

# Northern Lymphoedema Support Group Newsletter

Our next Get together will be  
for the Christmas Lunch on  
Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> December 2019  
At 12.30 for 1.00 p.m. at  
Newcastle City Golf Club  
(Please see further details at  
rear of newsletter)



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Hello members  
Welcome to the final NLSG newsletter of 2019!  
Hoping you are all keeping well and are looking forward to the festive season ahead.

It's hard to believe we will be heading into 2020; It feels almost science fictional!

Born in the 1960's I remember thinking when we reached the Millennium, how amazing it was to be transitioning from one century in to the next. Programmes or films would portray futuristic existences, for example robots and technologies which I suppose we thought were quite clever back in the day, but in many ways, we are experiencing that now.

For example, did you ever imagine that from a phone, you could talk, send a message, send an email, browse the internet, play games, actually speak to your family or friends and see them at the same time just by looking at the screen, then after that placing the phone down on a device called a hub to charge it!



There's also Alexa! Need I say any more....

## **Apologies**

For some reason, I managed to put in a lovely piece of text provided by Kathleen regarding the Bowes Museum in the last issue, I also managed to remove it before it went to the printer minus!

So, apologies, here it is, better late than never....

The Bowes Museum is a hidden treasure, a jewel in the heart of beautiful Teesdale. The magnificent building stands proud in the historic market town of Barnard Castle housing internationally significant collections of fine and decorative arts. Purpose built in the 19th century by John and Joséphine Bowes, the Museum has a wonderful story to tell.

John, the son of the 10th Earl of Strathmore, was born at No 13 South Street, Chelsea, London. His mother was a commoner, Mary Millner, who caught the Earl's eye when she worked on his Teesdale estate and ended up living with the Earl to all intents as his wife for many years. The Earl married her just 16 hours before his death in an unsuccessful attempt to secure his son's succession. Two very long court cases ensued, finally settling the Durham estates on John, but not

recognising him as the legitimate heir to the Strathmore title.

John was educated at Eton and became a very successful businessman who profited from the coal reserves on his land. From 1847 he spent his time between France and England exploring his interest in the arts. It was here he bought a theatre and met the Parisian actress Joséphine Coffin-Chevallier. Joséphine was born in 1825. She was an actress in the Théâtre des Variétés, Paris, owned by John Bowes. Joséphine was a talented amateur painter, who shared John's love of the arts; she was interested in a range of art forms including paintings, ceramics, furniture and textiles. Once the couple married in 1852, they soon began to develop the idea of creating a world-class museum back in John's ancestral home of Teesdale in order to introduce the wider world of art to the local people.

The prospect was daunting; nothing had matched the scale, grandeur or location of this colossal proposal in their lifetime. Plans were meticulously scrutinised and painstakingly formed in order to give the North East a truly magnificent edifice, a home suitably fitting for all the precious treasures which would be contained within it.

The Bowes' enthusiasm was immeasurable as Joséphine laid the foundation stone in 1869. She said: 'I lay the bottom stone, and you, Mr Bowes, will lay the top stone'. As the building grew, so did their collection and an astounding 15,000 objects were purchased between 1862 and 1874.

Suddenly the project was blighted when Joséphine died in 1874. John's motivation towards their lifelong achievement took an enormous blow and he virtually ceased collecting. Fortunately, the building did continue, but John, like his late wife, never saw its completion. He died in 1885 and never did carry out Joséphine's wish of laying the top stone.

Despite the death of John and Joséphine, momentum for the project had reached such a scale that it continued under the leadership of Trustees and The Bowes Museum was finally opened to the public on 10th June 1892 and attracted nearly 63,000 visitors in its first year.

## **NORTHERN LYMPHOEDEMA SUPPORT GROUP**

### **NOTES OF MEETING HELD ON SATURDAY 14<sup>th</sup> September**

**Apologies:** Ingrid Henderson, Julie Waters, Elizabeth Childs and Kath Clark

#### **LYMPHOEDEMA SUPPORT GROUP NOTES OF MEETING HELD ON SATURDAY, 14 SEPTEMBER 2019**

20 members were in attendance including Jill Lisle from St Oswald's Hospice.

Carol welcomed everyone to the meeting and made the following announcements.

There are two copies of "Let's talk Lymphoedema" by Professor Peter Mortimer and Gemma Levine available for members to borrow and return to the next meeting.

The summer outing to Bowes Museum which took place on Wednesday, 17 July was a great success and enjoyed by all. Thankfully the weather was kind.

There was a list available for the Christmas Lunch on 14 December at Nuffield Health and Fitness and members were requested to add their name if they were interested in attending. Details would also be in the next newsletter.

Thanks to Jill and Morgan for sorting out computer software.

Carol then welcomed our speaker Anjali Brough from the local charity FACT (Fighting all cancers ....together!)

Anjali outlined how Joanne Smith had founded the charity 14 years ago when she had been diagnosed with breast cancer. Although Joanne had been looked after extremely well by local medical teams and services, once outside the hospital, she found there was no practical or emotional support for her, or her family, or friends. FACT has grown into a regional charity operating from a dedicated Cancer Support Centre and exists to create a platform for the exchange of experiences, views and information, providing facilities to improve conditions of life and providing support and guidance for cancer sufferers and their friends, family and carers. Denise Robertson was an early patron and supporter of the charity and the new Cancer support Centre in Swalwell is named after her.

They run Support sessions, and group meetings for both men and ladies, weekly Coffee mornings, Family sessions, Wellbeing and practical support,

Health and fitness, Bereavement services and offer wig reconditioning from donated wigs. Kindness kits consisting of food, clothes and household items are available for those in need.

They also provide education workshops and provide education programmes for schools and provide support for businesses and employees affected by cancer, raising awareness of cancer signs. FACT relies on grants and donations and revenue from their charity shops.

Carol thanked Anjali for such an informative talk on the charity and hoped that our support group could be a help forging links in the future.

We then had a break for refreshments (thanks to Morgan for providing delicious cakes) and the raffle was drawn.

## **CHRISTMAS LUNCH**

Sadly, since our last meeting, Nuffield Health & Fitness have decided not to offer a Christmas Menu this year so after a bit of research and a few unsuccessful attempts to rebook elsewhere, I have made a successful booking at the City of Newcastle Golf Club on the Great North Road, (just past the offices of Daft as a Brush) and opposite the Three Mile Inn. Their Christmas Menu is listed on a separate page. This is more expensive, but I think compares favourably with many other venues. They have been very kind and have booked a private room for us, but numbers will be limited so please let me know ASAP if you would like to attend and your choice of meal. I have contacted those members who put their name on the list at the September meeting.

***Kathleen Brown***

The only downside to the lunch is, we must play 18 holes of golf beforehand, so meet you at the first hole around 9.00 a.m.

(Only kidding) 😊

**Kathleen, just a note of thanks, you have saved the day again!**

Talking of Christmas can I mention Christmas cards...

For those of you who are attending the Christmas Lunch, obviously it is a chance to see friends and exchange cards which is lovely.

However, this year instead of giving a card, I would like to suggest making a small donation into the pot which could be passed on to a charity, for example St Oswald's

Hospice instead. It's not compulsory, only voluntary. This happens a lot now where there are big groups of people and I thought I would just suggest it.

## **Pumpkins**

I was invited to a Halloween party this year and was most impressed at how much effort the host had put into decorating her home for this scary occasion. However, it was the food that really caught my attention; amongst bat shaped dipping biscuits and eyeballs made from mozzarella cheese and olives the piece de resistance was the serving bowls which held cheese fondue and biryani, the serving bowls being pumpkins! Of course I made enquires as to how this was done, and it was just a case of scooping them out, baking them in the oven on a baking tray for an hour, once baked then spoon/pour your meal into the hot vessel, very effective and ever so simple to achieve.

## **Remembrance**

As we know the poppy holds a long association with Remembrance Sunday and Armistice Day which is always held at the 11<sup>th</sup> hour on the 11<sup>th</sup> day of the 11<sup>th</sup> month.

In the famous poem Flanders Fields, which was written by John McCrae, a Canadian Surgeon, the poppy was one of the only plants to grow on the barren battlefields after the war.

I have noticed that throughout the Tyne Valley, the little villages and towns are donning poppies, large ones tied to lampposts, whilst others are affixed to wooden stakes in the ground. In Hexham the knitted poppies, so popular now, have been sewn onto mesh and adorn the perimeter of the town's memorial.

I couldn't imagine another other flower taking its place.



## **Podiatry**

I noticed in the LSN (Lymphoedema Support Network) newsletter, that in Anita Wallace's opening letter that the LSN will be attending the College of Podiatry Conference held in Harrogate in November where they will be manning an information stand. For those of

us who have lower leg and foot swelling due to Lymphoedema and experience problems with feet, it maybe that you visit a podiatrist regularly. The LSN are planning to produce specific information aimed at these healthcare professionals which is positive news.

I wonder how many people visit the podiatrist because they think they have a foot problem which turns out to be Lymphoedema, I presume they are referred to their GP at this point.

Additionally, Anita Wallace (Chairman – LSN), talks about Lymphoedema Services within England.

In 2018, there were 202 NHS provider clinics in England and in 2019 it reduced to 178, so a loss of 24 provider clinics. Straight away I thought, this is a step in the wrong direction, however after reading further – in total 28 services closed, some of the services have amalgamated with larger services, there have been 3 new ones and one clinic has divided into 2.

Anita mentions that the most common reason this happens is because a practitioner leaves and is not replaced as there are a lack of suitably qualified practitioners.

How can we help?

Well Anita has suggested appreciating your local Service, write to the local CCG (Clinical Commissioning Groups) and tell them how important the Lymphoedema Service provider you attend is, nominate them for awards and write to the managers of the local services with thanks.

I know that the help, care and information given to me from St Oswald's Hospice was invaluable, although discharged now (for good behaviour), I still follow (as best I can) all the advice I received – bandaging, exercise, elevation, healthy diet, skin care and MLD which I do occasionally. These practices assist me to manage my Lymphoedema whereas before I was referred, I used to walk around with a swollen leg and not know what was wrong. It was thanks to a newly trained GP who spotted the condition.

Raising the awareness of Lymphoedema is so important, yes, it means more referrals are being made and yes services are stretched but hopefully in time I would like to think that

more money will be allocated by CCG's to expand Lymphoedema service provision and with that hopefully more research.

So, go forth and praise your local Lymphoedema Service.

## Books

I expect a lot of our members are avid readers and I would be glad to hear of any recommendations.

My sister in law handed me a book called the Tatowiere of Auschwitz by Heather Morris, it is a true story about a gentleman called Lale Sokolov who finds himself in a concentration camp; he is given the role of tattooing his fellow prisoners with an identity number. It was a compelling book to read and I already have my eye on the author's follow on book called Cilka's journey.

Books aren't everyone's cup of tea; some people prefer newspapers or magazines, but I like nothing more than curling up with a good book and a cup of coffee and losing myself in a story.

I noticed that many of the supermarkets now have a collection of books that have been given by customers which you can pick up for a small donation which is given to a local charity.



**I received an email from one of our members a while ago, it was about attendance at a forthcoming meeting. A few emails went back and forth and the lady in question (you know who you are) mentioned that she had a list of jobs to do but thought she would change the title as she wasn't that keen on doing the jobs but options seemed far more appealing, it really made me laugh.** (If you want to share any of your little foibles, please let me know, because no doubt you will be tired of hearing about mine!)

***For those of you are unable to make the Christmas Lunch, may I take this opportunity to say, you will be missed, but I hope you have a lovely Christmas and Good Health for 2020. Best Wishes, Julie***