

Mouth Cancer Foundation Walk

Every year the Mouth Cancer Foundation holds a ten kilometre charity walk in Hyde Park to raise much-needed funds for research and to raise awareness. Last year as I was too frail, my husband Ray completed the walk for me, together with two other survivors from our support group Heads2gether. As a patient myself I was determined to do my bit this year and to complete the walk myself. On Saturday 27th September, along with Ray and sister Linda, I arrived at Hyde Park and met up with the rest of our Heads2gether group - ten of us in all including four survivors proudly wearing our survivor banners. This year the walk had attracted over 500 participants and it was quite uplifting to see how many of them were wearing survivor banners.

We Will Survive!

As it turned out, there was also an anti-knife rally that day and traffic was a bit chaotic but we all got there on time. Glenda, a fellow survivor, and I joined a long queue at the Ladies to prepare for the walk, not wishing to do a Paula Radcliffe. There was quite a mixture of people in the queue. One woman, noticing our mouth cancer t-shirts, suddenly said: "Ow d'ya get that then?" We patiently explained that we didn't actually know! Behind us in the queue, a small group of anti-knife campaigners



began an argument because they believed their rally was badly organized. Glenda and I half expected to be stabbed during their frustrations. Before the walk Dr Vinod Joshi, the walk organizer, gave a talk. He explained that the mortality rate for mouth cancer because of late detection is just over 50% and that one person dies of this every three hours. He then read out names of

people who had walked last year but who were now no longer with us. We had a minute's silence and a few tears.

This was followed by a vigorous warm-up session. I joined in part of it but did not get too carried away as I would never have achieved the walk. Last year Glenda hurt her back during the warm-up and subsequently found the walk difficult.

Strutting Our Stuff

Eventually we set off, armed with three bags of jelly babies, lots of water and a few bananas, to strut our stuff. It was a beautiful day and Hyde Park was full of people sunbathing, roller-blading, boating on the Serpentine and dog-walking. Squirrels were in abundance - one tried very hard to trip Linda and myself as it zigzagged around our feet. Ray was our group's photographer and although he didn't walk with us probably walked just as far criss-crossing the park to pick us up at various points, not helped by our group being quite spread out. We

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thought we were behind the others so we were walking quite quickly to catch them up but they had actually dropped behind and they were trying to catch us up! After two kilometres I asked “*Are we nearly there?*” Having built up momentum I didn’t dare stop in case I seized up even to the extent that, when Linda needed a pit stop, I walked round in a circle until she returned. She later admitted that the queue for the ladies had been so long that she had run into the gents saying: “*I’m in a hurry, I’m a nurse, seen it all before, sorry gents*”.

It was a great moment when we arrived back at the bandstand where we had started, our entire group having completed the full ten kilometres. After the formalities of registering completion our group retired to the restaurant by the Serpentine for a well-earned drink. Thank you to everyone who sponsored supported and encouraged me, all very much appreciated. The total that I raised from sponsorship for this event was £573.

Roll on next year!

Heather Derkacz

Macmillan Coffee Morning Success

I would like to say a huge “thank you” to friends and neighbours who came to my Macmillan coffee morning. Fiona Walthall was my fundraiser and helped me raise £125. Hopefully one of my guests will be the winner of the John Lewis gift vouchers.

Thank you also to my tea and coffee makers, to those who provided cakes and those who made donations at Malcolm’s coffee morning on the Monday. And a special “thank you” to my husband Ray who took my German Shepherd for a three-hour walk in a very wet and muddy Wychwood Forest to enable my event to

be less hairy - which cannot be said for the back of my car!

Heather Derkacz

Wychwood Surgery Does it Again!

On Friday, September 26th Wychwood Surgery was once again transformed into a coffee house in aid of Macmillan Nursing. With the help of a band of willing helpers, donations of cakes and raffle prizes, and the many people who turned up, we raised the magnificent sum of £660.

Thank you for all your support.

Esther Parsons

The Cotswold Antiques Study Group

On **Wednesday 10th December** at **10:45am** (doors open at 10:15am) in Bradwell Village Hall, The Cotswold Antiques Study Group (NADFAS) will host their Christmas lecture, entitled; *Unwrapping the Christmas Story in Paintings, Prose and Poetry*, to be followed by mince pies and a glass of wine.

The speaker will be Pamela Halford,

freelance lecturer who has lectured to the English Speaking Union, The National Gallery and at Bath University.

Bradwell Village is two miles south of Burford on the A361 Lechlade road. Non-members are welcome. Anyone interested in future programmes or in joining should contact the Membership Secretary on: 01869 345332.