



the Hereditary Multiple Exostoses Support Group

affiliated to Contact a Family

NEWSLETTER

Hi everyone, and a very warm welcome to our summer newsletter.

Our Newsletter is again geared towards our Conference and 10-year celebrations, which were held in May of this year. Although the attendance at this year's conference was low we had some excellent feedback and have again managed to obtain summaries from our speakers of their talks, which generated much interest during our question and answer section at the Conference. As I said to you all last year I do think it is important for us to report back to those members who were unable to join us and offer them the same support and information that we have managed to obtain by our attendance at these Conferences.

We have a couple of committee changes following our recent AGM. Dawn Searle has stepped down as Fundraiser to the Group but will remain on the Committee as Trustee. I am sure I speak for you all when I thank Dawn for all her hard work and commitment over the past ten years. Dawn has been an inspiration to us all and has helped to raise a lot of money for the group through various fundraising challenges as well as raising awareness. Thank you Dawn. We haven't seen the back of Dawn though - as I said earlier she will remain on the Committee as a Trustee and will be around to help with our HME Raise Awareness Week scheduled to take place in October this year. (Please see inside for details).

Lynne Colville has been voted in as Conference Organiser, which is great news. I am sure you will join me in wishing her all the best for the future in what is a challenging but rewarding venture.

Having now settled in my new role I hope that as a Group we can continue to move forward and increase awareness of HME at every opportunity. Our membership is increasing all the time, which is great news. We now have a Chairperson for the Youth, Rob Searle. (See inside for details).

Many thanks to those of you who have donated money to the Group (too many to mention individually) - this is always very much appreciated and will be put to good use.

Finally, once again, thank you for all your support and as always, please let us know if you have any comments or suggestions for the Group together with any offers of help. We like hearing from you! Have a great summer.

Christine Spencer, Chairperson

HMESG Committee**Christine Spencer Chair**

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The Editor

Welcome to Issue 16 of the HMESG Newsletter. 2007 is an exciting year for the HMESG as it celebrates its 10th anniversary and the planned raise awareness week - 15th-21st October - is certain to go a long way in increasing knowledge of this frustrating condition to a wider audience. Let's hope so - more understanding of the challenges faced by those affected would be much appreciated.

May saw another highly successful and enjoyable AGM and fundraiser in Newcastle. You can see full reports on these events on pages 3 - 9 and please make sure you read the enclosed ideas for fundraising during awareness week

We hope that you enjoy reading this newsletter and find it both informative and interesting. And remember it is your newsletter, so please do send any comments, ideas or articles you would like to see included. You can contact me on w.tollman@btinternet.com.

There's no stopping them...

Who says that having HME or any related conditions has to stop you from doing anything!

Congratulations to **Ryan Spencer**, 9, who became runner up in the Boys Kumite competition at the North West Open Karate Championship in Atherton, near Manchester on Saturday 3 March. Well done Ryan and keep up all the training and hard work.

Similarly, congratulations and thank you to **Elliot Watson**. Elliot attends the Gillies Mar-Jan Stage School in Lancashire, which, every 2 years, puts on a show to raise money for different nominated charities. Not only did Elliot perform but he also nominated the HMESG to be one of the recipient charities. His request was successful and as well as raising funds for the HMESG he also managed to raise awareness as his Dad - Steven - was invited to talk about the condition and answer questions which generated a lot of interest in our charity. The final sum of what's been raised will be announced in June and we will bring you an update in the next Newsletter.

Thank you

This edition of the HMESG Newsletter has once again been produced and distributed at no charge to HMESG by Dominion Business Supplies Ltd, Medway City Estate, Rochester, Kent.

The HMESG would like to extend its most grateful thanks to Simon and Rachael Garrett-Tuffney and everyone at Dominion for their most generous ongoing support and help in this matter. It is much appreciated and will enable the money saved on printing to be transferred to our Research Fund for the good of all our current and future members. Thank you.

AGM and Fundraiser, Newcastle 5 May 2007

Following on from last year's tremendously successful event, the Federation Brewery, Newcastle was once again the venue for the HMESG's 2007 AGM Conference and Fundraising event. And those who were able to make the journey and attend were not disappointed as they enjoyed another superbly organised and highly informative event as well as the opportunity to speak with other sufferers and like-minded people.

For those of you unable to attend Newcastle, and indeed, for those who were fortunate to be present we have 'persuaded' both Dawn and Rob Searle (the new Youth Co-ordinator) to share their thoughts of the event.

AGM - Dawn Searle

As with last year, the whole weekend went very well and was highly enjoyable. In her first year as Chair, Christine did a great job leading the AGM and there were some interesting speakers who helped us understand HME a bit better. As always, their presentations led to some good questions from delegates and some equally fine answers!

For this year's Members' story, Barbara Gibbs (our HMESG Secretary) talked from her position as a Granny of a spontaneous sufferer and spoke of her efforts in trying to raise both funds and awareness of the condition. She was inspirational!

I was very surprised to be presented with a beautiful cut glass vase and wine stopper and card from all the committee, as a thank you for my work over the years. I have in charge of fundraising activities since the group began and have now stepped



down to re-charge my batteries. I am, however, staying on as Trustee and will continue to support and help members whenever I can.

To help relieve the burden from Christine, Lynne Colvill was elected as new Conference Organiser. Welcome Lynne and good luck.

Fundraiser

The theme this year was 1970s Disco, which proved to be a lively and colourful choice!

The evening went very well. The hall looked great with silver star balloons on the tables and lots of those attending were dressed dress up in 70's gear. They all seemed to enjoy themselves immensely and thank you for making the effort - it really made the atmosphere of the evening. As well as UK members, we also had people from the Netherlands and Holland attend and it's great to see other European support groups coming together with the UK.

Two of my good friends, Maria and Rochelle, and their families came along and not only supported the funding to put the evening event together, but also helped the smooth running of the night and bid for items in our auction. I would like to thank them from the bottom of my heart for all their help.

The DJ, Steve, set the night off with music from the 70's then the band Disco Knights came on. They were 4 fab guys who sang for 45 minutes and got everyone on the dance floor. As well as the entertainment, there were also dancing competitions, best-dressed male, best-dressed female and best table competitions throughout the night.

Roxy, my daughter aged 12 and her good friend Tasha, 14, got on stage and sang "I will survive" then Roxy did a song by Cher called "Strong Enough".

A bit later on in the evening two people shouted that they would give £50 and £100 to hear them again and then everyone put even more money in a bucket. It was amazing and the girls loved it, and they were fantastic. Thanks girls!

I then said a few words about how the support group started and that the kids go through a lot of pain and operations but seem to always be smiling and are so happy to be a part of a support group.



Tasha and Roxy on Stage

Following on from his success last year, the popular Andy Oliver (Bid up TV) came on the stage and did a grand job with the Auction of twelve lots of signed sporting memorabilia. A game of Head and Tails was then played with the winner winning a bottle of red & white wine as well as and chocolates for their table.



Do you recognise these partygoers?

The evening came to a close with Disco Knights performing once more, followed by the Raffle being drawn. Lynda Tams was the lucky winner of the 1st prize which was an I-pod with Mrs Howard from London winning the £100 second prize and Mr Goodchild from Biggleswade the £75 3rd prize. Other smaller prizes were then drawn and all winners have been notified. Thank you to everyone whom either bought or sold tickets.

It was such a memorable evening and I am so pleased with the outcome. Although we didn't make as much money as last time, hopefully we have raised our profile and helped other people understand more about HME. The main thing, though, is that everyone enjoyed themselves!



Two of the Spencer family - Christine, our Chair, and son Ryan, 9 - prepare for a night to remember!



Thank you Christine for helping both me, and everyone else, that made the time and effort to come. It would be great when we have the next event if more members can come along and support it.

Rob Searle - New Chairperson for the Youth

This year at the Newcastle AGM, the Youth group decided to branch off from the main HME to start up the HME Youth and report back to Christine on what we would like for future meetings. 6 Youth members turned up for this meeting and I was elected Chair with Kayleigh Errington as Vice Chair. The meeting was very successful and we talked about a lot of issues relevant to us.

But before the meeting we thought it would be a good idea to get to know the new members of the youth group. So decided to go bowling.. Accompanied by Maria, Marcel and family (friends of Dawn Searle) we headed off to the Metro Centre by taxi and got in to our bowling shoes! There were two teams of 5 players and we had great fun with both teams doing very well! Afterwards, we went in the arcade for a few minutes where we played air hockey before heading back to the taxis, which took us back to the Lancastrian Suite.

When we arrived back at the venue, we went into a small conference room where Lewis Brown (an HME sufferer himself) and his wife Kim greeted us. We sat around a big table and discussed future plans and this is when I was voted on as Youth Chair and Kayleigh as Vice. Lewis Brown gave us an uplifting talk about his past experiences with HME, which the Youth found very useful and interesting and now look up to him within the group

In the evening we went to the HME 70's Disco, which was extremely good fun and well organised, and we all had a great time. The people that wore fancy dress looked amazing and made the night that extra bit special.

I had a fantastic time during the weekend and would like to thank everyone who made it possible. Special mentions go to Dawn Searle (my Mum) and Christine Spencer (Chair) for organising such a big event and making it run so very smoothly. Best Wishes, Rob

Lynne Colvill - New Conference Organiser

My name is Lynne Colvill and I suffer with HME. I'm 28 and from Kent although am now settling into life in West London with my boyfriend. I work full time as a supervisory mail operative for a large distribution company. It's mainly office work, so of course you get the usual office banter.

HME is part of my life, but not the whole of it and as such I try to never let it hold me back. I have a very active life, which includes going out, watching motor sports and football. I've never really thought about how HME affects my life; it's a part of me. I suppose the operations and hospital appointments take up a bit of my life. I joined the group in 2003 and went to the meeting in Oxford. It was the first time I had met anyone with my disease. Both my mum and I were shocked how differently everyone was affected but we all share a common bond - a determination and belief that the disease is treatable and that it won't affect our normal day to day living.

At the AGM in May, I was voted into my new role as Conference Organiser and I'm looking forward to the challenge of organising an event to make Christine proud! She works tirelessly for the group, not only being the main point of contact for other committee members but also filling the gaps we currently have on the Committee. We would not have had a conference this year without her efforts to secure the speakers, organise the location and the food. We would appreciate any input about what people want both in terms of topics and events. As you all know, finding out that you are not alone is an essential part of the groups' work and I think the conferences allow people to meet and exchange ideas on pain relief, treatments and hospitals. I hope to see all of you there! So that's a little bit about me, hopefully you guys can email the group at support@hmesg.co.uk and tell us what you want.

What the Speakers Said

Yet again, we have been lucky enough to secure copies of the papers presented by the superb speakers. May we extend our grateful thanks for these, as I know many of our members find them continual and useful sources of reference.

The Risk of Developing Early Wear and Tear of the Wrist in Adults with HME

Adam Watts, Specialist Registrar in Orthopaedics

Hereditary Multiple Exostosis (HME) can affect the way that bones grow. Bony lumps (exostoses), characteristic of HME, may prevent the bones from growing to their full length. Where bones grow in pairs, such as in the lower leg and forearm, this can lead to problems with joints such as the ankle or the wrist. In some people with HME the ankle is known to develop problems with wear and tear earlier than would normally be expected. This is more likely to occur if there is a greater discrepancy in the length of the two bones of the lower leg. It is often argued that in individuals with HME the ankle is at greater risk of wear because it has to carry the weight of the body. So what about the wrist?

The wrist, like the ankle, is in part made up of paired bones - the radius (on the thumb side) and the ulna (on the little finger side). These bones form a joint with the small bones of the hand (the carpal bones). The joints of the arm carry a surprising load - because of the

pull of the muscles across the wrist the load can be equivalent to body weight. So do these joints also wear early in HME? We have people with HME who come to the clinic with wrist pain - but there may be many individual reasons for this - and this may not translate to the population with HME as a whole. We have performed a previous study of a large number of people with HME and we noted that from the age of 40 years wrist movement decreased. We are therefore performing an ongoing study of the wrist joints of people with HME over the age of 40 years using questionnaires, X-rays and clinical examinations to see whether there is any evidence of wear and explore any factors that may predispose to it.

The preliminary results, from 15 volunteers were presented at the meeting. Their average age was 49 years. On average wrist movement was mildly restricted particularly in bending and rotation. The average function was only

moderate impaired. As the differences in the length of the radius and ulna bones increased the architecture of the wrist joint became more affected, pain increased, the wrists were stiffer and the function worse. Nine out of 22 wrists that were X-rayed did show very early wear and tear changes, and this appeared to be related to the worsening wrist architecture.

In summary the preliminary results of this study suggest a possible link between HME and early wear in the wrist, probably related to a short ulna bone. The volunteers in this study, however, did not have any significant impairment in function. This problem can potentially be addressed but would require intervention while the bones are growing (ie in childhood) to prevent problems in later life. We need to do further research before we can conclude that the problem warrants surgery in children with HME.

Why is HME so variable in families?

Dr Michael Wright, Consultant Clinical Geneticist, Northern Genetics Services, Newcastle

Why do I have 10, Mum has none and Gran had lots?

This is one of the questions that puzzle many people with HME. Why is it that there is so much variation in how the condition affects people, even people in the same family?

HME is caused by a change in a gene. Our genes are simply instructions that tell the cells in our body to do something. We have thousands of them and many genes are instructions, which tell cells to make a protein. When genes are copied to make new cells the copying process sometimes goes wrong and the copy is not an exact replica of the original. This may affect the instruction that gene contains and so either alters the way that the protein that is made works, or result in no protein being produced at all. These gene changes can be passed from parent to child, and if they are, the disease that they cause may also be passed on.

Most genes exist as pairs. The majority of people who have HME have a change in one copy of a pair of genes. They also however have a second normal copy of this gene. This explains why when someone with HME has children there is a 50% chance that the child will have the condition and a 50% chance that they will not.

The two genes that most commonly cause HME are either *EXT1* or *EXT2*. There is probably at least one more gene that is important in HME (*EXT3*) but that hasn't been found yet. All the people in a family who have HME will have the same gene change. So why is there so much variation within families?

Well it's probably because having a change in a single copy of these genes is enough to predispose people to develop exostoses but a 'second event' is needed in a cell to cause it to grow into an exostosis. In some cases this may be a change in the second copy of either *EXT1* or *EXT2*. In other cases it may be that the second event is a change in a different gene or something specific about the place that a particular cell happens to be in a bone. There is quite a lot of argument about this and there are probably a number of different mechanisms occurring in different exostoses.

The overall effect of all of this is that, whilst almost everyone in a family with HME who carries the family gene change will develop some exostoses at some time in their lives, when and where they will develop and how many of them will develop will vary from person to person. Everyone has the same initial gene change but how many of the 'second events' required to actually make an exostosis that occur will vary and so the number of exostoses will vary.

Sometimes it looks like the condition is getting more or less severe as it is passed from generation to generation. Sometimes it looks like it only affects boys and men in the family, or that it only affects the first-born child, or the third born. All of these are purely coincidence and simply represent the combination of some children in the family inheriting a normal copy of the gene and so not having the condition at all and some people having relatively few 'second events' and so developing only a few exostoses. The problem is that at the moment there is no way of predicting who will have lots and who will have only 1 or 2. Perhaps one day in the future our understanding of the mechanisms controlling this process will improve sufficiently to show us the answer to this important puzzle.

Pain

Professor Stephen Tyrer, Consultant in Pain Management, Royal Victoria Infirmary, Newcastle-upon-Tyne

Although Professor Tyrer was unable to be present at the Conference he very kindly sent us this presentation for which we are most grateful.

Hereditary Multiple Exostoses (HME) may produce pain and other complications by pressing on nearby tissue, limiting movement of joints, and may require surgical removal.

Types of Pain

There are two main types of pain that occur in HME.

Nociceptive pain and Neuropathic pain

Nociceptors are receptors which sense and respond to parts of the body that suffer damage. They signal tissue irritation or actual injury. Nociceptive pain is typically well localised and constant, often with an aching or throbbing quality. Examples in HME include bone pain, inflammation, and pressure on muscles, ligaments and other soft tissues.

Nociceptive pain is normally time-limited but in some cases it becomes chronic. This occurs because of what is called peripheral sensitisation. This phenomenon occurs when prolonged tissue trauma causes the nociceptor endings to become hypersensitive. As a result weak peripheral stimuli that would not normally be perceived as painful now activate nociceptors and lead to pain. This process is thought to be induced by inflammatory products. Pains may also result from complications that occur following the healing process including fibrosis, abscess formation, bone deformities, and other damage to previously intact structures.

Neuropathic pain is the result of an injury or malfunction in the peripheral or central nervous system. The pain is produced by damage to the nerve itself. In HME such pains may be due to pressure of bony outgrowths on sensory nerves leading to nerve damage.

Neuropathic pain is experienced differently from nociceptive pain. The hallmarks of this condition are allodynia, hyperaesthesia, numbness and hyperpathia.

These terms are described below in the table.

Symptoms of neuropathic pain

Term	Meaning
Allodynia	Painful response to normally non-noxious stimuli.
Hyperalgesia	Lowered pain thresholds and enhanced pain response to unpleasant thermal and mechanical stimulation.
Numbness & Paraesthesia	Reduced sensation in the affected part associated with numbness, pricking and tingling sensations.
Hyperpathia	Condition of altered perception when stimuli which would normally be innocuous, if repeated or prolonged, result in severe explosive or persistent pain when the sensory threshold is exceeded.

The adjectives that patients use when describing neuropathic pain include words such as burning, electric, tingling and shooting. The pain may persist for months or years beyond the apparent healing of any damaged tissues. In this setting, pain signals no longer represent an alarm about ongoing or impending injury; on the other hand the alarm system itself is malfunctioning.

Pain in HME

In a recent study of individuals with HME almost half stated that they had pain every day. Two factors were found to have a significant influence on pain, (1)-having complications secondary to HME, such as compression of tendons, nerves, and blood vessels, and (2)-having surgery (Darilek *et al.* 2005). Individuals who have complications and surgery as a result of HME are 4-5 times more likely to report having pain. Older people were more likely to report pain.

This paper showed clearly that pain is more common in HME than many have realised. Although most pains in HME are probably of nociceptive origin it is likely that neuropathic pain occurs. It is important to make the distinction, as treatment is very different for the two types of pain. Nociceptive pain is treated with drugs such as paracetamol, anti-inflammatory drugs and the opioid group, whereas neuropathic pain responds to drugs such as amitriptyline, carbamazepine and gabapentin, which primarily act as nerve sedatives.

Working out the type of pain helps identify the cause and also what treatment will help. Unusual deep bone pains associated with swelling should prompt particular attention because of the danger of chondrosarcoma. The watchword should be "Know your pain, work out why and treat".

Reference: - Darilek, S. et al. Hereditary multiple exostoses and pain.

Important Advice

There is an aspect of HME, which is rare, but it is important that it is known about. It is possible that an exostosis can change into a malignant tumour, which is usually slow growing and can often be cured. The chances of this happening really are rare and according to Mr Grimer, Consultant Orthopaedic Oncologist, who spoke at our conference, the chances of this happening in a child are extremely rare. The warning signs are an increase in size or discomfort of an exostosis after growth has stopped, or unusually rapid growth of one. These changes should be reported to your doctor who can arrange further investigation with an Orthopaedic Surgeon. At the Conference, Mr Grimer reported that the most common age of malignant change in HME is 35 years and the most likely place is in the pelvis. Nobody knows why this is. His expert advice is that people who suffer with HME should have an x-ray of the pelvis at the age of 20 then every five years to check for malignant change in exostoses. We are passing on this advice and suggest that you speak to your specialist for further information. Although people with HME are more likely to develop a malignant lump than other people, the risk should be kept in proportion. For example, for a female, it's less than the risk that all women face of developing breast cancer. It is rare, but we should be aware of the facts.

Journal of Paediatric Orthopaedics, 25; 369-376; 2005.

YOUR SUPPORT GROUP NEEDS YOU - CAN YOU HELP? HME RAISE AWARENESS WEEK

To all our members, we really need your help!

This year is the 10th Anniversary of HMESG and what better way to celebrate than by making a difference by raising funds for research & our next conference. We have designated **15th October to 21st October** as Raise Awareness week and the idea is exactly that - to raise both awareness of HME and funds locally and nationally. If we can all pull together and do something in our local area we will go a long way to educating more people about HME and may even get commercial sponsors or funds for our efforts!

Why is this important?

If we all say I'm too busy, we could lose the chance to ever learn more about HME or even one day get a cure. Conferences cost about £6,000 and we do not have the funds to stage another one in the near future and could miss out on this important opportunity for members to meet and support each other. Don't let this happen and help us be able to put on another Conference - the more we raise the quicker it will be. We plan to go to another part of the UK next time but need feedback as to where you want it? Email: support@hmesg.co.uk.

PLEASE HELP US AND DO SOMETHING FOR HME.

PLEASE LOOK AT THE ENCLOSED LIST OF FUNDRAISING IDEAS AND SEE IF YOU CAN HELP US RAISE SOME MUCH NEEDED CASH. WE ARE GRATEFUL FOR ANY DONATIONS. Thank you.

Visit to Antwerp - Christine Spencer

In November last year, Helen Small and myself were invited to a European meeting of HME Groups. It was a very well attended meeting with representations from Belgium, Spain, Germany, the Netherlands and of course the United Kingdom and although very tiring it was very informative and interesting.

Each country group gave a small presentation. It was very interesting to see the varying stages each group were at, especially the Spanish group, which is quite clearly starting up from scratch with only a small number of members currently.

We were all invited to dinner on the Saturday evening courtesy of the Dutch group where we chatted freely about HME and our individual experiences.

On Sunday morning Jan de Lange gave a presentation on his preliminary results on research into HME/Multiple Osteochondromas and the consequences of these conditions in the Netherlands, which was very interesting.

It was agreed that each country would, over the coming months, work towards European continuance and the setting up of a European alliance.

Helen and two other members, one from the Netherlands and one from Belgium, will act as a Working Party working on the initiating of a structure/work plan with Helen being the co-ordinator of this small working group. We shall keep you informed of developments.

HME Youth

From Rob Searle, Chair of the Youth Group

Firstly I would like to thank everyone that attended the conference in Newcastle. It was great fun and, on behalf of the youth group, I would like to thank everybody involved in making it the success it was.

At the meeting the youth group discussed what it wants to achieve and one of the things is to meet up regularly. Ideas were raised as to where we should meet and what we could do and one of them was to stay at my house in Hertfordshire which is on a direct train line into Kings Cross so we could go into London and do the whole 'touristy' bit. I think this would be a fantastic trip as we could all go out as a group and do things that some people have never done before! If you have any more suggestions for this trip or ideas for somewhere else, please e-mail support@hmesg.co.uk and marked FAO Rob.

We also discussed the age you have to be to be part of the HME Youth and decided on 13 years up to 21. Could you all please e-mail me your e-mail addresses to support@hmesg.co.uk so I have everyone's for future get-togethers and reference.

Each newsletter, the youth will be including a member fact file where a member will introduce themselves to the group with a photo (at your discretion) and a brief biography - this could include experiences, hobbies or interests. So again please e-mail me via support@hmesg.co.uk and as you will see, I have started the ball rolling with my profile below! We also thought we could include a bit in the newsletter for the non-affected siblings and family members of those with HME in a "What About Us?" section where they can talk about the experiences that they have had because of their family member having HME. They can also talk about their interests, hobbies and anything they get up to. Look forward to hearing from you.

Once again for the people who did attend the weekend in Newcastle - thank you! But I want to see a lot more of you in the future meetings and when we all meet up! Also please look at the fundraising ideas to see if there is anything you could do to help us raise money and our profile. We now have a raising awareness week specifically for HME during the 15th - 21st October. This is a huge step forward, however we all need your help to raise money for research and for conferences.

Fact File

Name: Rob Searle
Age: 17
Lives: Hertfordshire
HME: Yes, from age of 3 years
Interests: Fishing, Speedway, Football, Photography, Computers, Guitar Hero



Hi I'm Rob! (Youth Group Chair) I go to college at the moment where I am starting my second year in September studying e-business - I really enjoy it as it is quite challenging. I love all sorts of Fishing, from Sea to Coarse. The biggest fish I have caught was a 20lbs+ Tope (which is a Shark) I have also been going to Speedway for about 6 years now, every Saturday only missing a handful of meetings. Even if I am on crutches after my operations I still go and support my team Rye House Rockets! I am also a mad Football fan of Manchester United. I love watching them and my favourite player is Ole Solskjaer. I also go to watch my local team Stevenage Borough and I went to Wembley to support them a few weeks back when they came back from 2 - 0 to win the FA Trophy 3 - 2. The atmosphere was amazing and after I went to the player's party and had a photo taken with legend Steve Guppy. (He has played for a host of tops clubs).

I live in the countryside with my Mum, Dad, Sister Roxy and indoor rabbit Britz. I'd like to think as myself as a positive person and enjoy life to the full.

Fundraising

Since the last newsletter, so many fantastic fundraising efforts have been made on behalf of the HMESG and a huge thank you to everyone who continues to raise money for the group - your efforts are truly appreciated. If I have missed anyone out below please accept my sincere apologies and thank you.

Barbara Gibbs organised a 'Music for Christmas' Evening which raised a fantastic £1523.70. She would like to pass on her very grateful thanks to her son, Christopher, and his musical colleagues who made it all possible as well as his other friends who made mince pies, sausage rolls etc. Also, thanks go to **Grant Russell** who donated £75 and whose company Acumus Intelligent Housing Insurance, donated all the mulled wine for above event, plus a gorgeous furry penguin as a raffle prize.

Schools have been busy supporting us. **Roseacre Junior School** collected £188 at its Year 6 Carol Service while **Ouston Junior School** raised £114.72 with a dress down day - thanks **Ryan Spencer** for suggesting this. Ryan was also busy holding a Halloween party at his house with some classmates, which raised £18.31.



Christine Spencer (left) and 2 friends braved the freezing North Sea on Boxing Day and raised £536.40 for their pain and cold! Well done.

The Rotary Club of the Weald of Kent donated £200.00 by kind generosity of the Community Service Committee with their best wishes for our fund raising work as well as a bottle full of change, which amounted to £96.24. In addition, **Jim Henderson** donated a bottle of Malt Whisky to the raffle for guessing the contents of above bottle.

Thank you to Hollingbourne Village Pantomime Group for a donation of £200, as well as regular supporters **Tony and Janice Hart** who donated the £250 profit from the Hollingbourne Village New Year Dance to the HMESG. Hollingbourne WI also gave their Christmas party collection of £77.80. Thank you to all the generous residents of Hollingbourne for supporting us.

We have some very active fit supporters - **Gill Lloyd** beat her personal best time by 5 minutes in the Great North Run, despite torrential rain, raising £140.00 in the process and **Claire Cooper** ran the Flora Women's 5K race also managing to beat her previous best time and raising £140.00. Congratulations and thank you to both ladies. The **Hydro Active Women's Challenge 2006** made donations made to 1300 different charities including £20.00 to the HMESG and we thank this organisation very much for including us.

SpeedDater organised a Charity Casino Night, which raised £45.00 and **Exilarch's Foundation**, a registered educational charity, donated £20.00. **Alan Bernard** - The Perfect Light Lodge of Instruction - donated £70.00 while **Kelly Holmes** gave donations in lieu of Christmas Cards. **Sarah & Roy Nicholls** of Nicholls Furniture donated £200.00 and **Mary and Peter Dowse** gave £20.00 in lieu of raffle tickets. Thank you to **Mrs Sampson** for her £10.00 gratefully received, **Pat Savage** for her contribution of £75.00 and **Eileen Peterson** for her £20.00.

The creativity of our members and supporters never ceases to amaze me - **Una Garland** raised £50.00 selling hay, **George Gray** repaired computers for friends and family raising £60.00 for his effort and **Mrs T Champeau & Sebastian** sold garden plants and a bath seat to achieve £130.00.

Disclaimer

Please note that any views expressed herein, by individual group members, are not those of the Group as a whole and separate entity. The HMESG cannot accept responsibility for any goods or services mentioned in the Newsletter

Please do not forget to let us know if you move house or change e-mail address! Thank you.