

Up Front Newsletter



Issue 1

Winter 2008

Chiltern Hospital Breast Centre Support Group
London Road, Great Missenden, Bucks. www.upfront.org.uk

Welcome to the UpFront Newsletter!

Welcome to our first newsletter especially for members of the Up Front breast cancer support group.

We hope that you will enjoy reading the anecdotes, recipes and experiences of fellow members, and would particularly welcome your stories, recipes,

jokes, poems —in fact anything which you feel would be of interest to everyone. Please contact me.



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We're on the web!
www.upfront.org.uk

Meetings are held on the second Thursday in every month from 7.30pm to 9.30pm at The Chiltern Hospital.

An introduction to the group

The aim of Up Front is quite simply to support, to help others through their journey and to encourage and strengthen resolve. We've all been there and

understand how you may be feeling so whether it's practical issues, someone to talk to, the need to share experiences in a safe and informal environment,

or simply to smile or cry — we'll be there!

Up Front organises events and guest speakers on a regular basis.

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Best Medicine

The six best doctors anywhere,
And no-one can deny it
Are Doctors, Sunshine, Water, Air,
Rest, Exercise and Diet.
These six will always you attend,
If only you are willing
Your ills they'll cure, your health they'll mend
And charge you not one shilling!

An Evening of Style and Serenade

The Up Front Fashion Show on 4th October 2008 will be our first major fund raising event in aid of our nominated charity *Breakthrough Breast Cancer*. The venue will be the Beaconsfield School, Wattleton Road, Beaconsfield HP9 1SJ.



The evening will be a "celebration of women and life"—joyful, uplifting, giggly, fun and musical. Our intention is to make this a very prestigious and memorable occasion that not only raises funds for a very worthwhile organisation but is also fun for our members who will be helping behind the scenes and on the catwalk as models.

Professional choreographers with exactly the right skills, experience and artistic vision will ensure that we achieve a professional show. The evening will be supported by professional lighting and sound, and we are delighted that **Beverley Craven** will be performing some of her very well known songs.

Clothes will be provided by a lovely mix of some of the well-known local fashion retailers and hair and make-up will be attended to by professional volunteers.

Thank you to all those of you who have already agreed to be a model for the evening. You will be supported by some professional models and will have opportunity to attend workshops which will help you gain confidence and skill. However, we are still needing more of our lovely Up Front ladies to volunteer—after all, the fashion show is a celebration of all of us so please speak to either Sally, Penny or Brenda to find out more—it will be great fun we promise!

Family and friends will be so proud to see you on the catwalk.....

2008 Meetings Diary - subject to change due to availability of speaker

14 February	"My experience of breast cancer"
13 March	Walking for your health and weight loss
10 April	Holistic Health—t.b.c.
8 May	Sexual Wellbeing
12 June	Bras and Lingerie
10 July	Let our Image Consultant put some sparkle in your life! - t.b.c.
14 August	Summer Social
11 September	Nutrition
9 October	Breast Cancer— <i>Hot Topics!</i> - t.b.c.
13 November	Xmas Shopping—craft evening
11 December	Xmas Quiz, mince pies and lots of laughter



Second birthday celebrations!

Dinner and laughter at Annie Baileys

If you didn't sign up for the post-Christmas dinner at Annie Baileys on 17th January you missed a treat!



have

resounded around the entire restaurant!



"What a hoot! I thought I was never going to stop laughing!"



I think you could fairly say that we all laughed our way through the entire evening. Food was in typical Annie Bailey style and absolutely excellent, the wine (and mineral water!) flowed as did the conversation, but best of all was the laughter which must

Seriously, it was great to be able to spend time chatting and getting to know one another. A few of us shared stories, photographs were taken as is evidenced in this newsletter and a good time was had by all, indeed sufficient for emails to dart around asking when the next dinner will be!

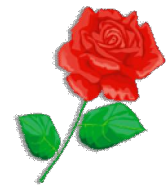
One good thing about my yearly mammogram

I'm in and out of there, I swear, in the blink of an eye. Moving at warp speed, clothes peeled to the waist in seconds flat. Motion lines blur, tremble on either side of me. I fight off demons that recur, mute their evil chatter (*we found it once, we'll find it again*). Steal a quick glance down at my watch. It's official: I'm in and out and on my way, I'd say in maybe half the time it takes everybody else.



Remembering Friends

Of course, we couldn't write about Up Front news without remembering friends who are having an especially difficult time, or who are sadly no longer with us.



As organisers, we have made a conscious decision not to make announcements and share with the group when someone is in difficulty for fear of unsettling others, particularly our newer members.

However, that doesn't mean that we don't care and it doesn't mean that we aren't there and ready to help in any way we can. This is why we have decided to create a "Book of Memories" which will belong to everyone at Up Front. It will be available at every meeting—please take a few minutes to look through it and to make your own entry, whether happy or moving, reflective or upbeat.

Pat Desborough x

Join us in raising funds for Breast Cancer Care

Up Front has entered a team for the Blenheim Palace Ribbon Walk in aid of Breast Cancer Care on 31st May. **SIGN UP AND JOIN THE UPFRONT TEAM** to raise money and get fit too!! There is a choice of 10 or 20 mile walks around the beautiful Blenheim Palace Estate and through the Cotswolds. Come and join us—the more the merrier!!!

To enter, simply log on to www.breastcancercare.com

/events and search for Up Front.

Enrolment fee is £30 per person with a minimum sponsorship of £250. To accommodate this and to make it achievable for everyone, we have set up a JustGiving website www.justgiving.com/upfront. For those non-walkers amongst us, please dig deep, show your support and sponsor your Up Front team!



"We had such fun last year walking a marathon through London for Breakthrough Breast Cancer. Thanks to our Up Front members, family and friends we raised £7,777 in the process! Now we are really looking forward to our next challenge!"

Christmas Quiz



What fun we had at the Up Front Christmas Quiz! Although there weren't too many of us to puzzle over the questions and giggle over potential answers, we had a really good time. Debs did her usual excellent job of masterminding and running the evening, even down to organising the prizes! I think the general consensus was that she was "fair but firm". Great fun!

Sample question: Myrtle, Sand and Swamp are all types of which plant?

Tried and tested

Fruit and Nut Slice. Makes about 12. Oven: 190°C/375°F/gas 5

150 g (5 oz/1 cup) raisins
150 g (5 oz/1 cup) mixed nuts of your choice

4 teaspoons pear and apple spread (or other fruit concentrate)
85 ml (3 fl oz/scant half cup) sunflower oil

75 g (3 oz/1 cup) oats
150g (5 oz/1 cup) organic white flour

85 ml (3 fl oz/scant half cup) cold water

Whiz together for a couple of seconds in a blender

Add to the blender and whiz briefly again.

Add to the blender and give another quick whiz.

Add to the blender and whiz to make quite a sticky mixture. Press it into a greased quiche tin or baking sheet, approximately 20 cm (8in) square. Bake for about 30 minutes, or until nicely browned. Slice and let cool before serving.

These slices store very well in an air-tight container and can easily be varied by exchanging the raisins for other dried fruits such as apricots and by popping in a few seeds such as sesame or sunflower.



Delicious with a cup of coffee—and low fat!

Experiencing Reiki, by Audrey Shanks

When I was receiving my radiotherapy treatment at the Harley Street Clinic, Reiki treatment was offered as part of their complementary services. Although I'd had aromatherapy massage and reflexology previously I'd not been a devotee of such services. On this occasion I felt that access to these treatments would offer me little breaks after my radiotherapy sessions, before heading home via train and tube.

I'm ashamed to admit that although I'd heard of Reiki—I really didn't know anything about how 'it' was administered or handled, or indeed what to expect. I thought nothing ventured, nothing gained, so I booked a session.

After the radiotherapy treatment I was shown into a room by the Reiki practitioner—(who was also a qualified physiotherapist). She asked a few general medical questions and also asked if I had Reiki previously—which I hadn't. She explained that she would pass her hands over me but wouldn't massage or touch me. I was then asked to lie on the treatment couch (fully clothed) and to close my eyes and listen to the soft music which was being played.

I honestly don't know what happened—and have to admit I'm not given to fanciful ideas as I'm known for being 'grounded'. I do have to say that the experience I had rocked me to my very core—I felt in touch with 'me' whatever that means. I really did feel something very special and utterly memorable.

The feeling I had was one of complete peace and stillness. Those people who know me well would find this incredulous as I am always rushing and eager to get things done. When the session was over the experience was so overpowering, that as I thanked the practitioner, tears (of joy) streamed down my face. She asked me what I had felt and I told her. She said that everyone has a different experience which is unique to them, but that what I described was in line with her experiences of providing this service to others.

I left with the most immense feeling of euphoria—as if I was floating on a cloud of happiness and thankfulness. I didn't rush for the train home as I normally did, but I floated into John Lewis's in Oxford Street, (as I had to pass that on the way to the tube and it was close to Christmas) so I indulged myself in their perfumery department!

I would never seek to influence anyone else, and I am not attempting to be an evangelist for Reiki, as I'm sure that for each person, and dependent on the practitioner, each experience is different—but I'm just sharing how fantastic it was for me and would hope that anyone



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