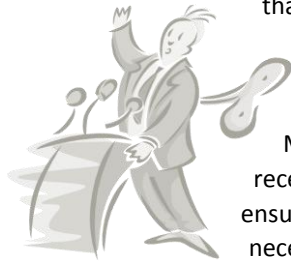


Branch AGM to be held on Sunday 27th March

By The Acting Chair of the Branch, Joel Millett

This year's Branch Annual General Meeting will be held at Nantwich Methodist Church, Hospital Street, Nantwich, CW5 5RP, at 14.30 on Sunday 27th March. Our speaker this year is David Hanson who is a Campaigns and Development Manager in the Policy and Strategy Unit for the Association.

One of David's roles is to look at how we work together with you to prepare for the changes that are being proposed in Government White Papers which affect the Association and consequently affect people with MND.



Work undertaken by David is key to getting the needs of people with MND heard and to ensuring at the same time that people with MND still receive co-ordinated care. He works closely with staff and volunteers to ensure that through the transition period services are maintained and where necessary, if this is not the case, the Association will run local campaigns accordingly.

For example David recently met with Dr Alan Whitehead, MP for Southampton East, to discuss the Association's campaign for specialist palliative care in Southampton. We hope that, with Dr Whitehead's support, everyone living with MND in Southampton will finally have access to the care they need and deserve.

Everyone is welcome so please come along and make the event as successful as previous years. Although we have to have an agenda, we keep the meeting as informal as possible, and afterwards refreshments are provided.

A look forward to the year ahead

Amongst the usual favourite events, such as the Strawberry Evening (which this year is being held on 16th June at the Nantwich Football Club), and 2 Walk to d'Feet's this year – to be held on 18th June in Nantwich and 25th June in Crewe, and during both events we will have a stall in the town centre to raise awareness.

On 11th May we are arranging a narrowboat trip, for people living with MND and their carers on the canal (final details are yet to be confirmed) with the Wirral Community Narrowboat Trust.



We are also hoping to have a stall at the Arley Garden Festival which this year is being held on Saturday 25th & Sunday 26th June (volunteers will be required for this event to man the stall), and hopefully this will be followed later in the year with a tour round the gardens with Lord Ashbrook.

Full details of these and other events will be available in plenty of time.

Diary Dates

7 March	Support Group – Rowton Hall Country House Hotel
27 March	AGM - Nantwich Methodist Church
11 April	Support Group – Grosvenor Garden Centre,

For further details go to
www.mndcheshire.org



Food for thought

Compared with Petrol.....

Think a gallon of petrol is expensive? This makes one think, and also puts things in perspective.

Diet Snapple 16 oz £1.29
£10.32 per gallon

Lipton Ice Tea 16 oz £1.19
£9.52 per gallon

Ocean Spray 16 oz £1.25
£10.00 per gallon

Brake Fluid 12 oz £3.15
£33.60 per gallon

Vick's Nyquil 6 oz £8.35
£178.13 per gallon

Evian water 9 oz £1.49
£21.19 per gallon!

(Evian spelled backwards is Naive.)

Ever wonder why printers are so cheap? So they have you hooked for the ink. Someone calculated the cost of the ink at (you won't believe it, but it is true)

£5,200 a gallon!!

So, the next time you're at the pump, be glad your car doesn't run on water, Vick's Nyquil or Printer Ink!

Just a little humour to help ease the pain of your next trip to the petrol pump...

Spring Conference 2011

The Association will once again be staging our ever popular Spring Conferences during April and May 2011. These one-day conferences are primarily aimed at people with MND, their families and carers although all interested parties are welcome to attend.

Again the conferences provide the opportunity to learn more about MND care and research, while sharing experiences of living with MND and socialising with friends. This is a great way for people to be introduced to the Association and an opportunity to network with local branch members and staff.



North West Spring Conference 2011 will be held at Manchester Airport on 9th April at Radisson Blu Hotel Chicago Avenue, Manchester M90 3RA , telephone number +44 161 490 5000

For further information please contact the conference and events team on 01604 611834

or email conference@mndassociation.org or go the National website at

www.mndassociation.org/news_and_events/events/conferences/spring_conferences/

Training to be an Association Visitor

I am Twinkle Shah. I am from India and have recently moved to United Kingdom after I got married. I am a Physiotherapist by profession and have got four years of work experience. Currently I am also working as a volunteer for Neuro Muscular Centre, in Winsford.



Firstly, I am looking forward to getting involved into such an association which provides care, support and guidance for individuals affected with motor neurone disease.

I am thoroughly impressed to see the services the MND Association provides to individuals and their families. I would love to be part of such an alliance where I could continue the good work and utilize my skills and experience to help people in a most effective way.

I have a keen interest to help individuals and help to bring a positive difference in their lives and I believe my previous experience and dedication would help me to provide better understanding of people suffering with MND, so that they are able to identify their problems as they arise and find ways to manage them with a smile.

This opportunity would also give me a chance to make new friends and at the same time help individuals when they are most vulnerable and help the Association to carry on their noble work and thereby fulfil the motto of my life

“Live your life by bringing happiness in others”.

Newsletter

This is your newsletter

*So please let us have
your contributions.
These can take the
form of 'humour',
'personal experiences',
'hints and tips',
'questions', 'holidays'
'photographs', and
any other
information that you
might think of interest
to our members.*



Austen



Shakespeare

*You do not have to be
a Jane or a William to
submit any of the
above.*

*So please do submit
your contributions*

*And make this
newsletter work for
everyone in Cheshire*

A new message
introduced by
Microsoft



Hints & Tips

Employment Support Allowance

(Extracted from the MND Associations publications)



WE have recently been alerted to the problems many people with MND are facing when applying for Employment Support Allowance (ESA).

Our policy and strategy unit has approached the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) to make them aware of our concerns, and have now agreed a redress procedure for people wrongly assessed.

If you know of anyone in your area having problems claiming for ESA, or who have had a claim wrongly assessed, please contact Kathy James the Regional Care Development Adviser (RCDA) on 0845 375 1832, or email: kathy.james@mndassociation.org who will be able to pass details on to the PSU team to forward to the DWP

The Cheshire Building Society

40 Branches of the Cheshire Building Society are aiming to raise in excess of £1,000 each for MND.

Various activities have taken place or have been planned such as raffles, coffee mornings, sponsored karaoke, clothes swaps, bag packing events, charity dinners, cake sales, a fancy dress pub crawl and even, in the case of one branch, a sponsored leg shave!

Angela Davies, Manager of the Cheshire Building Society in Northwich commented, "Every penny raised in Cheshire will go to support families affected by MND in the Cheshire area. We know what a difference this money will make in improving the lives of sufferers and I would like to thank all members of staff and customers who are helping us reach our target."

Events have got off to a flying start as the running total by the end of December was over £3,000. At the time of writing the total raised by the branches below stands at £5,398.84 with the Wigan Branch leading the way having raised £1,493.74

The money raised by Angela's colleagues in the Cheshire Building Society is vitally important to us in the fight against this cruel disease and to support the families who have to cope with so much.

For more information on events planned at branches of the Cheshire Building Society please check in your local branch. Branches participating in our area are: Accrington, Chorley, Crewe, Culcheth, Leigh, Lymm, Middlewich, Nantwich, Northwich, Stockton Heath, Warrington, Wigan, and Winsford



The Lions Club of Crewe and Nantwich

Members of The Lions Club of Crewe and Nantwich continued to support the Branch and gave a cheque for £150 to help local people.

It was gratefully received by local campaigner Joan Park in December. This donation will all be used for local people.

It is through such donations that we can help the people of Nantwich and Crewe to be as independent as possible for as long as possible.

Nantwich Methodist Church

The Ladies Circle at the Nantwich Methodist Church have kindly donated £250 to the Branch. This money will be used to help people living with MND in the area.

APA Line Dancing

Once again Danny & Margaret Boyd presented cash this time totalling £165. This money was raised by Ann and Alan from APA. Margaret had been an active member of the club for many years.

One of the world's greatest-ever long distance runners, Haile Gebrselassie, made his debut in the Bupa 30th Great North Run and left the field in his wake as he scorched to victory in 59:33 in difficult cold and wet conditions.



One of the 54,000 other runners was Shelly Newall pictured here on the left with her friend Amy Foynne and Shelly raised a total of £200 along with a Bank of America Matching Gift and donated the sponsorship money to the Branch to help people living with MND in the Cheshire area.

I would like to thank Shelly on behalf of the Branch because without donations like this it would be very difficult to support people living with MND.

ANTROBUS CAROL SINGERS

By Ann Barlow

The carol singers have a long way to travel as they try to visit every home in the parish. Although Antrobus has a reasonably small population of around 850 it has 33 roads and lanes that extend for some 36 miles criss-crossing an area of 4,145 acres of land.

Antrobus is well known for its strong community spirit and for raising funds not only for village organisations but for other charities.



One of the highlights of the year is the visits made by the Carol Singers organised by Dave and Kath Hankey. A notice appeared in the December Antrobus Village News saying "we will meet as usual by the telephone box in the School Lane car park at 6.45p.m. Everyone is welcome to join in and help us take the true message of Christmas to people's homes."

So on

6 nights before Christmas and finishing on Christmas Eve carollers braved the snow and ice and cheered fellow villagers.

A record amount of £2800 was collected. £400 has been given to Antrobus Methodist Church and to St. Mark's Church and £2,000 to MND Cheshire.

The Branch thanks everyone involved for their generosity. It is donations like these that enable us to continue to support people living with MND in the Cheshire area



Handbrige Flower Club

The Branch would like to thank the Club for their donation of £100 to the in memory of one of their members.

The money will be used for the benefit of those living with MND in Cheshire.



Update

By Hazel Francis

A cheque has been received, totalling £613.35, from Nicki Moore's brother Joe Morrin who works for Santander.

Santander have sent a matched donation for the Walk to d'Feet sponsorship money, and the chocolate tombola and Christmas cakes at the Coffee morning held in December.

The Branch would like to thank Santander for their generosity, and also would like to thank Cuppa and Cakes of Lufford Street, Crewe for their kind donation of cakes for the Coffee morning (which raised over £200), and also Nicki's mum for the Christmas cakes.

As ever the money will be used to benefit the people living with MND in Cheshire.

SimonFace®

By Simon Greenway

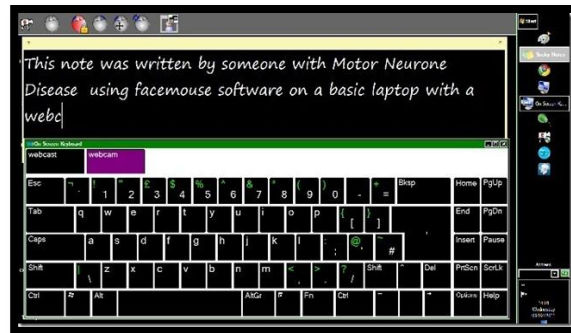
I first noticed weakness in my arms when windsurfing. Then whilst practicing the piano I realised my left hand became completely useless after only 12 minutes of playing.

Obviously concerned I underwent extensive tests and was eventually diagnosed with Motor Neurone Disease, also known as Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis or Lou Gehrig's Disease. That was in 2000 when I was 46 years old, and I was told it would be unlikely I would reach the age of 50.

I am now 56 and thankfully, due to the unusually slow progression of this fatal neurological disease, I still have the use of my legs, arms, hands and voice.

I eventually decided to use my understanding of how this illness can affect sufferers and their families at first hand to help others who are experiencing a more rapid decline. What drove me on with this work was thinking about the frustration experienced by sufferers when their intellect and senses remain intact but they are unable to communicate their thoughts, feelings and needs to their loved ones, carers and friends.

I undertook extensive research and found that although there are many assistive technologies on the market they tend to be quite expensive and can require intensive setup, training and maintenance. Not everyone has the ability to understand complex technology and I realised that there was a gap for a simpler, 'user friendly' alternative.



The SimonFaceBox01 is the first release from SimonFace of a product that can transform an ordinary laptop and webcam into a non-touch communication device by facetracking. It has been researched and developed by Simon Greenway and the SimonFaceTeam

As I had spent my working life in Information Technology (handheld data capture, bar-coding, touch & non-touch interfaces) I started to consider cheaper alternatives that were simpler to use to help people with this debilitating condition. I have now developed a cost effective and simple solution providing hardware and software that can operate with the use of a standard laptop using a single webcam.

This technology will empower people who lose their power of speech and motor control of their hands to regain

direct control of the laptop using 'SimonFaceBox', enabling them to use it for environmental control, speech synthesis, email, web browsing and social networking, keeping their lines of communication open and therefore enhancing their quality of life.

In the words of Tony Robbins, "The way we communicate with others and with ourselves ultimately determines the quality of our lives"



*16th April Coffee morning,
10.00am until 12.00noon
at the Parkgate & Neston United Reform Church,
Parkgate Road, Parkgate.*

*There is a large car park and good disabled access.
All proceeds will go to the Association*

Appeal for raffle prizes

Strawberry Evening – which this year is being held on 16th June at the Nantwich Football Club. We are looking for donations of bottles of wine/spirits and raffle prizes would be welcome.



Walk to d'Feet – to be held on 25th June, during the event we will be having a tombola stall in the town square and all contributions to the tombola prizes would be gratefully received.

If you can contribute to these events in any way please contact Hazel Francis on

Tel. No.01270 626222 or email hazel@mndcheshire.org

MND Forum



The Association has created an online forum where individuals can share experiences and support each other with the challenges of living with MND

You can register at <http://forum.mndassociation.org>

to date more than 700 messages have been posted since the launch in December and over 80 people have registered to share experiences.

60th Birthday Celebrations

By Steve Parker



I have already celebrated my birthday this year. It was the big 60th, and rather than everyone giving presents I thought that it would be a good idea for family and friends to donate what they wanted to spend on a present to MND Association instead, as it would be a much better use of the money and benefit a good cause.



Pictured with Beryl Parker (centre) are Steve and daughters Julie and Jeanette.

The MND Association has been really good to my mother since she was diagnosed with the disease last year and the involvement of the Cheshire Branch has been very beneficial.

So we started a just giving page to get donations early in January and this has raised £350 with donations from work colleagues, friends and family.

We had a party for my 60th birthday at Vicars Cross Golf Club near Chester, where again we asked for donations rather than gifts and we have also raised another £250 from this, which we will send directly to the Cheshire Branch of MND Association.

A legacy to the MND Association in your will is not complicated



Making a will is an important way to secure the future of your family and friends, and to make known your wishes to those you leave behind. After that, leaving us a gift in your will (a legacy), is a tremendous and thoughtful way of supporting our work. There are different types of legacy, but the most popular ones are:

- **Residuary legacy:** usually shown as a percentage of what is left over after all wishes have been carried out and debts cleared. This type of legacy rises in value with inflation and is the best possible gift you can leave to the Association.
- **Pecuniary legacy:** a specified amount of money.
- **Specific legacy:** a gift that can be in almost any form eg. house, land, jewellery, car etc.
- **Contingent legacy:** a gift that has certain conditions attached. For example the gift may only come to the charity if other beneficiaries named in the will die before the person making the will (the testator).
- **Reversionary legacy:** a gift of property subject to a prior interest. For example, a house that is left to someone to enjoy in their lifetime but when they die it passes to the charity.

To make a will we strongly advise that you make an appointment with a solicitor. You should not try to write your own will or use someone who is not properly qualified. Remember, this is probably the most important document you will ever sign. Only you know what you would like to happen to your estate and there must be no opportunity for misinterpretation in the wording.

To help you prepare for the meeting with your solicitor, we've prepared a simple, but useful *Will Preparation Form*. You can use it to ensure you have all the information you will need. It will help you work out what your estate could be worth after assets and liabilities are allowed for. Simply fill in your details and take along to your meeting. It will save time and make things a bit easier for both you and your solicitor.

If you have already made a will, and want to add to it or amend it to include a legacy, this can be done easily through a 'codicil' which your solicitor or adviser will help you to write.

For further information email legacies@mndassociation.org

Newsletter

If you would like to receive your newsletter by email then please contact Hal Bailey on

hal@mndcheshire.org

Committee Stuff

Sale of Christmas Cards

On behalf of the Branch Margaret Bailey organised the sale of Christmas Cards at Knutsford Civic Centre during November and early December.

In total this raised over £750, all of which will go to the Association.

Collections

If anyone knows a local shop or other retail outlet then please get in touch with Hazel either by phone or email.



We have a number of collection boxes collecting dust in garages or bedrooms, rather than cash, the only proviso is that the Branch needs full details of where they are going to be situated prior to issuing the collection box

Financial Stuff

Summarised Accounts as at 26 th January 2011			
Income		Expenditure	
Item	Year to Date	Item	Year to Date
General Donations	11,979.79	Financial Support	8,094.82
In Memoriam Donations	4,684.31	National Office	7,788.17
Fund Raising	14,669.12	Branch Admin costs	1,465.16
Gift Aid	319.03	Publicity	2,991.71
Sundries	0.00	Support Group Meetings	756.10
		Total Expenditure	21,095.96
		Surplus/Deficit	10,556.29
Total Income	31,652.25	Total	31,652.25

Christmas Party

(By Hal Bailey)

I know it's a while since we went to Tarporley, but for those who braved the weather at the beginning of December it was very enjoyable.

Approximately 50 members and friends of the Branch attended, it was the first time we had used the Community Centre for this function, and I think everyone would agree with me the venue, the atmosphere and the food was excellent. It would be remiss of me not to thank Hazel for the work she had put in the preparation and presentation of the food.

During the course of the afternoon we had the pleasure of Drew Steele, Chris Birtles and Steve Glover playing Spanish guitars.



Pictured from left to right are Amy Phillipson, Karen Hickmore and Hazel Francis

The Branch was presented with 2 awards by Karen Hickmore from National Office. The first, for **Inspirational Influencing**, was presented to Amy Phillipson who gave a very emotional talk at the reception held by Viscount Ashbrook at Arley Hall in September.

The second award, **Funtastic Fund Raising**, was presented to Hazel Francis who thanked everyone who had helped.

To round the afternoon off there was a raffle which raised an excellent total of £180.



We never lose hope. We strive to find a cure for MND and to support everyone affected by this devastating disease

mndconnect@mndassociation.org MND Connect offers support, information and advice to: People living with MND, Health and Social Care Professionals, staff and volunteers

Kathy James is the Association's **Regional Care Development Adviser (RCA)** working in the Branch area, who has detailed knowledge of the care and management of MND.

Kathy can be contacted on 0845 375 1832, or email: kathy.james@mndassociation.org

Branch Contacts

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Fund Raising	Hazel Francis	01270 626222	hazel@mndcheshire.org

Association Visitors

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Joel Millett	01625 525409	joel@mndcheshire.org
Amy Phillipson	07870 199435	amy@mndcheshire.org

Important Notice

If you know anyone living with MND or a Carer of someone living with MND and they have not had any contact with the Branch, please pass on your copy of the newsletter and encourage them to make contact with us. All our contact details are shown above.

Would you like to meet us at one of our informal get togethers for tea and cake in and around Cheshire – two of our venues are Hotels and one is a Garden Centre. These are very friendly and positive meetings with an exchange of ideas and hints and tips.

Again we would love to meet you, and if you think this is for you please contact us.