

Message from your Chairman



As reported later in this edition, we have recently enjoyed two very successful events. Firstly we welcomed the Mayor and Mayoress of the Borough of Harrogate to our Annual General Meeting and then swung into spring with a vengeance! Councillor Nick Brown has gone out of his way during his year of tenure to visit and be involved in as many of the local charities as he has been able and we were lucky to find a space in his diary to enable him to be present for our AGM (although it did involve our having to change the date, so apologies to at least one of our members who in fact has never missed an AGM until this one!). He spoke with warmth about the Branch and recalled a very amusing story about a friend of his who had also been friendly with David Niven. He had not realised when talking to us that in fact our head office is now referred to as DNH and that the 'thumb' connection was attributed to David Niven's apparent last gesture.

The Swing into Spring followed, of which pictures are included later, and I can report that as well as having a very good time we made a profit of over £500. Thanks to everyone who put the whole thing together, including Ruth's very taxing quizzes!

Looking forward we have our usual lunch (please note change of date for next one) and tea dates and we hope to be present at the Ripon Old Car gathering again as well as the 'Open' Pately Bridge Show. And we are always looking for new ideas or initiatives so please do let us know if you can come up with anything. The existing BMC members were re-elected at the AGM but we really do need a few more willing bodies to help us and note the reference to the 'Strong' campaign mentioned later.

The weather seems to have taken a turn for the better as I write so may I wish you all the best for the summer and any holidays you may have planned.

Peter Thompson

The Jarrow Walk

Thomas Lant decided to do the Jarrow Walk in support of his friend Dave Setter, whom he says is the most courageous person Thomas knows. Dave was diagnosed with MND but continued to raise money for the charities he already supports and in addition decided to raise money for MND by starting the City Against MND Network. Over the years Dave has raised thousands of pounds for charity, particularly to give kids a better future. His positivity, tenacity and generosity has really touched and inspired Thomas.

Thomas's Grandfather also had MND but he never got to meet him. His mum told him that her Dad lost the ability to speak and would write on a board. Towards the end in 1970 he could no longer write and passed away without being able to say anything. Thomas was at an event that Dave held to start his City Against MND Network and was shocked to learn that people, even though the technology exists today, are passing away now without being able to speak with their loved ones. There is also the impact this disease has on children who lose a parent. He wanted to do something that would contribute to Dave's efforts and all the efforts the Motor Neurones Disease Association and its supporters make every day.

He chose the Jarrow March because it starts in Jarrow, North East of England, near where his Grandfather lived and he grew up, following the route of the original walk of 1936 which was to raise awareness for another worthy cause. He started on 6th March and walked around 20 miles per day, ending up on 20th March at the Lamb Tavern in Leadenhall Market in the City. He said at the start "I'm unfit and overweight, but hope if I can do it it may encourage others to do something as well." He raised over £4000 via his fundraising page <https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/thom-lant> and en route one of our AVs Libby walked with him between Ripon and Harrogate and he also met up with Chairman Peter and AV Margaret the next day before leaving Harrogate.

A Few Snippets from the National Website

Raising Awareness at Councillor Conferences: In March representatives from MNDA travelled to two local government conferences alongside people living with MND, carers and family members, to help raise awareness of MND with councillors. They attended the Local Government Association (LGA) Labour Conference and the Conservative Councillors Association (CCA) Conference – where they also met with the Prime Minister Theresa May – to talk about the campaign **Champion The Charter** (www.mndcharter.org), encourage councillors to join the campaign and get their council to adopt the MND Charter. At the CCA Conference, they were joined by Charles Dowie who is living with MND. Charles has shared some of his thoughts from the day: “Today I made the effort to get up and engage our local government councillors – to ask them for their help not just for me and others living with this disease, but for my carer and all carers of people with MND across the country. I asked for them to consider the routine daily tasks that they do – but only use one hand or one leg to put on clothes or use no arms to turn over in bed – to now consider the 24 hour unseen care that MND brings with it. A few understood – a few had relatives and understood – a few have already undertaken to support the MND Charter. Today – the Prime Minister understood our needs and now has a personal copy of our Charter in her hands. Thank you for your understanding and your support.” The Champion the Charter campaign has been gaining momentum across England, Wales and N. Ireland but there is still more work to do

New Eating and Drinking guide launched: Presented like a cookery book, this guide contains a range of easy-swallow recipes, along with information and tips. Where people with MND experience difficulties with swallowing, movement or mobility, this guide is designed to help them continue the enjoyment of eating and drinking for as long as possible. The guide can also help carers, and health and social care professionals, when providing support. Celebrity chefs Dan Doherty, Prue Leith and Levi Roots have donated recipes, along with experts, and families affected by MND, who helped with development. You can and download the guide at www.mndassociation.org/eating or order a printed copy from the MND Connect helpline.

Jeremy Vine becomes latest Patron: Jeremy will support the charity’s national profile, fundraising and campaigning work, having spent the last two years as Patron of the West London and Middlesex Branch of the MND Association – a role he will continue alongside his new position. Jeremy joins the MND Association’s existing patrons, including Professor Stephen Hawking (who has lived with MND since 1963) and *Good Morning Britain* presenter Charlotte Hawkins (who lost her father to MND in 2015). Most recently Eddie Redmayne (who raised the global profile of MND with his Oscar winning performance in *The Theory Of Everything*) and Benedict Cumberbatch (who played Stephen Hawking in a BBC drama in 2004) were named Patrons of the Association in October 2015.

STRONG: Being a STRONG volunteer is about putting your time and skills to a good cause in support of our mission of a world free from MND, whilst gaining hands-on life experience and opportunities for personal growth. The newly launched STRONG community is a dedicated team of volunteers whose skills and expertise support the MND Association, working hard across a diverse range of areas. Anyone can join and donate as much time as they can. Minutes, days, weeks or months; your time will make a difference to those living with MND, their families and carers. Everyone brings something different to the table; time and skills that you take for granted can really make a difference and mean a lot to us. Collectively, it’s worth a great deal. Whether you’re a person who thrives on communication or someone who prefers to work behind the scenes, our volunteering community is here for you to make an impact, shine, and grow your future. MND does not care about time, but we do. **#StrongAgainstMND**. MND makes people weaker, but together we are STRONG. For more information there is a special website <https://strong.mndassociation.org/>

Funding for Gut-sy MND research announced: The Reta Lila Weston Trust announced that they will be funding Dr Nikhil Sharma and colleagues at the Leonard Wolfson Experimental Neurology Centre (LWENC) to investigate whether the bacteria that live in our guts could alter the progression of MND. The grant is for £1.2 million over a period of four years. Incredibly researchers have found a link between the bacteria that live in our guts and important cells called microglia. We know that microglia help regulate the function of the motor neurones. This study aims to find out whether the balance of gut bacteria in MND could be linked to changes in microglia.

If you can get online then follow this link for many more interesting news items
<http://www.mndassociation.org/news-and-events/latest-news/>

Swing into Spring 2017

It was a sell out evening on 25th March 2017 when friends and supporters gathered at Pannal Village Hall for the 2017 Swing into Spring evening of good jazz music, good food and challenging quizzes (with prizes!). Many thanks to Michael Barker and his band of young musicians King James's School Riverside Jazz Band who provided the excellent music. The buffet supper was created by Round Table catering and was delicious and plentiful – so much so that numerous platefuls were taken home for later snacking! The quizzing took part during the supper break and at the end of the evening, after swapping with another team, all the sheets were marked with prizes awarded to the winner of each round and also an overall winner - and a booby prize! There was also a raffle with numerous excellent prizes and we hope that once the treasurer adds up all his sums a great amount will have been raised for the Association, and awareness of MND has also been brought to the attention of a few more people. Here are some photos from the evening - there are more on the website.



The start of the evening



Chairman Peter addressing the crowd



Quizzing!



And eating!



The food, yum!



Winners of recent 200 Club draws

Recent winners include:

January 2017 – Katharine Wade

February 2017 – Jack Gilmartin

And the final one drawn at the AGM

March 2017 – Adryenne Hope

Don't miss out on the new Club – forms enclosed with this edition of Chatter – please join in!

Dates for Your Diary

The next **Social Lunch** will take place at The Old Spring Well, Skipton Road, on

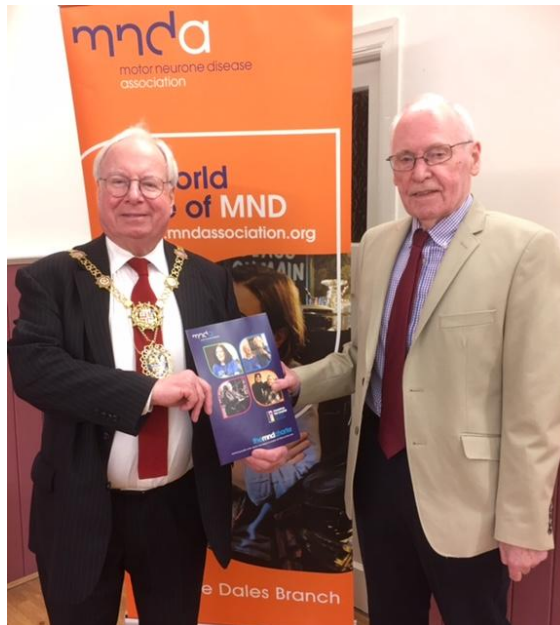
17th May 2017

(please note change of date from 10th)

More will be planned and the dates will appear in future editions of Chatter and also on the website

And of course on the **first Tuesday** in the month are the monthly get-togethers at Christian's Cafe in Crimple Hall on Leeds Road, Pannal (2pm – 4pm).

Our AGM was held on 19th March and was well attended (a total of 22 people including the Mayor and Mayoress of Harrogate). Here is a photo of the Mayor, Nick Brown, receiving details from Chairman Peter about the MNDA Charter.



MND Association campaigners from across the country have successfully campaigned to get 39 councils to adopt the MND Charter and commit to making a difference to the lives of people living with the disease and their carers. We wondered whether Harrogate Council might become the 40th council to Champion The Charter! More information can be found at www.mndcharter.org.

Branch Website and other Information

Please let us know if you would like to publish something on either our facebook page

<https://www.facebook.com/MNDYorkshiredales> or our website www.mndyorkshiredales.co.uk .

Or perhaps you might like to contribute to Chatter? We would be delighted to publish items from

Members in the next edition, just send your article to Ruth Pridmore

(if you don't have email then give her a ring and she will let you have her address).

Can you help us save money by sending you paperwork by email instead of the Royal Mail?

If you have an email address just let Ruth know and she will add it to the database.

Branch Contacts

Chairman, Peter Thompson – 01423 870130 chair@mndyorkshiredales.co.uk

Secretary, Ruth Pridmore – 01423 530764 secretary@mndyorkshiredales.co.uk

Treasurer, Geoff Catley - 01423 870143 treasurer@mndyorkshiredales.co.uk

Branch Contact, Margaret Thompson – 01423 870130 margaret.thompson730@ntlworld.com

National Contact Information

www.mndassociation.org

MND Connect – 0808 8026262

(note that the number for MND Connect has recently been updated)