

# Breathe Easy

Monday 21st April 2008

Supported by  
 The National Lottery®  
 through Awards for All



## Sutton Coldfield

**breatheeasy**  
 BRITISH LUNG FOUNDATION SUPPORT NETWORK

\*\*\*\*\*

Dear Member,

Welcome to the April newsletter. I feel sorry for the gardeners amongst us as the recent frosts and cold winds have prevented work that is vital at this time of year. However, I look forward to the calm balmy days of summer when I can sit and admire the garden in all its glory.....unfortunately I'll be mowing the lawn! At the February meeting we welcomed Philippa Campbell from Air Products, who gave an excellent talk despite technical problems. Thank you once again Philippa. The highlights of her talk I have included below. The speaker for the April meeting will be Kevin Daley from the 'Donkey Sanctuary' in Sutton Park.

I look forward to seeing you all on the 24th.

Ed.

### Last Month's Speaker



Before I outline The talk by philippa, From Air Products, I must apologise on behalf of Breath Easy for not being able to cure the technical problem which prevented her showing slides to accompany

her talk. However, philippa was undaunted and gave an excellent talk from which not only did the people who use oxygen gain information, but the rest of the group learnt about what is on offer if we should need the service in the future. Ed.

The first subject Philippa approached was the use of the concentrator. She likened the machine and its cabling to that of a telephone exchange with cables to different points in the house. By so doing there was no possibility of falling over trailing wires or cables. Of course with oxygen in a house one of the prime considerations is the safety aspect, which philippa was keen to point out. No smoking was the order of the day. I was not aware that the electricity used by the concentrator is paid for by the company. Philippa reassured everyone that if the electricity supply failed there was a device fitted that would still allow oxygen to be supplied, and if flooding occurred, as we saw last year a call to the 'Home' service would ensure that an oxygen bottle would be sent immediately.

At this point there was a question about portable oxygen to enable people to get out and about, and the portable cylinder was described but unfortunately this only allowed for 3½ hours use. However, a small box called a 'conserver' can be added, which extends the oxygen supply by about three times, giving approximately 11hrs use on normal flow rate. At this point philippa demonstrated how to set up the conserver and she mentioned, as the portable Oxygen is supplied by a battery, this would

last about 90 hrs. A battery is supplied in the first instance, and then you will have to supply your own, so it is important that you turn off when not in use. There are a number of cylinders of different capacities, including some designed for children.

The talk now moved on to the subject of liquid oxygen which may be required by someone on a high flow rate and is out and about a lot. This is recommended by your clinician and is useful in certain cases. Apparently, a number of flasks are supplied and the patient is instructed on how to fill these. These flasks are filled from a main tank which is very heavy so if you live on the ground floor then OK but as philippa said "not at the top of a five story building." The liquid oxygen lasts much longer but it is not for everyone.

We now moved on to 'holidays.' Six regions are covered by Air Products and includes the Northwest - Manchester, Liverpool, -East Midlands, - Nottingham, Derby - Yorkshire - Central Midlands - Wales and parts of London. If you are embarking on a holiday you must first fill in a 'home oxygen' form so that the company knows where to deliver, when to deliver and what you require. If you are going abroad you should ring in with details. There is a fee for this service. If you are driving in the UK then you will have oxygen in your car and you must have an oxygen sticker, you should also inform your insurance company, however philippa said she has been led to believe that if you have the sticker and are carrying an oxygen bottle in the vehicle your premium may not be increased. If you are carrying a concentrator or oxygen cylinders please make sure they are strapped down, so that in an accident they do not move. Please give a full address of where you are going and supply a contact number so that you can be reached, and do fill in your form well before your holiday so that the company are not rushed at the last minute, and inform your hotel or wherever you are staying that you use oxygen. Coaches and aircraft companies also need to be contacted. There were one or two further questions for Philippa to answer but I think I have covered the main points. We thank her once again for an enjoyable evening. Ed.

# Breathe Easy

## The FA Cup Final

A British Soldier, whilst on patrol in Iraq, happens upon a young lad kicking around a spent shell case with not inconsiderable skill. The two end up chatting and the soldier says, "Would you like to play football in England? A great friend of mine knows Alex Ferguson, the man in charge of the top England team. He could help you."

The boy appears very keen and so, when the soldier returns home, he asks his friend.

Well, it turns out that Alex Ferguson is interested and so the young lad is brought over. He starts off in the junior team, but is so good, he gets steadily promoted until he's on the substitute bench for the first team at the FA Cup final. The game reaches half-time and the score is 2-2.

"Alright", says Ferguson, "let's see what you can do."

On to the pitch he goes. The lad scores three fantastic goals and the team have a glorious victory. Afterwards, the lad goes to a 'phone to call his Dad.

"Dad", he says, "we won the FA Cup final and I scored three goals!"

His Dad is non-plussed and replies, "Don't you give me that! Back here, we're going through Hell! Your Mother went out for bread this morning and hasn't been seen since. Your Sister was raped last night, and your brother was beaten up in the street on his way back from school!"

"But Dad," complains the youth, "you can't blame me for that!"

"Well," said his father, "you made us come to Manchester!"

We all know that smoking is the most likely cause of many lung conditions such as COPD, but I am constantly surprised at how many people continue to smoke. I personally gave up smoking in 1981 but unfortunately still suffer from its effects.

However, help is at hand as described here

## Free Local NHS Stop Smoking Services

### Services

Support from specialist advisors for smokers who are resident, registered with a GP or employed in the Birmingham East and North PCT area. All clients are offered a one-to-one, group appointment or pharmacy contact in their locality with a choice of day, evening or weekend appointments. Quit attempts are supported with Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT) on prescription and regular follow-up sessions. Free NRT to those who are exempt.



### Pregnancy Services

Specialist stop smoking advisory in midwifery for pregnant women. Home visits available.

### Ethnic Services

A Mirpuri and Urdu speaker is available on the helpline - call 0800 052 5855. Clinics in areas where communities live. Advisors available who can also speak Urdu, Punjabi, Mirpuri, Kachi, Afrikaans and Zulu. Access to interpreters.

### Other Services

Specialist stop smoking support for young people, some at specific venues for young people. Health promotion in primary and secondary schools. Support for workplaces to become smoke free and advice and support for smokers wanting to quit. Provides a drop in session in community and health care settings. Can cater for women who wish to attend a segregated clinic.

**Call to Quit :-**  
(Birmingham East and North Stop Smoking Service)

Phone Call to Quit direct on: **0800 052 5855** or

Contact: - **stopsmokingservice@benpet.nhs.uk**

**Website: [www.benpet.nhs.uk](http://www.benpet.nhs.uk)**

Address Kingsnorth House  
1 Blenheim Way, Kingstanding,  
Birmingham, West Midlands B44 8LS

## Don't Forget!



**Sunday 27th April**

**Town Gate, Sutton Park, Sutton Coldfield**

Register on line at:-

<[www.lunguk.orgmidlandslunrun](http://www.lunguk.orgmidlandslunrun)>

For further information and updates about the day log on to: <[www.lunguk.org](http://www.lunguk.org)> or contact:

01782 398 114 or email: [blf@frsystems.co.uk](mailto:blf@frsystems.co.uk)

If you are fit to run, why not ask for sponsors and support The British Lung Foundation in it it's valuable work.

# Breathe Easy

## Chairman's

Chit

Chat



Following on from last month's article from Joyce Dyke, about how her illness affects daily life, we have a piece from Chairman Ann Fenoughty, on how her life has changed since the diagnosis in 1998.

### ME AND MY CHEST

I was first diagnosed with what was then Chronic Bronchitis and asthma in 1998 following a family holiday in France. (I had had asthma as a child) My lung function was checked and I was prescribed a number of inhalers and the initials COPD were banded about, and, of course, the fact that I had smoked made it my own fault. Fact is, I never had been a heavy smoker and gave up when diagnosed. Modern research shows however, that anyone who worked around photocopiers is likely to have inhaled toner dust which can be detrimental. Nevertheless I will never forget the fact that I was made to feel guilty and that I had brought the problem on myself, and no one ever sat me down and explained the condition. (I know all I know from my own personal research). I had led a very busy active life as Chairman of two hockey clubs, playing until aged 53, County administrator for Yorkshire Women's Hockey Association, properties master in Yorkshire and Sutton and latterly part of a local stage gang until 60, even doing a stint at the Hippodrome in Birmingham.

It was in 2001 that I was the first attendee under the leadership of Karen Hammond, at Good Hope's Pulmonary Rehabilitation Programme. I found it so beneficial that I have been trying to get it re-instated for some time now.

The last few years have been eventful to say the least. In 2004 I went into Good Hope with a chest infection and came out with a ruptured Achilles tendon. I managed to stay away until 2007 when I was in for over three weeks with pneumonia, after which I had short burst oxygen. That didn't last however and I am now on long term oxygen. I must admit when I was told I'd need 16 hours a day I was very distressed and tears flowed, but now it's part of life. I have a small portable tank which enables me to go out and about with my buggy.

The real problem with the disease is its unpredictability - you never know where or when, which

makes planning anything difficult, so if I'm fit I go for it - like after a five day stay on Ward 8 recently, I came out determined not to go back for a while, so went and had a new hair do and drove the car for the first time in ages! On bad days I rest and wait for the good.

As a result of my condition I have become more and more involved with the BLF and Breathe Easy and spend many hours on behalf of our group, my mission being to help others cope with their problem.

**Useful reading** - COPD Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease, Answers at your fingertips by Dr Jon Miles and June Roberts Class Publishing.  
Ann Fenoughty.

## Theatre Trip



As you may remember, last month I outlined a visit to 'Sutton Arts Theatre in South Parade, Sutton Coldfield, on Thursday 19th June, for a performance of Noel Cowards 'Private Lives.' The entrance fee will be paid out of group funds, but it is imperative that we know the number of members involved as the theatre is usually booked up well in advance. So, can I again appeal to you to let our Treasurer, Tom Fenoughty, have the £5 deposit (refundable on the night) **as soon as possible** if you wish to attend.

The address to send your deposit to is The Treasurer, Mr. Tom Fenoughty, 3, Wentworth Drive, Lichfield, Staffs WS14 9HN

## Powdered latex gloves cause asthma

When a staff nurse returned to work after a long holiday she noticed symptoms suggestive of occupational asthma. She started wheezing while at work but her breathing improved as soon as she arrived home. The hospital's occupational health department helped solve the problem. They confirmed that she had an allergy to latex. This gave her a rash over her hands and lower arms and then led to her developing asthma. The hospital's occupational health department now issues her with vinyl gloves. Everyone around her avoids using powdered latex gloves. The nurse continues to work using her skills. The employer provided her with a safe working environment and since then she has not had any problems.

## Please Let us Know!

As prices are rising and we are a charity with limited funds, there is a considerable cost involved in producing the newsletter, of which I send out approximately 160 per month. Please let me know if you no longer require it, to enable us to keep our costs to a minimum. Thank you.

Ed.

# Breathe Easy



## The Puffer Line Snippets!

Did you know?

K.Y. Jelly is useful for dry nostrils that people get when on oxygen therapy. Vaseline and petroleum products must not be used as they are inflammable.

An average adult body is twenty times bigger than it was at birth, but the eye is normally only three times as big.

The average adult has 656 muscles in their body, so I hope they don't all ache at once!

Good news for allergy sufferers - an unmade bed is better for you, as bed and dust mites flourish under the covers of a made up bed, so throw back the covers and leave!

Next Month "How to Enjoy the Summer" -Suggestions welcome!

Joyce Dyke.



## Quiz Time

Time for  
Answers!

### The Quick Quiz

Answers for last months Quiz

The answers are all 'Body Parts'

1. Snakes shed This ? Skin....
2. A river has one ? Mouth.....
3. Pessimists should learn to keep theirs up ? Chin.
4. An army marches on its ? Stomach....
5. Hill top on your face ? Brow.....

Here are this months questions

1. Sacred Building ? .....
2. Prisons have these ? .....
3. These have caps ? .....
4. Seen on a pirate flag ? .....

Whilst on the subject of beds, the following article is a reminder of how important the mattress is!

### Mattress Service

Some of your readers might be interested to read about my mother's serious problem with bronchial asthma, which she had for many years. If I remember correctly she was on various drugs. On one occasion she actually had to telephone a doctor in the middle of the night as she couldn't breathe.

Some time after my father died my mother agreed to remove his bed to give her more room. I was shocked to see how much dust had accumulated in his mattress over the years and I persuaded my mother to buy herself a new mattress (she was in her late 80s). From the day that the new mattress arrived until she died of old age at nearly 103 she never had any more problems with her lungs. I do hope this will persuade anyone with similar problems to get a new mattress.

Judith Constantine, Bath



### Room Service!

Some of you may have heard a rumour to the effect that due to charges imposed on us by the hospital, we were unable to use the room for our monthly meetings. I am happy to report that it is just a rumour and we are able to continue as before. We thank G.H. for their support. Ed.

## Bereavement

It is with great sadness that I have to report the passing of another of our members, Peter Burbridge. Peter and his wife Jean have been long standing members of our Breathe Easy group, attending the meetings and participating in all our activities until Peter had to go into hospital suffering from pneumonia. Unfortunately since then he has suffered with ill health for many months and died at home on Monday 14th April. I particularly, will miss Peter as we were work colleagues. Our thoughts are with Jean and the family at this sad time. Peter, a friend and a gentleman will be greatly missed.

Peter Rubery.

The funeral will take place at Sutton Coldfield Crematorium at 1pm on 29th April. Family flowers only, Donations to Sutton Coldfield Breathe easy Group please.

For submission of articles, comments or news, contact:- Peter Rubery at this address:- 18, Forest Close, Streetly, Sutton Coldfield, West Midlands B74 2JZ Telephone No. 0121 353 9623 or email <eponym@peterrubery.co.uk.>

If you **do not** wish to receive the News Letter in future, please contact me and I will delete your details. Peter Rubery, Ed.