



# ;The Semi-Colon;

December, 2011



## **XMAS EDITION**

*Special points of interest:*

*Pam and Alan Osborne report on the work of the ABC Group on pages 2 & 3*

*Diary dates for Support Group and Steering Group in 2012 on page 4.*

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As another successful year draws to an end it's time to wish all of you a Happy Christmas and New Year. We are now in our 6th year and have continued our growth in membership. In October we had a record 73 in attendance for the presentation by Paul Skinner. Of course, it has helped to have had such excellent speakers for our meetings. For that, we have to thank the Sheffield Colorectal Team and others for giving us their time and to Georgia and her team for their considerable help. Brian Bartholomew has just completed his first year as Chairman of our Support Group and he deserves our thanks along with all the other volunteers.

Our venue for the Support Group meetings, The Central United Reform Church, has proved to be extremely popular, both for its facilities and ease of access.

Our finances are now in good order for 2012 thanks to the outstanding success in raising over £1000 from the sponsored run by Heather Mallinson. The full details are reported on page 4.

We have every reason to admire our oldest and brightest member, Frank Yates. Frank is in his 92nd year and on Remembrance Day, as one of the few veterans remaining of WW2, he proudly led the Teams out at Sheffield United. Frank is an inspiration to us all for his energy and spirit. If you wish to learn more about Frank, you can read his memoirs on the BBC Archives.

{Type: 'Frank Yates' on Google and click search }

New Year Resolution for 2012:

Send in your news items and photos for me to report in our future editions.

Happy Christmas

Dil Scrivens, Editor

## ABC Group

Around three years ago, members of the Support Group were asked by Georgia to consider volunteering for a new initiative to promote the awareness of bowel cancer within the community. As you all possibly know, the golden rule of any organisation is “never volunteer”!!! Several people chose to ignore these wise words, and after coming together for a few meetings, brainstorming sessions, coffee and general hilarity revolving around ‘lavatory humour’, the name for the group, ABC (Awareness of Bowel Cancer) was born.

The group was made up of volunteers, and led by Georgia, Sadie and Stella initially. Stella turned out to be our Mrs Fixit, rounding up money and equipment from heaven knows where. The volunteers, all patients or carers from the Support Group, would put in their own tales and experiences, and the professionals would be there to help us out with the nitty-gritty of facts and figures. The idea was to target organisations and areas within Sheffield where the professionals thought we could make some contribution to improving health standards, by raising awareness not only of bowel cancer and its symptoms, but also of the National Screening Programme. The areas of Sheffield to be targeted were selected by Georgia and Stella using PCT data on mortality and sickness, low living standards, incidence of cancer and so on. Many meetings later, we were ready to have a go at meeting the public. We tried some formal-type “training” for our new roles, but it felt too much like lesson-planning. Instead, we decided to be our natural selves and rely on our magnetic personalities and the gift of the gab!



We target supermarkets in our defined areas, and some of us have presented talks to smaller groups, for example in areas of town where cultural differences and customs make it difficult for people to talk about symptoms and problems. A large diary of community events, usually for the summer months, will be assembled by our lovely hard-working professionals, and we simply volunteer our presence at those which are reasonably

within reach for us. Alan and I, for instance, tend to stick to events in Chapeltown, Ecclesfield and Firth Park. If an event lasts all day, we arrange a very loose rota, to be there for a couple of hours in our turns, so everyone gets a break for a coffee and the work is shared. Nobody is made to feel under any obligation!



What has been a revelation to us is the reaction of some retailers, who are happy to support events concerning breast cancer, for instance, on their premises, but not bowel cancer, as it's not really part of their 'image' ....! Others are only too pleased to give us house-room for a couple of hours.

This article is to bring our activities to the notice of the rest of the Support Group, as we realise that many of our colleagues may not know about us, or our purpose. This isn't a full-time job, we are not out every weekend, and we maybe attend two or three supermarket events and a couple or so of outside events in the year. We are happy to give our time if it benefits someone else, or gives them the impetus they need to seek help, for instance. If any Support Group members would like to drop in and help at events, it would be appreciated. The planning meetings are good too - Georgia brings chocolate biscuits!!!! Our AGM (not a very official one, though) is in January, and our programme will be sort-of-planned shortly afterwards, so if you want to join in, see Brian or Georgia and see if there's an event near you where you can come along and join in the 'fun'!



As for us, Alan is on his way to his fourth anniversary, and I have been following my own advice and have recently successfully completed my second screening. I am now able to tell people at first hand, that it's as easy as "ABC" !

Alan and Pam Osborne

## **HEATHER'S GREAT YORKSHIRE RUN RAISED OVER £1000 FOR OUR GROUP.**

At the last Support Group meeting in November we learnt that Heather Marrison had raised over £1000 from her run. Heather was presented with a bouquet of flowers in appreciation of her fine effort. The Group also played an important part in raising a large amount from the sponsorship forms. The money raised will underpin our finances for 2012.



### **2012 MEETINGS DIARY**

#### **Support Group Meetings**

Wednesday 8th February	1.30pm—3.30pm	(Speaker)
Wednesday 21st March	„	(Drop-in)
Wednesday 25th April	„	(Speaker)
Wednesday 12th September	„	(Speaker)
Wednesday 17th October	„	(Drop-in)
Wednesday 14th November	„	(Speaker)
Wednesday 5th December	„	(Social)

( All these meetings to be held in the upstairs room in the Central United Reform Church, Chapel Walk)

#### **Steering Group Meetings**

Wednesday 1st February	10.30am—12.30pm
Wednesday 18th April	„
Wednesday 6th June	„
Wednesday 5th September	„

( These meetings are held in the Rover Room, Scout Headquarters, Trippett Lane and are open to all members who wish to contribute to the organising and maintenance of the Support Group)