



May 2021

REG CHARITY NO: 1056887  
PO Box 178, Abergavenny, NP7 1DW

# TICKER NEWS

Official newsletter of the North Gwent Cardiac Rehabilitation & Aftercare Charity

## Dear Member

Long-Term Cardiac Rehabilitation is important - it keeps people out of hospital and improves lives. Our charity is committed to provide this service for the people of North Gwent and has done so for the last 30 years. As with many charities during the pandemic, we have suffered financially. To ensure our service has a future we are making the following changes;

- Our Fitness Instructor wage contribution to the Health Board will stop in June as will their employment with the Health Boards Cardiac Rehabilitation service. We are sure our money will be better spent if the Charity takes responsibility for the running of long term cardiac rehab. This has been a difficult decision and in no way reflects either the work of the Health Boards Cardiac Rehab' Team or the Fitness Instructors. The support they have given to the charity over many years is exemplary. To develop the service and maintain strong links with the Cardiac Rehabilitation team we will be developing the role of the Fitness Instructor and have encouraged our current Instructors to apply to work with us in this new venture.
- Based on previous class numbers and the response to our poll (members were asked to which class will they be returning) we are closing two classes - the Mardy Hall and Abertillery Leisure Centre. Our Chair has written to people who may be affected by this decision. We will, however, be opening evening classes in Nantyglo and Llanfoist
- We have done our best to keep the day and time of most of the classes the same as before.
- **NEW!** once we are back on our feet, we will introduce Mini Heart Health education sessions and provide one to one Fitness and Well-Being Assessment opportunities.
- For those people who are unable to attend classes there are also plans to introduce a digital service. This will allow members access to resources and live streaming events through the charity web page.

The above changes will ensure the future of Cardiac Rehabilitation and Aftercare in North Gwent. To see our briefing document 'A case for change: Future developments in the North Gwent Cardiac Rehabilitation and Aftercare Charity' please visit our web site [www.cardiac-rehab.org.uk](http://www.cardiac-rehab.org.uk)

## Also in this issue:

- ✓ Making good habits stick - *Tony Lowery*
- ✓ Health Ticker cooking tips + recipe -*Mary Wakeling*
- ✓ Keep on Walking - *Alasdair Whittle*
- ✓ Going for Gold - join our virtual walk
- ✓ Lets talk cholesterol - *Suzanne Indge*
- ✓ A tribute to Molly O'Connell
- ✓ New class timetable
- ✓ Thank you
- ✓ Donate to our New Silent Auction or Pop-Up Shop
- ✓ *I hope you enjoy this edition. New content and ideas for inclusion always VERY welcome. Jacky Miles M.B.E, PhD, RGN, Trustee. Contact me on [cardiaccarecommunity@outlook.com](mailto:cardiaccarecommunity@outlook.com)*



## Big Benefits with Perseverance

Of those people eligible for cardiac rehabilitation only 20% attend and even fewer complete the programme on offer. Why don't they attend? Perhaps they are too busy or can't get there because of work. Or they don't understand the benefits and are happy just taking their heart medication.

This is one of those times when people need much more than a pill. People who complete their cardiac rehabilitation programme are less likely to go into hospital, have a better quality of life, lose weight, improve their cholesterol levels, have less stress and a lower anxiety level than those who don't.

**Studies show that while early cardiac rehab is beneficial, people get even more benefit if they continue to exercise after it ends. Those of you who attend our community classes are testimony to this fact!**

[www.facebook.com/NGCRAC](https://www.facebook.com/NGCRAC)  
[www.twitter.com/NGCRAC](https://www.twitter.com/NGCRAC)

## KEEP ON WALKING

*Alasdair Whittle, Monmouth Class*

I have done a lot of reading in the past covid year, and one of the unplanned threads to emerge from this has been the theme of walking. That ties in nicely with the concerns of the charity and its current sponsored walk. In the modern world, we tend perhaps to associate walking with health and recreation. The examples I have come across in my reading show walking at the heart of other fundamental dimensions of life.

### **A guide into eternity.**

In the making of poetry, Adam Nicholson describes the year, over 1797–8, which the young poets William Wordsworth and Samuel Taylor Coleridge spent in the Quantocks in Somerset. That period saw the production of some of their finest work, from Coleridge's *The Ancient Mariner* and shorter poems such as 'Frost at midnight' and 'Xanadu', to their joint *Lyrical Ballads*, and at the end of the year, when the pair had gone their separate ways, Wordsworth's 'Lines written above Tintern Abbey'. Coleridge stayed in a small cottage in Nether Stowey with his wife and small child, Wordsworth and his sister Dorothy in a grander house nearby. They arrived on foot. Their radical friend John Thelwall walked from London to stay with them for a while, 'partly because walking felt like a democratic way of travelling'. Wordsworth had earlier walked extensively in France. They were being observed by government agents, since as supporters of the Revolution in France they were under considerable official suspicion, and their romantic wanderings were taken as signs of spying. In Somerset, they were for ever on the move, walking up on to the Quantocks, for pleasure, for immersion in nature, and as part of their creative process, 'like a guide into eternity', as Wordsworth put it in one poem.



**The elusive North-West Passage.** My next example shows walking of a different kind, purpose and range. John Rae, from the Orkneys in northern Scotland, first arrived in Canada in the 1830s as a young naval doctor, but was persuaded to join the Hudson Bay Company and remained in the north for decades (as set out in *Fatal Passage*, by Ken McCoogan). He must have been prodigiously strong and fit, and from an early stage showed a remarkable ability to cover vast distances on foot, including on snowshoes in winter conditions. He learnt quickly from indigenous people, including how to over-winter out in the wild. He led small groups on long-range explorations to the north, by boat as well as on foot, in an era when the elusive North-West Passage was being sought. By the late 1840s he became involved in the search for the disappeared expedition of Sir John Franklin in his ships *Erebus* and *Terror*. Franklin himself had survived a much earlier disaster by walking out southwards, and famously eating his leather shoes. Eventually, in the mid-1850s, Rae was the first to find, with the help of indigenous Inuit people, evidence of Franklin's sad fate, up in the icy wastes of Victoria Strait and King William Island. Thanks to the intransigence of Lady Franklin and no less a figure than Charles Dickens, it was to be a long time before that evidence was accepted.

**We have done our best.** My last example also involves walking in snow and ice. Ernest Shackleton's attempt to reach the South Pole in 1908–9 is perhaps less well known than Scott's ill-fated expedition three years later or Shackleton's own heroic escape from the Antarctic ice and seas during the First World War. In early 1909, his party of four (his companions were Jameson Adams, Eric Marshall and Frank Wild) got to within a hundred miles of the South Pole, but then wisely turned back. The expedition (as recounted by Shackleton himself in the two fat volumes of *The Heart of the Antarctic*, with contemporary black and white photographs) had experimented with other forms of transport. They even had a splendid motor-car, which proved unreliable in the cold and severe conditions. Other parties had dog teams, which Shackleton did not really trust. The polar group set off with ponies pulling their sledges, but after a few weeks they could not survive the cold. So the hard work of hauling the sledges ended up being done on foot, day after day, up to fifteen miles or so at a time on good runs. They turned back on January 9, 1909 ('We have shot our bolt...we have done our best'). Getting back alive was a close call, as the cold and ever-diminishing supplies took their toll. They thought constantly about food. They eventually got back with the help of previously laid depots and an outlying hut, reaching their ship, the *Nimrod*, on March 4. As Shackleton put it, a mixture of a love of adventure, a 'keen thirst for scientific knowledge' and the mysterious fascination of the unknown had taken them south, but it was good sense, sheer grit and the determination to keep on walking that got them back safely.



## GOING FOR GOLD

Join our new virtual walk

**Fight heart disease/support your local cardiac rehab charity/inspire others**

**London to the Olympic Park in Tokyo 7000 miles**

**Started 7th March ends 23rd July**

**It's easy to join** - keep a record of your steps or distance walked/ran/biked then either contact your Fitness Instructor or email [cardiaccarecommunity@outlook.com](mailto:cardiaccarecommunity@outlook.com) with the total every two weeks

**If you would like to raise money as well as getting fit sponsor forms are available from the Fitness Instructors or can be down loaded from our website**

## MAKING GOOD HABITS STICK

Tony Lowery, Trustee



**Two years ago, my wife and I had a visitor** who came for a week and stayed for a year. My brother's boy had just got his first job and needed somewhere to stay until he sorted out accommodation closer to his place of work. The problem was he lived in Northumberland and the place of work was in South Wales, too far to commute on a regular basis. When he arrived, we could see he was a victim of bad habits. Three years of living on beer, pizza's, Burgers and curries had taken a toll on him physically. His weight had ballooned to over 18 stone, he was a walking health time bomb. It was apparent when talking to him that his emotional wellbeing was also being affected by his physical appearance. There was no way we could let him live by himself until some of his unhealthy behaviour's were changed. The fault lay with the Bad habits acquired during the years of student living. Our goal became to help him change bad habits into good ones.

**Habits are difficult to break.** They are a process by which your brain converts a series of conscious actions into an automatic routine. When habits emerge, they allow the brain to save energy. This makes the brain more efficient and therefore smaller. It stops us thinking about basic behaviours and allows the brain to divert its attention to other tasks. In its basic form there is always a "Cue", this initiates the behaviour. There has to be a "Craving", this is the motivational reason behind the habit. This leads to the "Response", the actual habit. Then finally there has to be a "Reward". The problem for my nephew was that he liked pizza and the feeling of happiness he got from eating a 12-inch deep-pan pizza reinforced the bad behaviour.

**Habits like this are called keystone habits**, you cannot break the bad habits, but you can make new ones that change how you feel. The golden rule to changing habits is to keep the same cue and reward but change the response. Imagine you are walking down the street (the cue) you see a Greggs baker. You crave that sausage roll, so your response is to buy the sausage roll and eat it. The reward is that buying a sausage roll becomes associated with walking down the street. What we did with my nephew was to change the cue to give him a new set of behaviours. Three times a week, when we went for a walk, we walked to the gym. Two miles up, 45 minutes at the gym then 2 miles home again. At first, he found this a struggle and he needed support, but most importantly he wanted to change. There was a conscious effort on his part to change. After several months, he started to notice a change in his physical appearance. The reward was that walking and exercising was associated with losing weight. After the year, our nephew left us and went to a new job in Newcastle.

**Since lockdown started**, I haven't seen my family in Newcastle and apart from feedback from my brother had no idea if what we started was continuing. Last night, I had an e-mail from my mother. Attached to it was a picture of our nephew, he had a big smile on his face but most importantly had reached his target weight of 12 Stone. He had kept to the plan.

**MEMBERSHIP AND THE 200 CLUB – a reminder on the importance of renewing or joining both the annual Membership (£10) sec' Kathy Cleveland 01873 830829 and the 200 Club sec' Owen Webber 07955257595**

***They are a vital part of our regular income. As a member you will get a reduced class fee £4.00 and not £4.50. In joining the 200 Club you may get lucky and win a cash prize!***

## HEALTHY TICKER COOKING TIPS FROM ONE OF OUR MEMBERS!

Mary Wakeling, Monmouth class member and fundraiser

Like many of you during lock-down I have been doing more cooking and would like to share a few of my tips with you. I hope you find them useful. I try to lower the sugar in recipes and not to use salt. To save on electricity I also try to make full use of the oven, making my main meal and pudding at the same time. I like 'one pot' cooking because there is less washing up and all the nutrients and flavour's are retained. Cooking fish this way works well and here is a very simple but nutritious recipe:

Set the oven to approx 200c. Put a little olive oil in the bottom of a pan with a tight fitting lid. Add the fish (salmon, plaice, cod or sea bass fillets work well). Season well with black pepper and dried or fresh herbs. Then add vegetables of your choice. Celery (chopped), courgettes (sliced), small potatoes, slices of sweet potato and fennel all work well. Put a little more oil over the vegetables and bake in the oven for 20mins.

The same method works well with chicken. I fry onion and garlic briefly, then the chicken and cook thoroughly before adding the vegetables. Season and cover with stock before popping in the oven (200c). You can leave this in and turn down until you are ready to eat.



**HEALTHY TICKER PUDDING** In response to the call for recipes in the last Ticker news. Here's Mary's delicious **fruit crumble**.

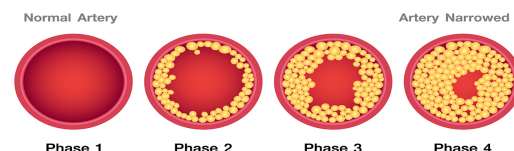
Set the oven to 180c. Take fruit - apples, pears or plums and poach in a little apple juice. When soft put in an oven proof dish. You can add star anise or cloves to the apples or pears. For the topping take 4oz soft margarine (I use pure sunflower), 5oz flour and make up to 8oz with ground almonds. Mix together and put on top of the prepared fruit. If you wish add flaked almonds or crushed nuts to the topping. Bake in the oven until golden brown on top. Enjoy!

More recipes for you to try in the next edition.



## LET'S TALK CHOLESTEROL .....IT'S MY SPECIALIST SUBJECT!

*Suzanne Indge, Cardiac Rehab Nurse Specialist/  
Team Leader Aneurin Bevan University Health Board*



### What is cholesterol?

Cholesterol is a fat in your blood which is needed for your cells, hormones, digestion and to produce vitamin D. Some people have too much cholesterol in their blood which leads to narrowing of the arteries. High levels of cholesterol can be caused by an unhealthy lifestyle but it can be genetic too. Usually people with a genetic predisposition to high cholesterol have cholesterol levels above 7. If you have a strong family history of coronary artery disease at a young age, which is generally below the age of 60, it could potentially be due to a genetic cause. If you have any concerns you could talk to your cardiac rehab/practice nurse or GP.

### Do you know what your cholesterol levels are?

Following a cardiac event patients are followed up closely by the cardiac rehabilitation team. This follow up involves education about risk factors for heart disease, one of which is raised levels of cholesterol. It is important to know what your levels of cholesterol are so that you can take control of your risk factors. In order to take control of your cholesterol level you may need to make some lifestyle changes such as reducing saturated fats in your diet and increasing your activity. Therefore it is important to know what your cholesterol levels are so that you can monitor your progress. A lipid blood test - lipid is a collective name for cholesterol and it's components of High Density Lipoprotein (HDL, good cholesterol), Low Density Lipoprotein (LDL, bad cholesterol) and Triglycerides - is taken after an admission with a suspected cardiac cause. Statins are commenced on admission if the patient is not already prescribed one in primary care. The lipids are rechecked 3 months after initiation and then it may only require an annual check-up if your levels are within range.

### Do you know what the latest cholesterol targets are?

For most of our patients who have known coronary artery disease, particularly if they had a recent cardiac event such as unstable angina or a heart attack the secondary prevention targets are as follows:

**Total cholesterol below 4 mmols/l, LDL below 1.4mmol (or below 1.0 if second cardiac event within 2 years) and 50% reduction in LDL from presumed baseline** (European Society of Cardiology, 2019). For more information on all things cholesterol take a look at the excellent information available on Heart UK – the cholesterol charities' website. <https://www.heartuk.org.uk>

## A TRIBUTE TO MOLLY O'CONNELL

*Jacky Miles*

Suzanne, Molly's youngest daughter, worked with me as a Specialist Nurse for over 20 years. During that time Molly appeared to me to be the ideal mother. Ready at the drop of a hat to help look after Suzanne and Steve's two boys as well as doing their housework and having a meal ready at the end of the day! I will always be grateful to her for supporting Suzanne in her career and when you read the following you will appreciate what an amazing woman she was.

### Thank you to Mandy (Molly's eldest daughter) for the following:

Molly was born on 30th May 1938 in Llanhilleth, the youngest daughter of Lottie and William Angel. Being one of 11 siblings, Molly grew up in a bustling home and that love of being surrounded by family remained with her for the rest of her life.

Molly met Trevor in 1961 whilst he was on National Service in Aldershot. Molly's sister Marjorie was married to Trevor's Sargent Major. When Molly visited her she met Trevor and it was love at first sight. They were married 6 months later and enjoyed a long and happy 56 years together. When their daughter Mandy was born in 1964, followed by Suzanne in 1967 their family was complete. Molly doted on her girls and supported them in everything they did. A talented seamstress, Molly made the most amazing dressing-up costumes for the girls to wear to school. When the girls joined a ballet troupe, Molly designed and made all the costumes for their annual shows.

For many years Molly worked part time at Georgetown Post Office. She made great friends with her employers Sue & Geoff, so when Sue sang for royalty, she asked Molly to make her dress - a stunning cerise pink evening gown. Molly was the 'go to' person if you wanted to dress to impress and was always very elegantly turned out herself.

When grandchildren came along Molly was always on hand to help. Nothing was too much trouble, so when Stephen badly broke his arm in an accident at work, Molly and Trevor moved in to look after him and the boys, whilst Suzanne worked full time as a nurse.

Molly was generous with her time and enjoyed teaching craft to Matthew and Lewis' class mates at Llantilio Pertholey school. Molly's Christmas crafting was legendary - her creations made hundreds of pounds for the PTA at Llantilio Pertholey and for North Gwent Cardiac Rehabilitation Charity where Suzanne works.

Molly was very modest about her achievements. The girls knew that she was a keen netball player in her youth, but it was only a comment by a school friend on Facebook and a conversation with her sister Jean, that confirmed Molly had played for Wales - the first pupil from Brynhyfrdd school to represent their country. The girls have since found a photo of their mum when she won her first cap, which now has pride of place in their homes.

Molly and Trevor still continued to do everything together, even as dementia took its toll on Trevor's health. They found new friends when they joined Singing for the Brain and enjoyed the support that singing in a choir can bring. Molly cared for Trevor up until his death two years ago and upon hearing of Molly's passing his sister Pam said her brother couldn't have asked for a more loving and caring wife.



## THANK YOU SO MUCH TO

### THOSE WHO HAVE SO GENEROUSLY DONATED OVER THE LAST MONTHS

Mr Collins on behalf of his late wife, Trellech United Community Council, Police Retirement Association in respect of the late Edwin Collie, T D Phelps, R J Sansom, G Yandl, B J & A M Stanway, Mrs P Hillman, Mr G Kingsbury, G Cahill, Mr R V Stephenson, Funeral of Molly O'Connell, Colin Greeves, G & A Cronin, G E Walker, D Cousins, S J Morris, D J Latham, R H Taylor, E Williams, A C Bradbury, Allison, Atkinson, R Cummings, M Slaughter, M & M Hooper, C M Thomas, C R Meek, E Hemson, J O Jones, June O'Brien, G Jarrett, Cafgye.

*Fight heart disease/ Support your local cardiac rehab charity/ Inspire others*

## WE ARE LAUNCHING AN ON-LINE POP UP SHOP

- **You can make it a success** by letting us have your good quality, pre-loved items.
- **You will be saving something from landfill**, making someone happy and supporting your local cardiac rehab charity. Its a win win situation.
- We want things we can sell, if you wouldn't buy it and cant imagine that anyone else would either, don't donate it!

Unfortunately we cant take electrical goods and books.

Please call ahead to find out if we will take the things you are thinking of donating

Contact Andrea Davies on andreadavies01@icloud.com  
mob: 07736240389

## YOUR NEW COMMUNITY CLASS TIMETABLE STARTING W/C JULY 5TH - RESTRICTIONS ALLOWING

- **Tuesday**  
Monmouth Leisure Centre, 09.45 - 10.45  
Usk Memorial Hall, 14.00 - 15.00  
Abertillery Wyndham Vowels Hall, 16.00 - 17.00  
LLanfoist Hall, 18.0 - 19.00
- **Wednesday**  
Tredegar Orpheus Hall, 10.30 - 11.30  
Ebbw Vale Catholic Church, 12.00 - 13.00  
Blaenavon Band Hall, 14.00 - 15.00  
Nantyglo Whitchurch Community Hall, 16.30 - 17.30, 18.00 - 19.00.
- **Thursday**  
Llanfoist Hall 12.00 - 13.00  
Abertillery Wyndham Vowels Hall, 14.00 - 15.00
- **Saturday**  
Llanfoist Hall 09.00 - 10.00, 10.00 - 11.00.



## PLEASE DONATE ITEMS FOR OUR SILENT AUCTION IN JUNE

*Fight heart disease/ Support your local cardiac rehab charity/ Inspire others*

Ask everyone you know and approach companies who may wish to use our auction as a promotion.

Along with goods, we can auction services as well as experiences and special treats!

Here are a few ideas:

- Gift basket
- Restaurant meal
- Custom artwork
- Signed memorabilia
- Golf lesson
- Art lesson
- Travel package
- Sports equipment

Please contact Andrea Davies -one of our volunteer fundraisers - on andreadavies01@icloud.com  
mob: 07736240389  
or leave a message on our Facebook page

## OUR VOLUNTEER TRUSTEES

Gary Hicks - Chair, Gareth Davies - Dep Chair, Tony Lowery - Secretary, Greg Overs -Treasurer, Nigel Dancer, James Jones, Jacky Miles.

## FUNDRAISING VOLUNTEERS

Jacky Miles - Chair, Tracey Lewis - Secretary, Kath Cleveland - Membership Secretary, Andrea Davies, Suzanne Indge, James Jones, Mary Wakeling, Paul Jarrett, Owen Webber - 200 Club Secretary.