

# MERSEY REGION EPILEPSY ASSOCIATION

NEWSLETTER  
Autumn 2008

## Lord Mayor's Donation



*Chairman Peter Rogan receives a cheque for £18,200 from the Lord and Lady Mayoress of Liverpool 2007-2008, Councillor Paul Clark and his wife Hilary.*

Throughout Councillor Paul Clark's year of office as Lord Mayor of Liverpool his Charity Committee worked hard by arranging events to raise money for his three nominated charities of which happily MREA was included.

The Association's main contribution to the Appeal was in organising a night of magic and comedy which was hosted by our Vice President Ken Dodd. Held at the Devonshire House Hotel in Liverpool, the evening proved to be a huge success, featuring six magic acts to include illusionists, close up magicians, comedy magicians and Liverpool's own world champion magician, 14 year old Stephen Williams. To top the bill Ken provided us with his own brand of magical comedy culminating with a standing ovation from an hugely appreciative audience.

In all, six fund raising events were organised by the Charity Committee and proceeds were shared between the three nominated charities, namely MREA, the Linda McCartney Breast Cancer Fund and the Alder Hey Imagine Appeal, to the tune of £18,200 each which included a donation of £4,200 from Ken Dodd to the Lord Mayors Fund for distribution to the three nominated charities.

Reflecting on the year's fund raising activity our Chairman, Peter Rogan, expressed his huge appreciation to the Lord Mayor for nominating us as one of his chosen charities. *"This contribution to our funds has lifted our spirits. Our funds were depleting at an alarming rate and the financial viability of the Association was becoming a real concern. Prudent management linked to this "windfall donation" has steadied the ship and although we cannot rest on our laurels there is now a much firmer base on which to build for the future."*

## AGM 2008

Over 60 members attended this year's AGM at the Neurosupport Centre.

It followed the usual format with the presentation of the Annual Report and Accounts presented by the Chairman and the Treasurer respectively. For those who were unable to attend a copy of the full report is available on the website.

Jean Norton introduced reports from group members which had mixed messages. Some of the groups were thriving whilst others were struggling to maintain numbers but nevertheless they continued to meet for the benefit of those who enjoyed each others support.

By way of a change the meeting closed with a presentation by local comedian John Martin who set out to speak about his work travelling the world as a professional entertainer.



His original journey veered somewhat off course when he launched into the act which he presents on the world's finest cruise ships with the result that those present enjoyed a real treat as they laughed through 30 minutes of non stop comedy.

Those present will remember this AGM for a long time.

# Further Development of Association Website

If you haven't visited the Association website recently then take some time out to view how it has developed over the summer months. We reported last autumn that the Executive Committee had resolved to invest energy and resources into providing a top class online service to supplement present provision and indeed to replace certain aspects of that provision.

A few months ago when we first analysed figures produced by our service provider it was found that we were averaging 500 visits to the site each month which was found to be somewhat disappointing. Following publication of innovative material the visiting figures have risen to 2933 a week ! A break down of the figures for the week 6th - 13th October 2008 are as follows:-

Total successful requests : 2933  
Average successful requests per day : 418

Average download of pages per day : 75  
Links enacted to other sites: 39

The advanced notice of the inclusion of children's pages prompted the highest influx of visits on its day of publication and it is anticipated that a forthcoming addition of a travel section will cause a similar increase in activity. All very exciting.

All our publications are now available on free download and for those who do not have access to a computer we will download single copies at the office and post them out to those who request them.

Another remarkable feature of the breakdown figures provided by the service provide is the geographical spread of those visiting the site. During the week analysed visits to the site were made from each of the five continents!

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## New Diary

People attending the Walton Epilepsy Clinic were lamenting the fact of the lack of availability of a substantial and hard wearing seizure diary.

To address this problem we have developed a diary which is now being tested at the clinics. Feed back from those who receive one at the clinic would be greatly appreciated.

## Sad Loss

All were saddened to hear of the loss of Graham Beaton, a long time member of the Bangor Support Group.

Graham did not enjoy good health over the past twelve months but nevertheless he steadfastly joined in Group activities and made the long journey to Liverpool for the AGM .

He will be sadly missed. Members of the Association offer sincere sympathy to Graham's family and his friends in the Bangor Group.

Newletter published by  
Mersey Region Epilepsy Association  
(Reg Charity Number 504366)  
Neurosupport Centre L3 8LR  
Tel: 0151 298 2666

## A Well Earned Retirement

After effecting a revolution in the provision of medical services on the local, national and international stages our President Professor David Chadwick has retired from clinical practice to take time out to enjoy the great pleasures of gardening, travel and above all, of being a Grandad.



The contribution made by David into research into epilepsy and the clinical treatment of the condition cannot be over emphasised. The limitations of the Newsletter could not do justice even to outline his achievements, Suffice to say that what he has achieved is immense and the Association is so pleased to have as an active President a man of such high stature.

The good news is that he is to continue as our President and we look forward to a long future of working with him for the benefit of local people with epilepsy.

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## Epilepsy Audit

Doctor Udo Weishmann, consultant neurologist at the Walton Centre and a member of our Executive Committee, is undertaking an audit into the side effects of antiepileptic drugs. This audit will begin within the Mersey Region and will develop to cover the whole country.

Patients attending the Walton Centre will be invited to help in this audit by completing a questionnaire relating to their medication and the effect it has on their lives. If you are approached to assist in this important audit please cooperate by completing the questionnaire as accurately and as promptly as possible.