



HEADWAY OXFORD NEWSLETTER



Issue 17
December 2009

FORWARD BY JAMIE MILLER

Dear Readers

This newsletter is brought to you in collaboration with Jean Wykes/Alison Bartlett/Jamie Miller and Claire Cadwaladr. Future newsletters will be produced by the Staff Team. You will see from this addition, that there are a great many changes that are taking place at Headway Oxford. We will attempt to keep all interested parties, well informed through future publications and our website. We would greatly appreciate your contributions, so please feel free to contact Claire Cadwaladr at our Kennington office.

Decembers Quote

“What you leave behind is not what is engraved in stone monuments, but what is woven into the lives of others.”

Pericles

CHANGES AT THE HELM by J.Miller

After four years as a member of the Management Committee and a further ten years serving Headway Oxford as Chairman of the Management Committee, Michael Berrett resigned at this years Annual General Meeting on Friday 20th November. Michael first joined Headway in 1995 and has led the Committee and the organisation through a decade full of challenges and change. I am sure that all those at Headway that have worked with Michael over the years will have their own stories and happy memories of those times.

Michael has asked that he still be invited to our events and stated that he will continue to maintain an interest in the developments at Headway, from afar. On behalf of the Committee, our members and Staff, I would like to say a huge thank you to Michael for his commitment and hard work in support of Headway and we wish him all the very best for his future plans.



STAFF NEWS

Farewell from Jean Wykes

I write to inform you all that this is my last newsletter, and to say goodbye. Jamie Miller the Service Manager, and Claire Cadwaladr the new administrator, will produce the Headway Newsletter from now on. In future please send all articles and information to Jamie Miller manager@headway-oxford.org.uk.

Thanks to all of you who have contributed over the years that I have been the editor to make the Newsletter so informative and lively. Please keep those articles coming to Jamie.

Times change and I feel its time for a change myself. Victoria, my daughter is now a neuro-surgeon and registrar at a London hospital. It's been 18 years since she was head-injured in 1991 during a teenage snowball game. After all these 18 years of involvement with Headway I feel it is time for a change, so I am retiring from the Headway Committee and as a Trustee. Good luck to all who sail with the Headway ship.



I would also like to thank our Newsletter sponsors Martin and Co who have generously printed it in colour for the last couple of years. They will be sponsoring Help for Heroes from now on so Headway is looking for new sponsorship for this Newsletter. If you know someone willing to sponsor Headway Newsletter, please give Jamie a ring on 01865 736319.

New Committee Members

We would like to welcome two new members to the Committee.

Sue Wilson

I currently work as the Deputy Business Manager at the Wellcome Trust Centre for Human Genetics, University of Oxford. I have worked for the University for 5 years. I'm in the process of completing my ACCA qualification – I have just 3 more exams to complete before I'm a qualified accountant.

In my spare time I enjoy visiting family with my husband, watching football, cooking and I enjoy swimming every week.

I'm pleased to be joining the Headway Committee. I heard about Headway through my neighbours Alison and Neil. I hope that I'm a good addition to the team, and look forward to contributing in the meetings.

Richard Coleman

Since 1997 Richard has been a solicitor specialising in personal injury and clinical negligence on behalf of individuals. For the past 5 years he has specialised exclusively in clinical negligence.

He has acted for many clients that have suffered traumatic/acquired brain injury and recovered millions of pounds in total in compensation for those clients to help fund the cost of care, appropriate accommodation, therapies, aids and equipment.

He has been a keen supporter of Headway for many years (starting with Thames Valley Headway when he lived and worked in Berkshire) and has organised fund-raising events for Thames Valley Headway and Oxford Headway.

He is married and lives in Banbury.

Other staff news



Fiona Rowe



Nicki Holland

We are extremely happy that Fiona Rowe was successful in her application to become our permanent Day Centre Manager. As well as already being familiar to members, carers and the staff team alike, Fiona brings many years of experience and enthusiasm to the role. In addition, Nicki Holland now takes on the role of Assistant Day Centre Manager, supporting Fiona in the task of creating an improved client centred approach to service provision at Headway Oxford. We congratulate them both on these appointments and look forward to the challenges ahead as a team.

Introduction to Claire

We are also very happy to welcome a new member of staff to the team. Claire Cadwaladr started with us in November as our new Vocational Worker and Admin Assistant. Claire will no doubt be introducing herself to everyone at Headway in the coming weeks and will of course be looking forward to assisting any of the members who wish to pursue any vocational opportunities.

CALLING ALL AUTHORS by J.Miller

Ever had the feeling that you could be the next Pulitzer Prize Winner, have you got a story to tell? This could be your chance to see your work in print. The BBC have launched a competition called My Story. This doesn't mean to say that you need to be a gifted writer (as your story, if chosen, will be written by a ghost writer from publisher Harper Collins). For your entry, you can utilise the assistance of your carer or ask staff at Headway if they could help to get your story down into words in the initial stages...



My Story is about finding remarkable true stories of ordinary people that could be turned into bestselling books. The BBC is looking for extraordinary true life stories from all over Britain. They might be dramatic, heartwarming, funny or sad - as long as they're true, we want to read them.

Fifteen people's stories will be told in a major new five-part series to go out next year on BBC1. Five of these people will win book deals plus a cash advance of £20,000.

My Story is not a writing competition as the winning stories will be ghostwritten by the publisher Harper Collins. But if your story is chosen, your name would appear on the cover of your own book.

Applications should be made via the website: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/mystory/> and add a summary of your story in no more than 1500 words. All applications should be written in English or Welsh.

If applicants don't have access to the internet, please apply via post to My Story, PO Box 65655 London W12 2BG. The closing dates for entries is 16th December 2009.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

A New Look and a New Feel to your Centre and Your Services

By the time you read this article it is likely that the proposed improvements to the Centre at Kennington will be well underway.

In a bid to improve on the services we provide for our members, we have been able to secure some more space within the Good Shepherd Hall. Father King and the Diocese have very kindly agreed to lease a further 39 sq mtrs (approximately) to Headway Oxford, for which we are very grateful.

To maximise the potential of the new space, we are going to refurbish and re decorate the Centre. We are also going to be providing a computer suite and add a Physiotherapy area, complete with new and additional equipment.



It is also expected that the Sensory Garden (work being undertaken by Oxfordshire's Youth Offending Service) will be completed in the coming weeks, adding a valuable and engaging area to the facilities on offer at the Centre.

These new facilities will help us to implement the improved services we propose for our members. The focus of our work will be on the needs of the individual. We aim to develop enablement plans with each individual member and their carers. The support that we then offer will reflect the needs of the individual, as stated in the enablement plan. It is envisaged that this will necessitate a greater degree of flexibility on our part as to how we provide this support but this will not be at the expense of the excellent group work that has been such an integral part of the Centre activities to date.

We will continue to listen to our members and their carers in order to help inform the changes in service provision, so if you would like to help by giving us your ideas and opinions, please talk to a member of staff at Headway Oxford (see contact details provided).

PAT AND KEITH'S HOLIDAY

Keith and I finally decided, with some trepidation, to go on holiday together in August to Milford-on-Sea in the New Forest area. This would be our first holiday together since Keith had his stroke and became reliant on a wheelchair two years ago.

The holiday home, purpose built for a disabled person, was duly booked as were carers from an agency in New Milton, Hampshire.

On leaving day we found that the first real hurdle was fitting the luggage, for three people, plus fishing equipment, shower chair and return stand (which we were unable to hire) into a vehicle adapted for a wheelchair. This took some time but eventually with Keith surrounded by everything we set off. After an uneventful journey we arrived safely in the early evening.

After unloading and a meal the first carer arrived with her manager who decided that Keith needed two carers at all times – however – we managed to persuade her that one was quite sufficient at home and the carer agreed that she could manage perfectly well. The carers were very friendly and efficient and all took to Keith very quickly – thanks I think to his ready smile and friendly manner. We would certainly use them again.

The holiday home gave excellent access to the bedroom and shower/toilet with plenty of space for Keith to be cared for and moved around. The parking was adjacent as was a good shop and social club.

Keith really enjoyed a visit to Beaulieu Motor Museum. We were able to move around freely with the wheelchair and the disabled toilets were spacious. Unfortunately we had to vacate the “Top Gear” Marquee in a hurry because the fire alarm sounded. It turned out to be a drill and we had no time to go back in much to Keith's disappointment.

One attempt at a social evening in the club was somewhat thwarted when as we approached the entrance, again, a fire alarm sounded. We realised that this time it was for real when smoke began to waft out of the door and everyone from the nearby swimming pool appeared covered in silver blankets and with nothing else except for their swim wear and on a very cold evening. The local fire service duly arrived and we watched the action through our window – no one hurt thank goodness. Then with the club out of action we travelled to nearby Milford for a very good pub meal.



Nearby lakes gave Keith his first experience of fishing for a long time and although he could not quite “land” a fish he was able to hold the fishing rod and enjoy the fresh air and sunshine at the lakeside.

A trip to Weymouth to visit a bird sanctuary, a day out at Lymington and then the beach and another day out with friends for Sunday lunch and a sea rescue demonstration from the cliff top completed our holiday. Unfortunately the winch which pulls the wheelchair into the car did not withstand the week as well as Keith and I as it stopped working. This could have curtailed our trips out if we had not been accompanied on our holiday by a very kind and helpful relative who was able to manually push the chair up the ramp and into the car.

We returned home with a real sense of achievement having spent a very pleasant week together and gaining valuable experience for the next time when perhaps we may travel even further.

HEADWAY CARERS' GROUP

A group set up for carers of an adult with an acquired brain injury

The group is specific to carers of a relative, friend, or neighbour with an acquired brain injury. The aim is for the time to be used to drink tea and coffee, eat chocolate biscuits and talk with others who have some understanding of what you have been through.

We will be gathering at **7.30pm** until **9pm** on the second Wednesday of each month.

2010 Dates

Jan	Feb	March
13 th	10 th	10 th
April	May	June
14 th	12 th	9 th

The informal meeting is held at the Headway Oxford centre:

4 Bagley Wood Road
Kennington
Oxford
OX1 5PL

If you would like any further information please contact me on 01865 736 354 or communitysupport@headway-oxford.org.uk

If you will require a paid carer for the evening please contact me to discuss the possibility of Headway Oxford helping towards this cost.

I look forward to seeing you there,

Clair Johnson
(Community Worker)

Please come along to chat and share stories with others who have been through a similar experience to you.

Dr Martin Birch

We were all deeply saddened to hear of Martin Birch's passing on the 17th October. Many of you will have known Martin as he had a long association with Headway Oxford.

Our thoughts and sympathies go out to Linda and family at this time.

Obituary for Dr Martin Birch, who died 17 October 2009, aged 65

by Jean Wykes

Photo of Linda and Martin Birch

Martin Christopher Birch was a former chair of the Department of Entomology, University of California at Davis and an International authority on insect communication.

In 1981 he returned to Oxford upon his appointment as a university lecturer, curator of the Hope Entomology Collection and a tutorial Fellow of Lady Margaret Hall.



Dr Martin Birch was an amazing, charismatic man. After a car accident in 1982, which left Martin in a coma and requiring operations for internal injuries, he spent about a year at the Rivermead Rehabilitation Hospital. Martin never fully recovered from his accident, but turned his focus toward helping others with head injuries and was one of our first Chairmen. Headway was in its infancy when Martin became Chairman. In spite of having only a few words, he could communicate well with anyone and via his professional contacts helped Headway develop. Martin remained Chair of the Management Committee for many years, several of which I assisted him as Secretary. Martin was succeeded by Michael Berrett, and Vivienne Taylor succeeded me as Secretary.

I first met Martin in 1991 after my daughter was injured in a snowball game. At his funeral his daughters said of him, "after his accident, we discovered how determined an individual really can be. Dad refused to be restricted by his disabilities, living up to Churchill's motto of "never surrender" and adopting it as his own.

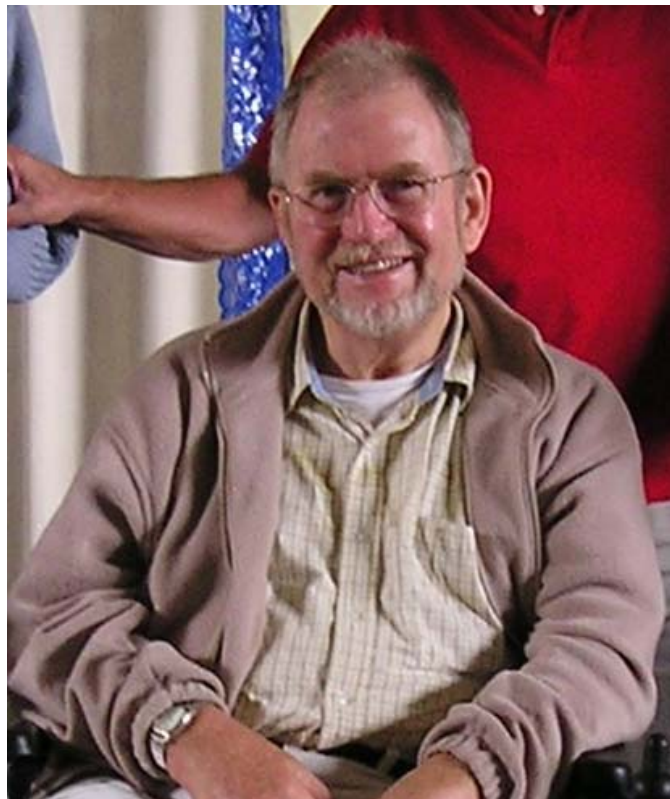
Through the love, help and support of so many people, from health professionals, colleagues, family and friends and his own determination, Dad still managed to achieve so much. He was able to take an active role in bringing up us girls, return to part time work, joint supervising students, take on roles in the Tackley Parish Council and become Chairman of Headway, a very special charity set up to support head injured individuals and their families.

Many of you will recall the familiar sight of Dad on his tricycle, cycling the ten miles into Oxford each day and more recently heading off to the village shop in his motorised wheelchair.”

Martin loved life and said of himself “I have been fortunate in so many ways... life is a beautiful thing and the world, of which I have been able to see so much, so wonderful.” Despite a second head injury 7 years ago, Martin remained constant to his adopted motto and became an active and cheerful member of the Wednesday Group.

I will always remember Martin as a fun loving gentleman with a twinkle in his smiley eyes. Martin certainly inspired many smiles to go around the world, for a favourite poem of that time was “Smiling is infectious. You catch it like the flu. When someone smiled at me today I started smiling too. I walked around the corner and someone saw me grin When he smiled I realised I had passed it on to him. I thought about the smile and then realised its worth A single smile like mine could travel round the earth. So if you feel a smile begin don't leave it undetected Start an epidemic and get the world infected.”

In remembrance of Martin let's start a smile epidemic today.





You are invited to **HEADWAY OXFORD**



For a **Christmas Celebration**

On **Wednesday 9th December**

Open house for all members and carers
involved in Headway!!!

Food, drink and music
will be provided!



Headway Oxford, 4 Bagley Wood Road, Kennington, Oxford. OX1 5LY
Call Clair, Jamie, Jamie, Fiona or Nicki on 01865 326 263 for further
information!

***If you would like help with transport,
then please call us!***

**Please telephone or e-mail to let us know if you
are coming, and whether you are bringing
someone with you by Friday 4th December.**

Thank you!

01865 326263

admin@headway-oxford.org.uk



HEADWAY CHRISTMAS LUNCHES

MONDAY 14TH DECEMBER - 12 – 2:30pm

**WHATLEY HALL HOTEL
17-19 HORSE FAIR
BANBURY
OX16 0AN**

TUESDAY 15TH DECEMBER - 12 – 2:30pm

WEDNESDAY 16TH DECEMBER - 12 – 2:30pm

FRIDAY 18TH DECEMBER - 12 – 2:30pm

**THE BOWYER ARMS
FOXBOROUGH ROAD
RADLEY
OXON
OX14 3AE**



*Merry
Christmas*



Headway Oxford Christmas holiday Opening Times



Kennington

Last Centre Day is Friday 18th December

Reopens Tuesday 12th January 2010



Banbury

Last Centre Day is Monday 21st December

Re opens Monday 11th January 2010

