

Hearts and Minds

The Hertbeats Newsletter

St Albans and District Cardiac Support Group

Established 1997



**Affiliated to the British Heart Foundation
and Arrhythmia Alliance**

secretary@hertbeats.org.uk

Website: www.hertbeats.org.uk



December 2019 / January 2020

Forthcoming Social Events in 2020

Friday January 10th

Post-Christmas Lunch at The Plough & Harrow, Southdown.

Tuesday January 21st

A talk on behalf of the Herts & Middlesex Wildlife Trust by Claire Robinson.

Tuesday February 18th

John Willan: The first Camelot National Lottery Draw Master.

Tuesday March 17th

Doctors' Evening: Our Vice Presidents, who are local consultant cardiologists, will outline the latest developments in cardiology.

Tuesday April 21st

Ray Saunders: East of England Ambulance Service Community First Responders.

Tuesday May 19th

Annual General Meeting of Hertbeats.

Tuesday June 16th

Strawberry Evening – with entertainment.

**All meetings will be held in the Hall of St Mary's Church, Marshalswick
at 8:00pm (Hall available from 7:45pm).
1 Sherwood Avenue, St. Albans AL4 9QA**

PUBLISHED BY HERTBEATS, a Cardiac Support Group formed in 1997 to provide practical advice, information and help to cardiac patients and their families within the St. Albans, Harpenden, Welwyn Garden City and Hatfield areas. It is also an informal social group that arranges a variety of outings, exercise classes, regular friendly gatherings with interesting speakers and the opportunity to meet new and old friends. Hertbeats does not offer formal medical advice, but members often learn much about their ailments, and the practical means of coping with them, by talking to other members who have had similar experiences.

Opinions expressed in *Hearts and Minds* are those of the authors and not necessarily those of the Editor nor of Hertbeats.

News from Chairman Brian York

After more than 20 years of service to Hertbeats Dr John Versey, one of our Life Vice-Presidents, is retiring from our Committee. John will continue to contribute in other ways as usual, not least in his organising of the distribution of the Newsletter. Nevertheless, it's important that at this time we thank John profusely for all he has done for Hertbeats.

I don't think we can compete with Brexit for crisis, but in recent months Hertbeats has struggled to find members to keep all our activities at current levels. Hence the (continuing) appeal for helpers. Graham Imber has come forward to give talks to the cardiac rehab classes at the City Hospital, organise the Maple Unit exercise classes and has been co-opted onto the Committee. He may soon be joined by one or two other new Committee members. Every organisation needs new blood.

I am pleased to say that Steve Gledhill has stepped in to edit *Hearts and Minds* and we are most grateful to him to use his capability to support Hertbeats in this crucial task. Receipt of the Newsletter is the one thing everyone experiences from Hertbeats. You will have seen already how Steve has redesigned and made our website so much more exciting and relevant – www.hertbeats.org.uk

Enough members have volunteered to help with hand distribution of the Newsletter and to help Michael Utteridge on Outings. A few have offered help with jobs to be done at the monthly meetings and to find speakers. However, in other areas there has been no response and I would urge all members to look again at the revised **responses to request for helpers from membership** which appears in this Newsletter on page 15. Please help to keep Hertbeats going.

Our monthly meetings and outings are still very successful. Continued thanks go to Jim Green and Michael Utteridge for making these activities so popular. I can't walk very far until the NHS allows me to have another hip replacement, but I was able to go to the Milton Keynes theatre to see the brilliant *Kinky Boots*. The hip problem has so far prevented me from getting a pair of my own! Some of us are looking forward to the next theatre visit to see *The King and I* at Milton Keynes.

Jim has mainly been responsible for organising our forthcoming post-Christmas lunch at *The Plough & Harrow* in Southdown, Harpenden. **Please see page 5 of this Newsletter and also the separate flyer enclosed.**

Finally, NHS news; the government announced it was to build 40 new hospitals which turned out to be then 20 and finally just six in the near future. However, the (fairly) good news was that the West Herts hospitals were included in the six. £400 million has been allocated, mostly to expand and refurbish Watford, but with some of it for St. Albans and Hemel Hempstead. The bad news for a few is that £400 million is still far from enough to build a brand-new hospital instead.

A Very Happy Christmas and Prosperous and Healthy New Year

From the new Editor, Steve Gledhill

A few months ago I accepted the challenge of editing the Hertbeats website. In early November I additionally agreed to edit the Newsletter. I now appreciate what a fantastic job my predecessors did and equally importantly what the contributors from within the club do to get the news together.

Many of you have access to the Internet but for those who do not have access please be assured that the newsletter will continue. As editor of both the website and newsletter I can ensure that information about forthcoming events will appear in both.

The Newsletter will still appear in electronic format as a PDF file under the 'News' section of the website – unfortunately the last one was not posted.

The electronic version is normally put on the website a few days after the Newsletter is distributed to ensure that those who rely on the newsletter are not disadvantaged when applying for an event which may be oversubscribed.

Please let me have any ideas for future newsletter topics and if you wish to write a letter to the editor for publication I would be delighted to publish it. Finally, I am sorry that there was no space for jokes this time!

Steve Gledhill 07785 381912 editor@hertbeats.org.uk

Hertbeats Post-Christmas Lunch

Friday 10th January 2020, 12 noon for 12:30pm

The Plough & Harrow, 88 Southdown Road, Southdown, Harpenden AL5 1PR

Many have requested that the "Christmas Party" should be held at lunchtime instead of the evening as some do not like driving in the dark. The maximum number of people that we can invite to this lunch is 60. Partners are welcome. Full details of the menu are shown below. The enclosed flyer should be completed showing your choices by ticks. Please make a note to remind yourself of your choices. The flyer should be returned ASAP with a cheque made out to Hertbeats in the envelope provided. There is local parking available in the adjacent Co-op if the Plough & Harrow car park is full.

To avoid disappointment return the flyer immediately. If you have any queries contact James Green on 01727 830191 or jamesgreen.6@hotmail.co.uk

Menu

Starters

- A: Homemade-Minestrone Soup served with Brown Bread and Butter (V)
- B: Luxury Duck Liver and Pork Pâté with Orange and Cognac Liqueur served with Toast and Garnish
- C: Prime Smoked Salmon Parcel filled with Prawns in a Marie Rose Sauce served with Garnish

Main Course

- A: Turkey - Traditional Christmas Dinner
- B: Beef - Traditional Roast Dinner
- C: Nut Cutlet - Roast Potatoes and Seasonal Vegetables (V)

Desserts

- A: Christmas Pudding and Brandy Butter Sauce
- B: Dulgent Chocolate Brownie with Chocolate Sauce and Fresh Summer Fruit served with a choice of Cream or Ice Cream or Custard
- C: Ice Cream - Three scoops of Strawberry, Chocolate or Vanilla Ice Cream or a combination of your choice, plus a choice of Chocolate or Strawberry Sauce.

Tea & Coffee

Hertbeats Updated Website

The Hertbeats Website www.hertbeats.org.uk has recently been completely redesigned, it has more information and it is now easier to find your way around. The intention is to update it more frequently so that forthcoming events and recent news items are listed. Many photographs have been added. If you have access to a computer we suggest you give it a try - and tell your friends. Below is a simplified outline of the menu structure to show what is currently available.



Home Physical Activities Social Events Outings News Membership Charities Contact

- **Home**
- **Physical Activities**
 - Exercise Groups
 - Walking Group
 - Golf Society
- **Social Events**
 - Speaker Evenings
 - Social Meetings
 - Meet the Doctors
- **Outings**
 - Theatres & Shows
 - Tourist Attractions
- **News**
 - Newsletters
 - News for Members
 - Press and Other News
- **Membership**
- **Charities**
 - BHF – British Heart Foundation
 - Arrhythmia Alliance
 - CRY – Cardiac Risk in the Young

Exercise Classes

Exercise is an important part of cardiac rehabilitation. Exercise Classes are a major part of Hertbeats' activities. They are structured to give exercise to a level appropriate to those who have had heart problems. Classes last about an hour and are held on Mondays to Thursdays at locations in and around St Albans.

The list below is a summary of the activities. For more information contact the organisers shown on the back cover of the newsletter or consult the website.

<p>Monday: 2:30pm Westminster Lodge</p> <p>Tuesday: 6:00pm Jersey Farm Community Centre and also at 6:00pm St Albans City Hospital Maple Unit</p>	<p>Wednesday: 1:00pm Harpenden Leisure Centre and at 6:00pm St Albans City Hospital Maple Unit</p> <p>Thursday: 6:00pm and 7:15pm St Albans City Hospital Maple Unit</p>
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The St Albans City Hospital Maple Unit Exercise Group poses for a photograph during a brief pause in their class

Antonella McMillin's Exercise Classes

All members are welcome at Antonella's classes. As well as the Westminster Lodge and Harpenden Leisure Centre classes she does the following.

Group classes:

Batchwood Tuesday 11:30am
London Colney Wednesday 11:00am

Gym classes

Harpenden Monday 12:20pm to 1350
 Friday 12.30pm to 14.00pm

Phone her at 01582 715615 for clarification

Westminster Lodge Exercise Classes:

Christine Hill coordinates the group exercise classes held at Westminster Lodge Leisure Centre which is at the bottom of Holywell Hill in St Albans. The classes are in Dance Studio 2 on the 1st floor on a Monday from 2:30pm to 3:30pm.

The cost for each session is £3.75 which is paid at Reception on the ground floor on arrival. This amount includes a discount with a S.A.D.L. (St. Albans & District Leisure) card which is issued free at Reception.

Free car parking is available for the first two hours, but you must take a ticket and display it on your windscreen.

Members' attendance has been steady, numbers recently have ranged from the highest of 14, the lowest of 10 with an averages of 13.

Christine reported, "I would like to welcome two new members, Pamela Johnson and Fraser Campbell as well as Mary Webster who is back after prolonged illness." She added "If anyone is interested in joining our happy friendly class please contact me for a chat on 01727 852610 or email:

cjh@stalbansherts.myzen.co.uk."

Jersey Farm Exercise Class

Roger Miller organises the Tuesday class at the Jersey Farm Community Centre (JFCC). He sent in this report.

The exercise session starts at 6:00pm for an hour and costs £4.00 per session, paid on the night. The equipment is limited to mats and hand weights due to small storage area shared with other hall users. Jacquie's "warm up", "movement to music" and "warm down" takes us through an hour of aerobic exercise with some low level strength and flexibility woven in.

It is not a regimented regime. This allows members of varying age and fitness to push on at their own pace all helped by the frequent repartee and laughter. Jacquie regularly adds variations to the "routines" which adds interest and often catches us all out. The Jersey Farm Community Centre is an ideal venue with plenty of room. Attendance averages 14 with as many as 19 being present from time to time.

Roger commented, "If you wish to join us you would be more than welcome, call me on 01727 766278 or email secretary@hertbeats.org.uk "

Hertbeats Walking Group

The Heartbeats Walking Group held a dinner as a thank you to Ed Jones the walk organiser and Tina, his wife. For the last five years Ed and Tina have planned routes for the group and walked round them in advance to assess suitability.

To thank Ed and Tina 24 group members and spouses met in the evening on August 22nd at the 'Wicked Lady' in Wheathampstead. After an enjoyable and convivial meal the Hertbeats secretary, Roger Miller, presented Ed and Tina with gardening tokens and some orchids purchased from contributions from the walkers. Roger emphasised the gratitude of the group and acknowledged the many hours spent by Ed in planning walks and organising attendance.

On average ten people take part in the walks, it is not only a healthy activity it is very friendly. Anyone can join in – contact Ed on 01727 850165

Walks are on the first and third Wednesdays of the month at 10:00am except for December when there are no walks. The first walk in January will be on the second Wednesday, 8th January, because the first Wednesday is January 1st.



*Ed Jones and his wife
Tina are presented with
gifts by Heartbeats
secretary Roger Miller*

*Some of the walking
group members with
their guests at the
celebration dinner for
Ed and Tina Jones*



Outings

Michael Utteridge, our “Outings” organizer, reports.

“Kinky Boots”.at Milton Keynes report, October 2019

We concluded our programme of outings for this year with a highly enjoyable visit to the Milton Keynes Theatre for a performance of the hit West End musical “Kinky Boots”. The show is based on a true story of how a virtually bankrupt Northampton shoe factory was rescued by diversifying into making thigh length boots for drag artistes. Whoever managed to make a hit musical from that story deserved an award!

Programme for 2020

Currently I am working on the programme for 2020 which was presented to the Hertbeats Committee in November for comments and confirmation.

“The King and I” March 2020, our next event

Coincidentally, we will commence the new year’s programme with a return visit in early March to the Milton Keynes Theatre for another hit musical “The King and I”. Unfortunately all the tickets have already been sold and I have had to order the largest coach available from Barnett's Coach Hire for this outing.

“Tutankhamun” Exhibition

Our second outing in 2020 will be a visit to the “Tutankhamun” Exhibition at the Saatchi Gallery in London on 25th March 2020. At the time of writing there are a few tickets available at £33.00 which covers the coach, driver’s gratuity and admission to the exhibition. Deadline for payment is the end of November.

The Exhibition is expected to surpass attendances at previous Tutankhamun exhibitions so it is essential for us to confirm booking early.

The Exhibition is the largest exhibition of treasures from the boy-king’s tomb and is three times larger than the first exhibition in 1972 at the British Museum.

The treasures are set out in nine galleries which follow Tutankhamun’s journey to the afterlife. The upper galleries cover the story in modern times from the discovery by Howard Carter.

It will be the last opportunity for anyone to see the exhibition of treasures outside Egypt.

Michael concludes his report with the following:

“Corinne and I would like to thank everyone for their support for these activities and we look forward to seeing you, and some new faces, in the New Year. Full details of the 2020 programme of Outings will be published in the next Newsletter. My contact details are on the back page of this Newsletter.”



The World-famous Gold Coffinette was used to store the liver of Tutankhamun.

Golf Society

Vernon Clough reports.

Our final golf meeting of the year was held at Little Hay Golf Centre, near Hemel Hempstead in September. It was hosted by our friends from ‘Hert to Hearts’ - the Hemel Hempstead cardiac support group.

Coffee and and bacon roll were starters for the day. There were five teams of four players, each team concurrently playing two competitions.

- Yellow ball competition in which each team player played alternately with a yellow ball. This was won by a strong Hert to Hearts team.
- Best two scores competition which was won by a Hertbeats team including Rob Hindley & Vernon Clough.

Honours were therefore even. ‘Nearest the Pin’ was won by Vernon Clough. Partners, spouses and some golfers who were unable to play met for an excellent meal. Convivial banter and prize-giving concluded an excellent day.

The Hertbeats Golf Society goes into hibernation for the winter and will start up again in the Spring. So, please watch this space!

If anybody, of any golfing standard, would like to join our group they would be very welcome. For more information please contact contact Vernon Clough at vclough@ntlworld.com or on 01582 713080.

100 Years of British Musicals

James Green organises the Hertbeats speaker evenings which take place in Marshalswick most months. His report on a different type of evening follows.

Earlier in the year I asked members what would they like to entertain them at our meetings. The most popular request was for musical entertainment. Corinne Utteridge gave me the names of two gentlemen who she had seen perform and said they were very entertaining. So I invited them along. Their names were David Crewe, baritone and Alastair Sharpe keyboard. Their programme was “100 years of British Musicals”. They not only performed the songs but told us stories about the artists and composers.

It was great to hear numbers from Gilbert & Sullivan, Ivor Novello, Flanders & Swan, Eric Idle and many others. Many of our members were singing along and tapping their feet.

The show ended all to soon, but as so many people asked me afterwards whether can we have them back, I hope to invite them again next year and they said they will bring along an extra singer and the programme will be longer.

This was the most enjoyable meeting I can remember and I think many other people thought the same.



Hertbeats musical evening

Left to right:

David Crewe, baritone

Alastair Sharpe, keyboard

Secretary Report

Current Membership. As at 7th November 2019 Hertbeats membership stands at 374 which is a rise of 20 new members.

New Members. The following have joined Hertbeats since the last newsletter.

John Edgell, Peter West, Sheila White, Ewan Webster, Keith Moles, Jean Cooper, Ronald & Patricia Herrington, Clive Calcutt, Geraldine Cloke, Jim Golding, Anna Howard, Malcolm & Marilyn Murray, Chris Walters, Michelle Parkin, Shirley & Roger Gray, Malcolm Isaacs and Jocelyn Keeling.

You are most welcome as members and we hope you will find something in Hertbeats that you want to follow up and enjoy.

Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) courses

Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) can save the life of someone who has just had a heart attack. Hertbeats actively encourages its members to attend training to give them the skills to assist those in need. With knowledge of what to do a member could seek the assistance of any reasonably fit person and instruct them. Knowledge is seldom wasted.

So whether you are new to CPR and want to be trained, or you are seeking a refresher, please phone Jean Sharpe on 01727 838193 or email her on jayms500@gmail.com

Herts Advertiser Deliveries to your Home

Many people no longer have the Herts Advertiser newspaper delivered to their homes which is a shame because it keeps us in touch with what is going on in the local community. If you want to get a copy delivered call the parent company, Archant, on 01438 866130 or email distribution.enquiries@archant.co.uk

In the Garden

It is bedtime for the majority of the garden but if some plants are still flowering enjoy the last blooms. You may have given the lawn its last cut this season but keep it tidy over winter by trimming the edges and also dig out the larger weeds to encourage grass to spread into the space.

Reduce the height of your bush and floribunda roses to prevent high winds loosening them in the ground. Plants that are loose are at risk of allowing rainwater to form a pool at the base which can freeze and damage the stem. Alternatively give them their final prune now instead of waiting until springtime. I always do mine early because I do not like cutting off new shoots in March.

Choose a nice day to clear the greenhouse and give the inside a good clean including the glass.

Collect seeds for next season and keep them in the cool and in paper, not plastic, bags or envelopes.

Clear the pond of rubbish without disturbing the bottom too much because of hibernating amphibians.

During this slack period give your tools a good clean and oil and sharpen if needed.

There is plenty to do to prepare for next year, remember you will be a year older and the difficult things gradually become impossible eventually. Be warned, it has happened to me.

Season's greetings to all, Bill Whitehead.

Travel Insurance

Travel Insurance with Pre-existing Medical Conditions

Jean Sharpe writes: It will soon be time for me to update the Travel Insurance Companies list. Should anyone wish to recommend an insurance company please let me know. It could be based on cost or service provided, or it might be what happened when things went wrong such as a travel company going into receivership. I can be contacted on 01727 838193 or email me at

jayms500@gmail.com

Responses to request for helpers

Our chairman, Brian York, has been requesting Hertbeats members to volunteer to help with various important tasks in the club. He wrote:

“Since the last Annual General Meeting your committee has been asking for help with Hertbeats’ activities, together with support and commitment.

We are still looking for help in a number of areas.”

Can you help please?”.

Some posts have been filled, notably Assistance for Outings organiser, speaker finder, helping at meetings and Newsletter deliverers.

But as you can see below we still need our members to come forward and help please.

- Vice-chairman (to be a member of the Committee) *None*
- Minutes Secretary (for the Committee) *None*
- Assistance for Outings Organiser (4 people)
- Assistance in finding speakers (1 person)
- Organiser of lifts to and from meetings and Outings *None*
- Help at Group meetings e.g. setting out and packing up, tea/coffee, events such as the Strawberry Evening (2 people)
- Hand delivery of *Hearts and Minds* Newsletter (7 people)
- Contributions to Newsletter *None*
- Joining your surgery’s Patient Participation Group (PPG) and mentioning/promoting Hertbeats whenever appropriate) *None*
- Attendance at NHS public consultation and ‘development’ meetings *None*
- Help with publicity and recruitment of new members (e.g. ‘staffing’ the Hertbeats stall at events) *None*

HERTBEATS OFFICERS & COMMITTEE MEMBERS

HONORARY OFFICERS

LIFE PRESIDENT	Brian Gibson	01727 859127
LIFE VICE-PRESIDENTS	Dr John Bayliss Dr John Versey	01582 764852
VICE PRESIDENTS	Dr Masood Khan Dr Philip Moore Dr Joban Sehmi	

OFFICERS

CHAIRMAN	Brian York b.york@btinternet.com	01727 854072
SECRETARY	Roger Miller secretary@hertbeats.org.uk	01727 766278
TREASURER	Dave Tarrant treasurer@hertbeats.org.uk	01727 858396

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

CARE AND WELFARE	Ann Gibson	01727 859127
MONTHLY SPEAKERS	Jim Green speakers@hertbeats.org.uk	01727 830191
INFORMATION & PUBLICITY	Gareth Huxtable publicity@hertbeats.org.uk	01582 768004
REHABILITATION TALKS	Graham Imber exercise@hertbeats.org.uk	01727 834907
OUTINGS	Michael Utteridge outings@hertbeats.org.uk	07931 342808
TRAVEL INSURANCE	Jean Sharpe	01727 838193
TRUSTED TRADERS	Jean Sharpe	01727 838193
COMMITTEE MEMBER	June Gibbs	01582 763526
EXERCISE CO-ORDINATORS	exercise@hertbeats.org.uk	
MAPLE UNIT	Graham Imber	01727 834907
WESTMINSTER LODGE	Christine Hill	01727 852610
HARPENDEN & BATCHWOOD	Antonella McMillin	01582 715615
JERSEY FARM	Roger Miller	01727 766278
OTHER ACTIVITIES		
GOLF SOCIETY	Vernon Clough golf@hertbeats.org.uk	01582 713080
HERTBEATS WALKS	Ed Jones walks@hertbeats.org.uk	01727 850165 07745 295691
WEBMASTER	Steve Gledhill webmaster@hertbeats.org.uk	07785 381912

Please send your contributions for the next issue by 15th January 2020
to editor@hertbeats.org.uk