall, Paul Riley is still waiting action upon his ailments and wife Brenda is also unwell. Molly Illsley has returned home after a short stay in RDH. It is with much sadness that I report the passing of Rod Starbuck following a stroke whilst on holiday in Madeira following a severe stroke. We wish his family well at this very difficult time. We also welcomed back into our fold Julia Sherratt, who has struggled with ill health for a year but is gradually on the mend. On a more positive note Vera Allsop has phoned to say she and Gordon Gaskin are well, Geoff Hinks has overcome his worst spell of illness, although it has taken the best part of a year to do so. We advise that one of our members has relocated to be near her family in Hampshire. We wish Vera Clarke every happiness in her new home. She will still receive the Newsletter each month, although I'm not sure how quickly the postal service will react to the most important document they will ever transfer. If you are unwell and not mentioned here, we apologise but we were not advised of your difficulty.

**New members.** This month we welcome Margaret Cresswell, Ina Thompson, Gerard & Avril Nolan, Pamela Ashton and Anne & Bryan Cogley to our group and wish them well and hope they enjoy as many of our events as possible.

**Birthdays.** Birthday wishes in September go to Louise Sherratt, Nicola Alcock, Desiree Day, David Hancock, Barbara Pearson, David Newton, Ted Evans, Laura Blatherwick, Brian Davis, Vera Allsopp, Ben Jennings, Don Pate, Ian Knowles, Betty Hassell and Janet Stewart. Happy birthday to you all. We continue to receive thanks from those who have received birthday cards made by April Howe. Wedding anniversary's during September include Alex & Janet Stewart, Roy & Barbara Pearson, John & Margaret Smith, Ian & Donna Knowles and Neal & Marilyn Thompson. A happy anniversary to you all. If I have missed you, then please contact me with you details. Sally Cholerton sent this message "*Just a quick note to ask whether you could please pass on my thanks to the lady who makes the lovely "Take Heart" birthday cards. I thought the card I received on my birthday (Aug 25) was absolutely beautiful and it was much appreciated.*" Many others have mention the same sentiment about their birthday cards. Our thanks must go to April Howe for doing such a marvellous job.

**Atrial Fibrillation - news.** A seminar is to be held to discuss atrial fibrillation on 20 October at the ICC in Birmingham. Full details can be found at <http://www.atrialfibrillation.org.uk/events-news/patient-days.html>. It costs £30 to book now but £50 on the day and includes refreshments for the full day session. Thanks to Elaine McCulloch for the heads up.

**Every day** my grandfather goes out and measures his allotment. He reckons it is shrinking by a few inches each day. I think he is losing the plot!

**A new blood test could improve heart attack diagnosis in women.** BHF research, funded in part by all of us, has developed a highly sensitive blood test to detect troponin which leaks from the heart following a heart attack. The current blood test does this but is not sensitive enough to detect minute amounts of troponin. The new test costs around the same as the current test and so it is likely that NICE will approve it. The test could then reveal even mild heart attacks and the treatment, either angioplasty or drugs or both can be administered much sooner than before, resulting in a better life expectancy than now. More than 30,500 women die each year, mostly from heart attacks. Heart disease in women is currently underdiagnosed and undertreated. This study by the University of Edinburgh, might indicate a reason for that – after a heart attack, women appear to have lower troponin levels than men. Until now, it has been assumed that levels of this marker of heart damage are the same in men and women. Professor Peter Weissberg, BHF Medical Director, said: *“It is well recognised that having a mild heart attack puts you at greater risk of having a more serious one in the future if it’s not identified and treated. We also know that women with heart disease are less easily identified than men. This research has shown that the normal range for a blood test – that detects small amounts of heart damage – is different in men and women. When results are adjusted for this difference, many more women are identified with underlying heart disease than with the conventional test. If confirmed in larger studies, these results suggest that the test could save more women’s lives by identifying those at risk of a major heart attack.”* So thanks to all of you, more lives could be saved. Thank you. Check out the BHF website for more information at [www.bhf.org.uk](http://www.bhf.org.uk).

**Swimming.** Swimming works your whole body, improving cardiovascular conditioning, muscle strength, endurance, posture, and flexibility all at the same time. Your cardiovascular system in particular benefits because swimming improves your body’s use of oxygen without overworking your heart. It is healthy, great exercise, could prolong your life, and **reduce aches and pains**. Those who turn up, say how good the exercise is and how they feel better for having made the effort. Yvonne Gilbert says, *“When I first started at the Leisure centre, I could only do two lengths. Over the weeks I have gradually increased my stamina and did fourteen lengths last time!”* A terrific result Yvonne, well done. See you all next week?

**Flu jab time.** It is that time of year again when GP surgeries are to offer the flu jab. Heart patients are automatically included, as are pregnant women, those over 65 years and those from 6 months to 64 years of age if they have underlying conditions. It probably won’t prevent you getting flu but could have an added bonus of reducing your chances of a heart attack. Research in Australia, reported in British national newspapers, suggests that when flu strikes it may encourage the blood to thicken or prompt an inflammatory response in arteries that are already narrowed. The University of New South Wales in Sydney say, *“Even a small effect of influenza vaccination in preventing (heart attacks) may have significant population health gains,”* Thembi Nikala, senior cardiac nurse at the British Heart Foundation said *“The flu can lead to serious illness, so getting your flu jab is*

*vital if you have or are at risk of heart disease. It is why many heart patients who are deemed at high risk are already offered the vaccine as a matter of routine.”* This study is a timely reminder that susceptible patients should have their flu jab and that includes carers as well, you need to be healthy to look after you're nearest and dearest. Whilst the research showed that flu did not increase the risk of a heart attack, having the jab appeared to be protective. It cut the chance of having a heart attack by 45%. So what are you waiting for – telephone your surgery to make that appointment.

**A little girl** asked her mother, 'Can I go outside and play with the boys?' Her mother replied, 'No, you can't play with the boys, they're too rough.' The little girl thought about it for a few moments and asked, 'If I can find a smooth one, can I play with him?'

**August luncheon.** The change of venue to the Crewe & Harpur at Swarkestone Bridge, proved a huge success for those who attended. There were sixteen members in attendance and at least six who had to cancel at the last moment. Two meals for the price of one (main course only) is always a great attraction but the quality of the food was very good. Jean Sykes was most impressed *“it was lovely and such an attractive location too. Perhaps we should put this down as a place to visit next year”* was her suggestion. Glad to hear you all enjoyed it. Our next lunch is The Great Northern, Station Road, Mickleover, Derby DE3 9TB.

**A man is** getting into the shower just as his wife gets out. The doorbell rings, so she wraps a towel around her and runs downstairs. When she opens the door, their neighbour Bob is standing there. Before she says a word, Bob says “I will give you £800 to drop that towel!” After thinking for a moment, she drops the towel and stands naked in front of Bob. He hands her the £800 and leaves. She wraps the towel around her and goes back upstairs. When she gets to the bathroom, her husband asks her who was at the door. “It was Bob from next door,” she responds. “Great” says the husband, “Did he mention the £800 he owes me?”

**Do you have an email address?** Please notify Michael if you have an email address but currently receive your Newsletter by snail mail. You will receive it promptly and in full colour and help save on printing and postage costs. There was a delay this month in the “postal” edition, which would not occur if on email. Sign up your family as members and get them to print off your copy in full colour. Geoff Sykes has belatedly joined the internet happy family at the tender age of xx years. So, if he can do it so can many others – give it a try but do not become a slave to it like me.

**Jam Jar Challenge.** How are you getting on with your jam jar? Is it filling up? It could make a difference when we empty them in November. Margaret Storry wrote *“our jam jar is getting quite full - I haven't counted it just recently but we can hope.”* and Sue Robinson added *“The jar continues to receive coins. It's an effective way for us to contribute”*. Geoff Hinks telephoned to say he has a huge jar of coins which he was happy for us to collect. Thanks Geoff – see you soon. Who else is saving with us?

**An exercise regime we could all follow.** AS ALWAYS CONTACT YOUR PHYSICIAN BEFORE A NEW EXERCISE REGIME. Begin by standing on a comfortable surface, where you have plenty of room on each side. With a 5-lb potato bag in each hand, extend your arms straight out from your sides. Hold them there as long as you can. Try to reach a full minute, and then relax. From one week to the next you'll find that you can hold this position for just a bit longer. After a few weeks, move up to 10-lb potato bags. Then try 50-lb potato bags, and then eventually, try to get to where you can lift a 100-lb potato bag

in each hand and hold your arms straight for more than a full minute. After you feel confident at that level, put a potato in each bag. Thank to Per Staehr for this contribution.

**Talking Walking.** On the road to a longer life. It is healthier to walk, so see you all soon. Bring your family and friends to enjoy a great social occasion and join in fun which is good for all of us and get great exercise in beautiful Derbyshire countryside.

**Hare (it is NOT a fast walk but a LONGER walk) & Tortoise combination walks.**

Ted Evans writes: Fourteen Take Heart Hikers met in the Peak District of Hartington for the September walk and the "hare" walkers included one couple who had metamorphosed

from "tortoise" to "hare". The hare walkers experienced the beautiful countryside of the Derbyshire/ Staffordshire border north of Hartington, which was on the verge of its autumn change. The signs of autumn were there: blackberries; mud under foot; sheep being brought down from the hills with the help of a brown and white sheepdog, we assumed, for their annual



meeting with the tup before being returned to pasture over the winter ready for the spring lambing. The "hare walkers" enjoyed a break at the site of Pilsbury Castle before moving on, crossing the river Dove, not much more than a stream, a steady climb across fields to a very demanding climb up a slippery sliding muddy cliff of about 100ft., the new "hare" walkers needing a lot of help from fitter and more expert "hares" onto the road at Edgetop, about the halfway point of the hike. Further uphill walking on the road back towards Hartington took its toll on the new "hares" about 1.5 to 2.0 miles from home due to some fatigue and rheumatic pains in spite of it being downhill from there to Hartington. The

planned wait for assistance was enjoyed in the sunshine picking and eating the abundance of blackberries and awaiting the magnificent car journey back to Hartington. The sights of buzzards and kestrels and this beautiful part of the Peak District was a memorable experience for the new 'hares' but they have recovered following sustenance at the Post Office Cafe and a good night's sleep but feel a bit sorry that they didn't complete their first "hare" walk with Take Heart. The tortoise walkers, both of them, were

somewhat surprised to see a bull stand up as they approached a herd of cows and made a slight detour to remain safe. The café was also the same recuperation stop as well. The famous cheese shop was worth its visit for some really tasty treats.



**Tortoise walking.** We visit Carsington Water each year for a tortoise walk. This time there were 8 members who departed from the Sheepwash car park at 10.00. The weather was overcast but mild, great conditions for a walking talk. A dalliance at a bird hide revealed that Cormorants were in residence on the Osprey platforms (no Osprey visits this year).



Further along the trail we were met by Mr & Mrs Chris, which surprised us as Mr Chris had

received two stents only three days earlier. He seemed in good spirits now he was out and about again. There are two regular walkers in the photograph, who are rarely seen in any photo's! Can you name them? Time for refreshments, always an important part of our walks and you can see the enjoyment some were getting. Then off back to our cars. What a lovely way to pass some time away in the company of friends we have just met. Incidentally, the water level at Carsington is around 90%, despite it looking considerably lower.



**If you need help getting to the walks**, please telephone David Rowe on 01332 767368 or 07890 645645.

**The British Heart Foundation (BHF)** volunteer fundraising department is delighted to announce a fantastic event taking place on Sunday 6 October 2013 at Calke Abbey, kindly sponsored by Western Power Distribution. To raise much-needed funds for our vital research, we are asking individuals and groups of friends, families and colleagues, to take part in one of two circular routes of 2 or 9 miles around the grounds of Calke Abbey; a stunning National Trust property located in Ticknall, Derbyshire. Entry is just £10 for adults, £5 for children (under 16's) and under-fives go free, with everyone encouraged to raise sponsorship to help us Fight for Every Heartbeat. All participants will receive a medal as they cross the finish line. As a charity, we rely on donations and fundraising events to continue with our life-saving work. We receive no government funding which is why events like this and the support we receive, is so very important. Where ever possible, money raised in the region is spent back in the area to help save lives locally. We currently fund much of the research undertaken by Professor Samani and Professor Murphy at Glenfield Hospital, Leicester. Many research grants awarded by the BHF are funded by events like this.

**A little boy** was doing his maths homework. He said to himself, 'Two plus five, that son of a bitch is seven. Three plus six, that son of a bitch is nine....'  
His mother heard what he was saying and gasped, 'What are you doing?'  
The little boy answered, 'I'm doing my maths homework, Mum.'  
'And this is how your teacher taught you to do it?' the mother asked  
'Yes,' he answered.  
Infuriated, the mother asked the teacher the next day, 'What are you teaching my son in maths?'  
The teacher replied, 'Right now, we are learning addition.'  
The mother asked, 'And are you teaching them to say two plus two, that son of a bitch is four?'  
After the teacher stopped laughing, she answered, 'What I taught them was, two plus two, THE SUM OF WHICH, is four.'

**Carers Forum.** Following success of the Cardiac Rehabilitation Patient Carer forum last October, the cardiac rehabilitation team are to hold another event again this year on 15 October 2013. There will be display tables in the reception area, with resuscitation demonstrations and a seated question and answer session in the gym. Cardiac Rehabilitation is to be found on Level 0 of the Royal Derby Hospital and will start at 1.00 PM. We hope you can attend.



**Comment corner.** We continue to send the Newsletter via email to those who are able to receive it. We are delighted to receive the following feedback from August's edition: *rcd your newsletter thanks very interesting, but I don't know where you get your jokes from, it can't be Christmas Crackers at this time of the Year!!!!!!!!!!!!!!./ looking forward to enjoying it, always a good read and informative/very surprised just how much you have managed to put into it, brilliant/Always a pleasure to read/As good as ever/Just read the newsletter and our jam jar is getting quite full - I haven't counted it just recently but we can hope. I like the jokes and I take them to read out at the Littleover Ladies Circle I am chairman of/ I enjoyed reading it/ Another informative and amusing newsletter-well done/Another excellent newsletter received, thank you/A good read as usual/* But do you agree? We would love to hear from you, especially those who are unable to attend our events! Thanks to all those who respond, it makes a difference.

**Gardening.** A report from Pat Fitton. There is an Autumnal nip in the air and we are entering the "Season of Mists and Mellow, Fruitfulness" as Keats wrote in his poem "To Autumn." The gardens are beginning to look a little tired now with summer bedding fading and some perennials dying back. So - it's tidying up time. Remove anything that has "had its day," fork a general fertiliser into the space and plan your spring planting. The garden centres and shops are selling a huge variety of spring flowering bulbs and now is a good time to buy. Stocks are plentiful so it is much easier to find exactly the species you want rather than later when they have all been picked over. The lawns, having been subjected to hot temperatures and drought during the summer are ready for some TLC now. Use a moss killer and then later in the month scarify the lawn. If you do not have an electric scarifier, use a spring tine or a rake to remove excess thatch and dead moss. Give a light mow with the mower blades set to high and then, for a thick sward and a lush lawn next year, apply an autumn feed. Conifer hedges need to be clipped in September or the immature new shoots will be damaged by frost. Tomatoes it will continue to ripen, but stop the plants now and it reduce watering, new fruit will be small and will not ripen. Damp, but still mild weather brings out an abundance of snails, watch out for them among the late showy flowers such as dahlias and cannas. Autumn can be a busy time in the garden when starting to put it to bed for the winter, but it can give you time to reflect upon the joys and the successes of the past season and to reflect upon the odd failure, but it also gives you time to anticipate the joys of the coming seasons. Happy thoughts!



**Change of venue for lunches.** We are changing the venue of our lunch in November. We will be attending The Lawns, High Street, Chellaston. Change your diary NOW!!

**August poser.** In which month do Russians celebrate the October Revolution? No correct answers yet, so we roll it over into this month.

**I've learned.....** That the less time I have to work with, the more things I get done!

**A blond password!** Business's everywhere often carry out audits of company computer passwords used by their staff. For those who do not use computers, this is a way of "protecting" information from those not meant to see it. The password used by one particular blond female was "MickeyMinniePlutoHueyLouieDeweyDonaldGoofyWashington". She was invited to attend an interview with the manager and was asked why she had such a long password. She replied that she was instructed to use 'at least eight characters and one capital.'

## Forthcoming programme.

### September.

- Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> Grand banquet & auction at Viceroy, Duffield. £20 per person for a fabulous meal followed by an auction of terrific items. Tickets via Michael & Trisha. 12 noon to eat at 12.30 PM.
- Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> Coffee morning at The Cube café/bar from 10.30 AM.
- Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> Swimming at the Queens Leisure Centre at 3.15 PM.

### October.

- Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> Swimming at the Queens Leisure Centre.
- Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> The British Heart Foundation walk at Calke Abbey, for individuals and groups to take part in one of two circular routes of 2 or 9 miles. Entry is just £10 for adults, £5 for children (under 16's) and under-fives go free. Details from [bhf.org.uk/calke](http://bhf.org.uk/calke) or Michael.
- Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> Swimming at the Queens Leisure Centre.
- Friday 11<sup>th</sup> The Travel Club Trust holiday to Folkestone. A 3 night holiday, with trips to local beauty spots. Contact Bob Betchley for details on 01332751198.
- Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> Walking back to health – 🦏 & 🐢 Youlgrave walk of 7.5 miles. Meet at the Youlgrave car park to the north end of the village.
- Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> Celebration swim at the Arc Leisure Centre, Mansfield from 5.00 PM. Details from John Dean at [dean508@btinternet.com](mailto:dean508@btinternet.com) or 01298687320.
- Monday 14<sup>h</sup> Ian Hingley will "Bring your memories along" to this month's meeting.
- Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> Carers Forum at Cardiac Rehabilitation, Royal Derby Hospital, Level 0 commencing at 1.00 PM. Display stands, resuscitation exhibition and a question session hosted by medical staff and others.
- Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> Swimming at the Queens Leisure Centre.
- Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> Lunch at Cherry Tree Farm, Etwall Road, Willington, Derby DE65 6DX.
- Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> Swimming at the Queens Leisure Centre.
- Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> Walking back to health - 🐢 Darley Abbey walk of 2.25 miles. Meet at Old Chester Road car park.
- Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> Coffee morning at The Cube café/bar.
- Wednesday 30<sup>th</sup> Swimming at the Queens Leisure Centre.

### Exercise classes.

Royal Derby Hospital - Contact Christine Chambers on 01332 785597 for phase 4 rehab only. "Exercise for the Heart". Contact Jane on 07930 975681. Classes at Draycott and Ilkeston. "Mobile Sports Therapy" contact Matt on 01332 832224 or 07714718910. Tai Chi held in a studio on London Road, contact Carol on 07920 080443. BHF Heart Health Line 0300 330 3311, Mon-Fri 9am-5pm, to seek information on heart health. Cardiac Rehab Programme at Belper Leisure Centre, Amanda Gowling, 01773 825285

### Contacts.

If members have a problem and would like to talk to someone in private, please telephone one of our "listening ears" Jean Percival 01332 512112, Geoff & Jean Sykes 01332 549229. Any queries, comments or questions about Take Heart (Derby) should be directed to our Chairman Michael Flude on 01332 380219, by post to Willowbrook, Markeaton Lane, Derby DE22 4NH or email [michael.flude@takeheartderby.co.uk](mailto:michael.flude@takeheartderby.co.uk). Items for the newsletter should be sent to Michael, information about publications to Marilyn on 01332 558756.