

A photograph of a forest floor in autumn. The ground is covered with a thick layer of brown and orange fallen leaves. Patches of bright green moss are visible, particularly in the foreground and around the base of trees. A large, dark green fern frond is prominent in the lower right. In the background, several tree trunks and branches are visible, some with green leaves and others with yellowing foliage, suggesting a transition into autumn. The lighting is soft and natural, filtering through the trees.

UPBEAT MAGAZINE

Journal of the West Suffolk Heart Support Group

Autumn 2022

Registered Charity Number 1067415

www.upbeatheartsupport.org.uk



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Welcome back, everyone, to our Upbeat magazine! In our last Newsletter in March, I said that I would try to restart the magazine in the autumn, and here we are! It's been a long time since the Spring 2020 issue and most Upbeat activities were on hold for the majority of the time. Many members have told me how much they appreciated the monthly newsletters which helped everyone to keep in touch and to know what was happening with Upbeat. Hilary's weekly coffee mornings on Zoom also provided the chance for us to have a chat and to see some familiar faces. The Committee continued to meet via Zoom to make all necessary arrangements for the organisation to continue, even during Lockdown, and now that the worst of the pandemic seems to be behind us, our exercise classes have re-started, along with some social activities, which you can read about in this magazine.



You will have noticed, I expect, that this issue is the 'slimmed down' version I predicted, without any advertisements, but I've tried to retain the same format and variety of articles. As always, I'd be happy to receive contributions from any members who have stories to tell or amusing anecdotes to relate. Please note my revised e.mail address above, which I have set up just for Upbeat-related correspondence. As Upbeat activities increase in number and there is more on which to report, we may go back to our 56-page magazine. It's up to members really. If everyone actively supports the organisation by attending exercise classes and social events, Upbeat will thrive and as editor I shall be kept busy!

Those of you who attended our AGM earlier in the year will have heard our Chairman, Sylvia, and our Secretary, Hilary, both say that they intend to step down at the end of their present terms of office. They have worked hard for Upbeat for many years now - far more than they originally intended - and both feel that they would like more time to themselves. It's hard to imagine Upbeat continuing without someone in each of these posts so I hope that somewhere among our membership of almost 800 there will be people willing to stand for election to these important roles at our next AGM, otherwise Upbeat may cease to be, and that would be a great shame for us all.

As I look through the Spring 2020 edition of Upbeat magazine, I realise that it went to press before the nation entered Lockdown and all our social events were cancelled. What a lot has happened to us all since then! This year Valerie and I have managed to catch up on several holidays which we'd booked before the pandemic struck and which were carried over. I hope that you have also been able to return to doing many of the things you enjoyed 'pre-Covid'. Numbers attending our exercise classes are still well down on what they used to be, with the result that we now operate fewer classes than previously, with none at all on Fridays. I know that, sadly, we have lost a number of members, some of whom are listed on Page 13, and maybe others are apprehensive about returning and being in close contact with people. However, can I encourage you to come back? The new premises at New Bury are bright and airy, with plenty of room to distance oneself, whether it be while exercising or sitting having coffee and a chat. Long Melford Old School classes are doing well and we've had quite a few new members there. If you yourself no longer come along, or if you've got friends who used to attend but now don't, please let us know if there's anything we can do to tempt you back.

In our January newsletter this year I told you that my GP had referred me to Slimming World and I promised to let you know how things went. Well, as those who've seen me at New Bury Centre will testify, I've got on rather well, losing almost two and a half stone! There have been a few glitches along the way, especially when we've been away on those holidays which were held over from pre-pandemic days. We had an eleven day river cruise in France, during which I gained ten pounds, thanks largely to cheese and wine!!! However, after each indulgence I've got back on track and shed the pounds again, though it gets harder and harder as I move toward my goal weight of ten and a half stone. I've been helped by the fact that Valerie has also joined and has lost a lot of weight too. We both feel much better for shedding the pounds and it's been a good excuse to buy some new clothes - in several sizes smaller than we used to squeeze into. We have certainly found that Slimming World works for us.

A few last words on possible future events: coach hire has become very expensive and buses for our theatre trip to Ipswich and to the Annual Lunch both ran at a considerable loss because few members used them. This means that car sharing might be the answer instead of bus hire, or we only arrange events which can take place locally. Again, please let us know your thoughts on the matter. Many thanks.

Best wishes to you all.

David

P.S. Don't forget to have your Covid boosters and your 'flu jabs!

TRAVEL VOUCHER SCHEME

Do you have a bus pass but find that you can't use it because either there are few or no bus services where you live, or you have a severe and long-term disability which prevents you from using conventional public transport?

Did you know that you might be able to swap your bus pass for travel vouchers that can be used towards the use of community transport, taxis, or private hire vehicles? The vouchers are given by the Council and you can get up to £100 worth each year to use for taxis and suchlike.



If you think you might fulfil the criteria for receiving travel vouchers you should contact the relevant Council department at:

**Suffolk County Council Free Travel Bus Pass,
PO Box 212, Waterlooville, PO7 6ZN.**

You will have to give details of the reason or reasons that you are unable to use conventional public transport and you will have to have your application form endorsed by someone who is professionally qualified, such as a doctor or community nurse involved in your treatment or care.

How can you apply?

If you use a computer, you can download a travel vouchers application form.

Alternatively, you can telephone for one on [0345 6000659](tel:03456000659),

Or, you can pick up an application form at Council offices or libraries.

All applications have to be accompanied by a passport photograph and proof of eligibility.

You will have to return your bus pass with your application form.

More information can be found online at:

<https://www.suffolkonboard.com/concessionary-travel>

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT AUTUMN 22

It has been a very different year with all sorts of problems to be faced.

We still have to cope with reduced numbers attending classes due, perhaps, to people still being wary of meeting up again in large groups and trying to cope with Covid. How it has affected us all! There are more health issues due to Covid as well as age-related problems resulting in some members being unable to travel. Sadly, some have lost partners and others are unable to drive.



We had the move to the new Community Centre in Bury and we are still getting used to this change. The building itself is modern, clean, and air-conditioned, which is much better, but we are lacking the closeness we had in the old building.

The lack of interest and low attendance at the AGM were very disappointing as this would have allowed you all to have your say about things. For those of you who did not attend, I gave notice that this would be my last year as Chairman. When I was elected I said I would do three years and I have now served for eight years! I have given my very best care and attention and feel proud to have been a part of this fabulous group of people. I hope that somebody will step forward and take on this role. Our Secretary, Hilary, also gave notice that she intends to stop being Secretary at the end of her year of office so we do need others to come forward to take on these positions to keep Upbeat going.

We are lucky that we still have a few people who come along to classes, take the money at the door, and set up and put away before and after classes. Our grateful thanks go to these members.

Ann Clarke still organises the coffee mornings although again the number of members attending is smaller. We are very grateful to Ann for continuing to organise and run the coffee mornings.

Bill Kettle has been working hard with the patient group in Sudbury to get new members and we are working with Kate Turner to see if we can get access from the re-hab group at West Suffolk Hospital. Hilary wrote articles advertising Upbeat in lots of local magazines and this did bring in some new members. Our numbers are declining and we have asked Mike Dawson the original chairman of Upbeat when it was formed to see if he can help.

As always, we give a big 'Thank you!' to all the volunteers, but we desperately need some members to form a social group to organise events for future fund-raising. At present there are only a few of us left and it's becoming hard work. I appreciate the cost of trips may be an issue next year with petrol prices so high, resulting in coaches being mega expensive to hire. Venues too will increase prices and for some places we have to pay in advance. As for food prices – well! I don't have to tell you everything is at a premium cost to us all. I believe that members still like to go on trips and if we only have a few perhaps we can manage. It would help if you could write comments or suggestions (which can be anonymous) and put them into the box which will be on the table at the entrance where payment is taken at venues. This would give us a better idea of what you want us to do.

I appreciate all the support that you given: your time, your donations, supplying raffle prizes, making sandwiches and cakes, etc. It has really helped us keep going. *THANK YOU!*

It is good to see our magazine back thanks to David Axton, so keep sending him articles, photos about what you are doing, anything remarkable or funny, or just if you have anything to say, please send these to him at axeditor@btinternet.com.

Thank you to the Executive Committee. Thank you to Valerie, our wonderful Treasurer, to David Camp for keeping our Upbeat web page up to date, to Hilary for staying in every Friday morning to run the Zoom coffee and chat sessions, as well as being such a support to me and keeping us all in check as a good secretary does.

I am writing this before I go on holiday - ten days off - and it seems ages since I got away. Having to pack a suitcase is a new experience, especially as all the clothes washed and ironed and put away months ago now don't fit!!!! As soon as I return we will have the annual lunch to look forward to. I am sure we will all enjoy it and look forward to seeing you there.

Having now had two knee operations and been forced to stay at home because I was unable to drive until six weeks after the op., I have been out of action physically for about six months which has been very hard. It made me realise how little time there is left to do all the things I want to see and do before I am unable. This is really the main reason for me standing down and I hope you will all understand. I have loved being Chairman and guess what! You still have me for another year, until the next AGM!

Best wishes to you all.

Sylvia

Afternoon Tea

at Great Waldingfield Village Hall April 7th

The first social event held by Upbeat since the pandemic and lockdown was back in April when Joyce Hurrell organised an afternoon tea in Great Waldingfield Village Hall

Members were a little apprehensive at first but we spaced the tables fairly wide apart and opened all the windows on the opposite side of the hall to ensure we had plenty of ventilation.

Upbeat ladies had kindly made sandwiches, cakes, and sausage rolls, and Joyce made the scones which were served with jam and cream. It was a lovely spread and a big thank you goes to all who provided the food. It was excellent!

The kitchen area was quite small so Joyce and her team of helpers worked very hard in the cramped space ensuring everything was plated up properly and teas and coffees were served to members. They all got very hot and it was hard work standing so much. "Very well done," to all the ladies who performed kitchen duties. Sylvia and Wendy did a raffle which made a nice profit on the day.

After eating tea we were entertained by "WOT, NO CAKE?", a ukulele group of volunteers who give their time for free to entertain folks around this area. We had no idea what to expect but were all very impressed and they soon had everybody tapping their feet and clapping along to rousing songs like "My old man's a dustman". They are very professional; we all enjoyed the music and they made it fun. (We understand that they got the name because when playing at venues they do not ask for payment but simply want the group to be provided with tea and cake. On one of the earlier visits the organisers only provided tea and the band all exclaimed 'WOT, NO CAKE?' - hence the name.)

They were a lovely bunch of people and we obviously made sure that they did have tea *and* cake

For the first event it was great to see members relaxing and enjoying themselves and we must thank Joyce Hurrell for arranging this. Well done, Joyce!

Sylvia



Such a pleasant afternoon in the company of 'WOT, NO CAKE?' musicians! Such a quirky group! Some old songs, pulling memories back of when I was young

If you see them advertised, don't miss them. They are definitely a golden opportunity to see for fun!

Barbara Bannister

Editor's Note: If you are interested in booking 'Wot, No Cake?' for a function, you should contact :

carolbirch@live.com
01449 782066



AGM Report

by Hilary Neeves, Upbeat Secretary



At the time of writing we have recently held our AGM at the New Bury Community Centre. It was the first time since the pandemic that we were able to hold a meeting 'in person' rather than on Zoom and for me, it was rather disappointing that only thirty-five members turned up. Among these were the current committee and several nurses and instructors. I did get forty-two apologies from people who would have come but for some reason were unable. Thank you for those, but that still makes a total of only seventy-seven members out of a total membership of 740!

Many times over the years we've made requests for extra people to come forward to serve on the committee. It is almost embedded in the Invitation to the AGM that we ask for more help. We lost two committee members and gained one new one this year. A lot of us have been on the committee for several years. I have been in this post for eleven years and have given notice that my time as Secretary is drawing to a close. Unless we get more members coming forward, the future for Upbeat does not look very bright. We have no Social group anymore and the committee are taking on the responsibility for that as well. Sylvia, our Chairman, tells her story elsewhere in this magazine, but the work falls to the same people year after year.

We do not want the group to fail and will do everything to keep it going, but more help is needed. I am acutely aware that this is not a unique situation. I also realise that many of you, through various circumstances, are not able to help and I understand that. Many groups and associations are in the same situation, needing a continuation plan. Please let us know if you feel you are able to help. Ideally you need reasonable computer skills and the ability to be 'hands on', attending the sessions. By this time next year, we have to have new blood coming in to drive the group forward **or it is likely to close!**

Two other Heart Support groups in Suffolk have closed during the past few years, and apparently we are the last group standing. We are unique and the people of Suffolk are lucky to have us still operating where others have folded. We just need to push the word out that we are here and ready to support those needing a bit of tlc. More members = a more viable group.

Enjoy the rest of the good weather while it lasts and let us look forward to a new year of friendship and support amongst us all.

Hilary x

UPBEAT EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

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Instructors: Peter Azzopardi, Martyn Blackford, Yvonne Galloway, Amanda Pearson

SOCIAL EVENTS & FUNDRAISING

At the time of going to print, no member has specific responsibility for organising social events. We need people to take on this role so please, step forward!

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WEB SITE CO-ORDINATOR/MEDICARD
David CAMP e-mail: davidcamp44@btinternet.com

Our New Committee Member, Kevin Jefferson



I was born on March 18th 1962 in Colchester. My parents moved to Chelmsford when I was five, and I went to school there. I married Eileen in May 1981 and we have four girls, one boy, and now we have six grandchildren.

At 18 I began working as a taxi driver. Later, at 21, I took my HGV Class 1 and worked for a few cowboy firms to get experience. In time I moved my family to Haverhill to start work for KD Transport and later moved to Rougham and changed jobs to Turners of Soham, driving in the UK and the EU. I started to work for a Dutch firm called Visbeen and was with them until I lost my HGV licence in 2017 due to heart problems. It was found that I had blown a valve and needed open-heart surgery which I had in late December of 2017 at Papworth Hospital.

I was introduced to UPBEAT when I was going through the cardiac rehabilitation exercise program in Sudbury, and when I finished the program I went to see what Upbeat was all about.

By becoming a committee member, I hope to help the club in going forward.

Report from the Treasurer and Membership Secretary



Finances

As I reported at the AGM, we are currently in a very good financial position due to the many donations and support we had throughout the pandemic, including bequests, and gift aid, the latter of which allowed us to reclaim nearly £5,400 in the last two years from HMRC. Treatts continue to support us both financially and paying for our postage. The St. Edmund's Trust gave us a grant of £8,784.

Thank you to the many members who support us in a whole variety of ways, from a £1 coin in the tin to much larger sums for particular reasons. We have had many donations in memory of members who have died and we thank you for remembering Upbeat. Others have had donations for Upbeat instead of presents for birthdays or wedding anniversaries. Thank you, all; it is much appreciated.

We also have small regular donations through Easy Fund Raising and Amazon Smile. If you buy things online please consider registering for Upbeat through those two areas as they give donations to us for everything you buy.

We have started having fund-raising activities again and you may like to know how much they have raised:

- New Bury Fund Raising tombola £174.00
- Strawberry Tea £672.27
- Thursday Coffee Mornings - donation £100.
- Great Waldingfield Tea £396.00
- Easter Egg Raffle New Bury £235.20
- We Will Rock You made a loss of £378.00. (The tickets had been bought in 2019 but the theatre bought back unsold tickets, which prevented a much bigger loss, the major part of which was due to the cost of the coach.
- Treatt Christmas Jumpers £319.32
- Ashlar House Raffle £195.00
- New Bury Christmas Raffle £192.00

Thank you to the people who have organised these activities; and we really need more people helping with events.

Membership

We currently have 743 members and are very pleased to welcome our new members:

**Mr & Mrs John and Elizabeth Staines Mr & Mrs Bernard & Gisela Mirwis
Mrs Vi Goodhand Mr & Mrs Edward & Valerie Banks Mrs Gloria Bell
Mr & Mrs Kirk & Hayley Bracey Mr Tim Chapple Mr & Mrs David & Jill Allen
Mr & Mrs Michael and Emma Turner Mr & Mrs Richard and Susanna Spall**

If you change any of your details, including e-mail addresses, telephone or mobile numbers please let me know. Also, if you no longer wish to be a member please let me know: Mrs Valerie Axton - 01284 747238 or valerie_axton@hotmail.com

You are welcome to continue receiving our magazine and to keep in touch with Upbeat even if you can no longer get to meetings or events, or move away.

Valerie

Absent Friends

We are very sorry to have to report the deaths of the following members:

*Mrs Jill Brooks - Member since 1995 and Previous Chair person
Mr Brian Richell - Member since 2013 Vice Chair
Mr Keith Bannister - Member since 2008
Mrs Jill Osborne - Member since 2009
Mr Michael Stokes - Member since 2017
Mr Tony Childs - Member since 2004
Mrs Barbara Stanley - Member since 2012
Mrs June Shield - Member since 2021
Mrs Eileen Shurmer - Member since 2006
Mrs Jess Lifford - Member since 2000
Mr Ken Gay - Member since 2005
Mrs Beth Riches - Member since 2005*



Ken Gay's wife, Eileen, has asked that we convey her thanks to the many friends who sent cards and messages on Ken's death, and who made contributions to Upbeat in his memory. Your kind thoughts were much appreciated.



STRAWBERRY TEA AT NEWTON GREEN

by Giles Washbourn

It was a dull and gloomy morning as we hitched the trailer and loaded up the gazebos to take to Newton Green for the Strawberry Tea. Up until now, each year we have been so fortunate with a lovely sunny day for the tea, no worries about rain etc. This year as we drove over to our destination we had a little drizzle and the anxiety levels were rising as we pulled into the car park.

Charlie was there to meet us with the hall already opened and ready for the gang to arrive. Within a short time Bill and Richard arrived to get the tables out into the garden and erect all the gazebos. By this time the sky was clearing nicely and blue patches were appearing.

Hilary's daughter, Karen, and granddaughter, Jasmine, arrived to help and were quickly put to work arranging flowers and decorating the outside space, before helping with tea in the kitchen.

An hour or so later gazebos were up, tables out, with bunting and tablecloths making a lovely summery patchwork of colour in the garden. John was setting up his silhouette stand; he is a magician with the scissors. The Raffle Table was being filled with prizes with Val and Sylvia in charge. Sue and Rosie were unloading loads of colourful plants to be sold on their plant stall. The band, which consisted of Giles on guitar, Karen on Violin, and Hilary on accordion, was setting up their instruments ready to entertain with some folk music. John joined in on his snare drum. There was all manner of 'goings on' and preparation in the kitchen and food hall with many members bringing food as they arrived. Thank you all for that.

Within no time at all the garden was filled with families and members chatting and enjoying the, by now, hot sunshine. It was joyful to see everyone. A second run to the Strawberry Farm nearby ensured we had plenty to fill the scones and pavlovas.



The wonderful ladies in the kitchen did a magnificent job in very hot conditions and hardly had time to come out into the sunshine, so we thank everyone who gave up their time and worked so hard to help out. It has given us thought for next year, as we are all getting older, perhaps we should plan it differently as it is a lot of work that falls on the same helpers all the time. Thanks go to Sue who made a wonderful cake which was auctioned and to David who organised a Quiz which kept everyone from falling asleep in the sunshine!!



I think we all went home with tired feet, but pleased that everyone had enjoyed the afternoon and the weather had turned out so beautifully. We missed Sylvia, who was recovering from surgery, and also Clare (Ketty), who was away, but Clare's brother came in her place and helped with the setting up and clearing away.

We had quite a few last minute attendees, which helped with the finance and the whole day was a lovely occasion. We made a magnificent profit of nearly £700. To all of you who worked so hard to help out we give a big 'thank you'.



What is heart failure?

by Kate Turner, Senior Cardiac Nurse



The term 'heart failure' sounds alarming to most people. It does not mean that your heart has completely failed or that it is about to stop; it is simply a medical term used when your heart muscle is not working as efficiently as it should. This may be because the muscle has weakened and is not able to pump strongly, or because the muscle has become stiff and is unable to relax to allow blood into the pumping chamber. It may also be due to one or more of the heart valves not working properly, or because of an abnormal heart rhythm, putting strain on your heart muscle.

The heart pumps oxygen and nutrients around the body. If you have heart failure this means that your heart's ability to function as an effective pump is reduced. The reduced blood supply to your kidneys means that they are not able to filter waste products and fluid efficiently. In turn this means that fluid can build up in your body, resulting in swollen feet, ankles, and legs. If fluid builds up in your lungs it can cause shortness of breath.

What causes heart failure?

Sometimes it is difficult to identify the cause of heart failure. However, there are many causes and these include:

- Heart attack and coronary artery disease
- High blood pressure
- Heart valve disease
- Infection of the heart muscle
- Excessive alcohol consumption
- Abnormalities of the heart rhythm

What are the symptoms of heart failure?

Symptoms include the following:

Shortness of breath, coughing, difficulty in breathing:

If fluid builds up in your lungs it can cause shortness of breath. You may notice these

symptoms more when carrying out some form of activity or when taking exercise. However, you may also become short of breath when carrying out light, everyday tasks or even when resting. Waking up at night feeling breathless is also quite common. You may find it helps to prop yourself up with plenty of pillows rather than lying flat.

Tiredness and weakness:

When your heart is not pumping properly it has difficulty sending enough oxygen and glucose to your muscles through your bloodstream. This can result in you feeling tired when carrying out light duties or even when resting.

Swollen feet, ankles, legs and abdomen:

As already said, the reduced blood supply to your kidneys means that they are not able to filter waste products and fluid efficiently. In turn this means that fluid can build up in your body, resulting in swollen feet, ankles, and legs. The inefficient pumping action of your heart results in your kidneys not being able to get rid of excess fluid from your body. As a result of this, you may find that parts of your lower body may swell (such as your feet, ankles, legs, and abdomen).

Weight gain:

This may happen slowly over a period of time, or it can happen very quickly over a day or two. It is normally due to a build-up of excess fluid.

How is heart failure treated?

The symptoms of heart failure can be relieved to an extent with medication. You may also need treatment for the cause of your heart failure, if this is known. One of the main treatments for heart failure is diuretic therapy (water tablets). These encourage your body to get rid of excess salt and fluid. Also often prescribed is a relatively new drug called Entresto (Sacubitril Valsartan) which has been shown to reduce the symptoms of heart failure.

How does it work?

Entresto blocks the effect of an enzyme called Neprilysin, which inactivates the Natriuretic Peptide hormones, which are protective to the heart and help the heart cope with its weakness. Natriuretic Peptides help your body to retain less water and reduce blood pressure; this reduces the amount of ankle swelling and breathlessness patients may be suffering from.

Lifestyle changes:

There are also things you can do yourself to help manage the heart failure. Small changes can really help the way you feel.

The main things to consider are:

- Keeping an eye on the amount of fluid in your body by weighing yourself daily
- Keeping an eye on your fluid intake - there is usually guidance given by your healthcare professional on fluid restriction
- Stopping smoking
- Reducing salt in your diet to around 3 grams (½ a teaspoon) daily
- Reducing your weight if necessary
- Remaining as active as possible – with guidance from your healthcare professional

Having an annual flu vaccination and, from this year, the Covid booster too. There is also the opportunity to have the one-off pneumonia vaccination if you haven't already had it. (Ask at your GP surgery)

100 Club Winners

March	1st Mrs B James £100 No.042 2nd Mr & Mrs J Green £55.00 No.200
April	1st Mrs E Williams £100 No. 277 (£50 donated to Upbeat) 2nd Mr R Wakerley £55 No.024
May	1st Mr S Parsons £100 No.308 2nd Mr W Kettle £55 No.043 £25 donated to Upbeat
June	1st Mrs R Deeks £100 No.189 2nd Mr J Smith £56.50 No.008
July	1st Mr K Bannister £100 No.271 Deceased - Money to daughter Ms A Fuller 2nd Mrs C Forge £56.50 No.168
August	1st Mrs A Wiseman £100.00 No.11 2nd Mr D Galer £56.50 No.111
Sept.	1st Mr D Galer £100 No.108 2nd Mrs V Helm £56.50 No 160



Can wearing an apron raise money?

Well, yes it can, when it's a Camra Beer Festival apron, worn when serving beer, selling beer cards, or helping in any other way at the Camra Beer Festival.

The festival was held in St Edmundsbury Cathedral and grounds in June over five days. We had good weather and enjoyed various musical acts while our customers enjoyed the beers and, of course, the ever popular gin bar. Upbeat members, Nick, Keith, John (pictured), and myself all enjoyed ourselves chatting with other volunteers and the festival crowd.



A big 'Thank you!' to all of you, and to Dawn, not a member, but who donated her time to raise funds for Upbeat. We are still awaiting our final total after all the invoices have been paid, but we expect to hear when the cheques are awarded soon.

Come and join us next year; it's good fun and remember, wearing an apron **can** raise money!

Felicity Stemp

Camra Beer Festival committee and Upbeat member

Susan Johnson recently did a dance marathon in memory of her lovely mum and dad, Ella and Rodney Johnson. Rodney (pictured) was a committee member for Upbeat for many years.

Rodney was a stalwart of Upbeat from its inception in 1994 and his invaluable work for Upbeat was acknowledged at the AGM in 2017, when he was presented with a special award to thank him for all that he had done for the group.



Susan raised a magnificent £1063.63, despite the event taking place in extreme heat weather conditions and Upbeat are very grateful to her. This was such a nice thing to do and Rodney and Ella would have been delighted. Thank you again, Susan.

Sylvia

From Downbeat to Upbeat: July 1993 – To Now!

Mike Dawson: Upbeat Chair 1994 -2003



The night of Monday 13 July 1993 was a bad one! I was an Environmental Health Officer in those days and I had a heart attack while out working, doing noise control at a rather unruly late night event near Bury St Edmunds.

I didn't know that I had had a heart attack until I reported to West Suffolk Hospital after lunch the next day. There's a story about the time in between, involving my GP's late-night call-out misdiagnosis of my chest pain, but we'll leave that one for another time.

The doctor at West Suffolk said in a very matter of fact way, "Well you've had a heart attack." The effect on me was dramatic! Well it's probably better described as catastrophic! Mentally it was like hitting a brick wall, or falling off the wire, or both at the same time. I was 37 years old with a young family; life was good, I thought – only now it didn't seem so!

Like everyone on that heart attack journey before and since, I felt lonely, worried, uncertain about the future, and more. As time went on in hospital and out of it, I went through the process of recovery and slowly climbed back up the rungs of the physical and mental healing process. Never mind the physical though, every little step seemed like a mental mountain. Each step brought a worry, not being wired to a monitor, leaving hospital to go home, the first time I went for a walk on my own, going swimming and so on.

Slowly I built my confidence. I was lucky. Being young, I didn't have any ongoing symptoms and so I was able to build my new normality relatively quickly, but it was a different normality.

Through it all my wife, Sue, was amazing. She was caring, supportive, encouraging, loving, and, in short, totally focussed on me – all the things that you would want your nearest and dearest to be after you have had a heart attack. The problem was, I was focussed on me too and didn't realise for months how badly she too had been knocked by my illness. She never let on to me about her trips to the doctor, her

panic attacks, her worries about the future. She just carried on looking after me.

I went to the six-week rehab course at West Suffolk Hospital with the spirit of a health-kick convert. I did the exercise and soaked in the advice and education. I met with some lovely professionals who I thought were just great: Ali Shorten, Gylfa Nunn, and Wendy Trett, and they got me on the way back to a healthy and confident life. I guess that following that I didn't look back. I was exercising regularly, I got into running, and I lost loads of weight.

I used to buy West Suffolk Cardiac rehab sweat shirts for running in. In Autumn 1993 when visiting the hospital to buy a sweat shirt, I had a conversation with Ali about the fact that it was a shame that there was nothing that continued the exercise and support for people after the six-week rehab course. She agreed and said that she and colleagues were also wondering how to provide ongoing support and exercise opportunities for ex-cardiac patients to keep the exercise habit. That got me thinking.

There were a few other successful heart support groups in the country and indeed there was Heartbeat in the Ipswich area. They all worked to a British Heart Foundation model and so with some help from the BHF we started to set up a Heart Support Group for West Suffolk. We got some willing volunteers to form the very first Committee and off we went. I can't remember everybody's names, which is sad for me, but I can still remember all their faces – Mike and Sheila, Rodney and Ella, Jill and Ken, Stan, Selwyn and a few others who I just can't recall - all were just terrific, including Ali and Gylfa who joined to keep us in order.

We got set up in 1994, raised some funds, got the first exercise classes running at the Bury Leisure Centre, got a logo (it's still the same today), gave ourselves a name. Ha! choosing the name, was a discussion I remember well. A favourite in the running was 'Dicky Tickers'. Mmmm..., I wasn't sure about that one! We soon applied for charitable status and we were up and running, quite literally in some cases.

In 1994 the Committee established some principles, which still stand good for Upbeat today:

- Upbeat would focus on providing exercise and education-based support for its members.
- Upbeat support would be open to anyone with heart problems and, importantly, to their partners.
- We would keep exercise class charges as low as possible.
- Upbeat would try to raise its own funds so as not to rely on public sector funding.
- We would use a social activities programme to help raise funds.

- We would pay staff at a good rate to attract the best people we could.

So, we went on and on, and now as Upbeat nears its 30th Anniversary it's still going strong. That success is testimony to everyone who has supported Upbeat, put effort into helping Upbeat, and worked for Upbeat over those years. It is also testimony to the fact that the services Upbeat offers to its members - regular exercise, lifestyle education, mutual support, and good fun - well, they really work you know!

A Queen's Award-winning charity, still dedicated to supporting people with heart problems and their other halves, at their time of great need and in their new normality? It makes me so proud to see the success Upbeat has achieved. Keep it up - you're just brilliant!

Maybe that bad night in 1993 was a cloud with a silver lining.

Mike

Mike Dawson - Upbeat Chair 1994 -2003

Coffee Mornings



Dear Everyone,

We have been having smaller numbers at our coffee mornings on the first Thursdays in the month because people have other commitments, so we have decided to fix coffee mornings from January 2023 to the 2nd and 4th Thursdays in each month, except December when we will just meet on the 2nd Thursday.

I have booked the following dates with Jackie at Southgate:

Jan 12th, 26th Feb 9th, 23rd Mar 9th, 23rd Apr 13th, 27th
May 11th, 25th Jun 8th, 22nd Jul 13th, 27th Aug 10th, 24th
Sep 14th, 28th Oct 12th, 26th Nov 9th, 23rd Dec 14th.

The dates we have arranged for 2022 will remain as they were.

Best wishes

Ann

Upbeat Rocks in Ipswich

Finally, on May 11th, our long-awaited theatre trip to Ipswich to see the musical 'We Will Rock You' took place. In some ways it was a great disappointment - not the show itself, I hasten to add. That was very good and enjoyed by those of us who went, but, oh my goodness! There were only twelve of us in total!

As you probably saw in previous newsletters, I had originally booked forty-nine seats and we had arranged for a fifty-seater coach to take us there. However, for whatever reasons, despite reminders and pleas, we managed to sell only fourteen tickets. Fortunately, the Regent Theatre in Ipswich were very understanding and helpful and refunded the cost of all the unsold tickets! This amounted to £1,466, considerably reducing the loss we made on the visit.

Ilva Maxey had managed to get us a smaller coach (only a thirty-nine seater) which cost less than the larger one would have done, but still, on the day, we had plenty of empty seats on the bus, including two which would have been occupied by a couple who had to cancel at the last minute.

We picked up first of all at the bus station in Bury, then at the Old School in Long Melford, before our final pick-up at Waitrose car park in Sudbury, and arrived at the theatre in good time. Our stalls seats gave us a good view of the show, which seemed to be very well attended. It looked to me as if all the tickets I had returned had been re-sold, because there didn't appear to be lots of empty seats around us.

I don't know quite what I had expected from the show, other than the fact that it featured the music of Queen, but it surprised me with its storyline and setting. The performers: singers, dancers, and musicians, were all excellent but in spite of that I can't say that it was overall to my taste, although I enjoyed it as I almost always enjoy live theatre.

One thing the experience has shown me is that outings like this are likely to prove too expensive for Upbeat to arrange in the future. Coach travel is becoming prohibitively costly, and with the ever-increasing price of fuel, hiring a bus is likely to get ever dearer. Sadly, we shall certainly have to consider very carefully before arranging any future trips which involve coach travel.

David

Frankie and Bob Join the Race for Life



It's often said that we all know someone who has been touched by cancer - perhaps a relative or close friend. Each year Cancer Research UK organises a nationwide series of fundraising runs to raise money to carry out its research. Upbeat member Frankie Mountfort has taken part locally for many years, in fair weather or foul, first in 2010, but with a short break for Covid. Once she ran with her daughter's dog!

2022 was to be no exception and the morning of Sunday, June 12th saw Frankie among the many who converged on Nowton Park, dressed in the standard pink, to 'run'. Well, you didn't have to run. Although its purpose is serious, the whole event is meant to be fun, with many 'runners', dressed up for the occasion. You will see that Frankie was running "For Beth*", and that this year she was joined by fellow Upbeat member, husband Bob. His t-shirt tells us that he was running for his niece, Mandy.

Bob says that Frankie has done the race for life for many years and that his role in the past has been her loyal and greatest supporter and transport provider. She wouldn't let him run with her until this year when men were invited to participate. According to Bob, men were allowed to take part in the previous year but when he told Frankie, she didn't believe him!

Usually the runs were 10 km or 5 km but this year a 3 km run was added to encourage "old farts like us", as Bob put it!. According to Bob, it wasn't long after the start that they realised the rest of the field was out of sight but he and Frankie plodded on to the finish where they joined a whole lot of other runners (probably on the second time around, Bob said jokingly) so they crossed the line to rapturous applause!!!. Thanks to sponsorship from family and friends, including Upbeat members, Frankie

and Bob raised £220 for Cancer Research UK and they would like to say a big 'Thank you!' to everyone who signed up and helped with donations.

Similar fun runs are already being planned for 2023 in many areas. Cancer Research UK says: '*We **all** have a reason to Race. Who will you Race for?*'

Do you have someone dear affected by cancer? Could you run, jog, or walk 3 km to raise money for research? Does Frankie and Bob's example inspire you to join in next year? You can find out more by logging on to:

<https://raceforlife.cancerresearchuk.org/find-an-event>

** I'm sad to report that as I prepare this issue for sending to the printer, I have heard that Beth died this morning, October 4th. Our sympathies go to her husband, Peter, the family, and her many friends.*

Upbeat Christmas Cards

Christmas cards in aid of Upbeat are on sale at New Bury Centre, Long Melford Old School, and Southgate Community Centre (where our coffee mornings are held).

There are two designs:



The Robin



The Donkey

Each pack contains 10 cards of one design and 10 envelopes.

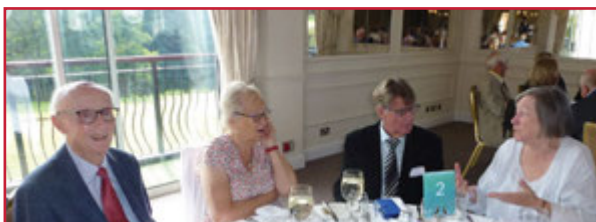
1 pack - £3

4 packs £11

You can either buy at the venue or they can be ordered from Upbeat Treasurer, Valerie Axton. Telephone 01284 747238 or email valerie_axton@hotmail.com.

Upbeat Lunches Out

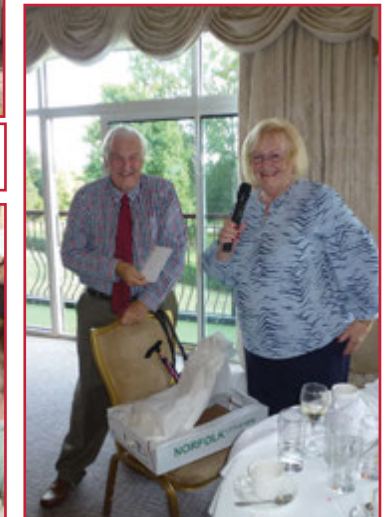
Thursday, September 29th saw almost a hundred members and friends gather once again at the lovely setting of Stoke-by-Nayland Resort for Upbeat's Annual Lunch. It always provides a pleasant occasion to meet with friends for a good chat and to enjoy a tasty meal in elegant surroundings. There was the usual raffle, with prizes including a round of golf, £100, bottles of wine and spirits, and many more. Thanks go to the many members who donated items for the raffle, and especially to our Patron, Daemmon Reeve, and Precon Products Ltd. of Woolpit who have generously supported Upbeat for a number of years.



Presentations and thanks were given to various members who have given their time and energy throughout the year to keep Upbeat running smoothly, and those in attendance were entertained by after-dinner speaker, raconteur and wit, Stephen Bayfield, who gives his talents to support charities throughout the region.



Photographs courtesy of Giles Washbourn and David Axton



7 STEPS TO A HEALTHIER HEART

ONC OPTIMAL NUTRITION COACHING
FOUNDED BY NANCY L. KATZ, PH.D., RD, CNSC

PART 1 You don't have to make big changes to reduce your heart attack and stroke risk. Here are some healthy habits that could save your life:

CONTROL YOUR BLOOD SUGAR

1

Aim for a fasting blood glucose less than 100mg/dL.

MONITOR YOUR BLOOD PRESSURE

2

Keep your numbers below 120/80mm Hg.

MAINTAIN A HEALTHY WEIGHT

3

Target a body mass index (BMI) of less than 25.

LIVE SMOKE FREE

4

If you smoke, quit.



Thanks to our instructor Peter for providing these two sets of infographics showing us '7 Steps to a Healthier Heart'

7 STEPS TO A HEALTHIER HEART

ONC OPTIMAL NUTRITION COACHING
FOUNDED BY NANCY L. KATZ, PH.D., RD, CNSC

PART 2 You don't have to make big changes to reduce your heart attack and stroke risk. Here are some healthy habits that could save your life:

GET ACTIVE

5

Log 150 minutes of moderate intensity activity - like brisk walking - per week, or 75 minutes of vigorous-intensity activity.

EAT A HEART HEALTHY MEAL

6

Make vegetables and fruits, whole grains and fish mealtime staples. Limit sodium, saturated fat and added sugar.

WATCH YOUR CHOLESTEROL

7

Strive for a total cholesterol less than 200mg/dL.



www.optimalnutritioncoaching.com