

The Ribbons Centre offers a range of services to anyone living with HIV and their partners, families and carers. Children are welcome although parents are responsible for them at all times whilst in the Centre.

A warm welcome awaits you!

Our services include

- Support for people who are newly diagnosed
- Full Disabled access
- Complementary therapies
- Resource area with an up to date library
- Access to the Internet for research purposes
- Use of office facilities including PC, photocopier, phone etc
- Advocacy service
- Referral to other specialist services
- One to one Support
- Information and support on Immigration, benefits, housing, employment
- A confidential Counselling service
- Social Events
- Food
- Training
- Discussion Forums
- Outreach

Centre Opening Times

Mondays Closed

Tuesdays Drop-in 3-9pm

Wednesdays 10am-2pm by appointment

Thursdays Drop-in 11am-4pm

From Feb also Drop-in 6-9pm

Fridays 10am-1pm by appointment

Positive Women's Group

11.30-1.30 on the first Wednesday of each month

P.A.C.T. (Partners and Carers Together) Monthly support group



September 2005. New Patrons Sally Taylor and Cllr Edwina Cooke join Matthew Stevens and Dr Fred Wilmot to dedicate a tree in commemoration of 10 years of The Charlotte Jackson Trust, the charity that runs The Ribbons Centre. Photo courtesy of The Southern Daily Echo.

STAFF CHANGES

I've been working in the office part time for 2 1/2 years now. The time has gone really quickly and I've enjoyed helping to make the office run smoothly.

We recently looked at how we could further improve service provision, and concluded that Darryl didn't always have the time he would like to support the volunteers, as he was busy supporting service users. Volunteers are an important part of the Centre and it benefits everyone to get the best from them. This is why from January I will be extending my role and taking on much of the day-to-day volunteer support work to give Darryl more time to focus on supporting service users.

I'm really looking forward to escaping from the office during drop-in and working with Darryl and the volunteers to improve the service we provide. As I will be now working full time, it also means that there should be someone to take your call during office hours Monday to Friday.

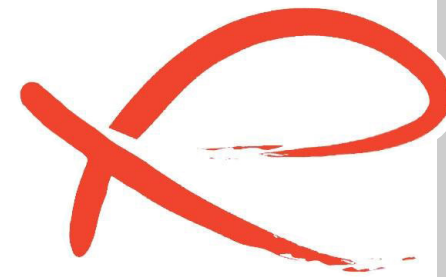
With best wishes for the New Year, Martin.

Following the success of the photography course leading to the photo exhibition we are investigating whether we can run a graphic/poster design course at the centre sometime in the New Year. Perhaps, we may even develop some new posters for the Ribbons Centre from the workshops. If anyone would be interested in such a course please let Darryl know.

PACT GOES TWICE MONTHLY

Partners and carers now have a second opportunity to meet each month at the Ribbons Centre. From February we are offering the opportunity to meet on the third Wednesday of each month as well as the first Wednesday.

This second meeting each month will be an "opt-in" group. As long as people indicate they want to attend it will run – it saves staffing the centre if no one is going to attend.



Winter 05/06

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The Ribbons Centre is a project of the Charlotte Jackson Trust.

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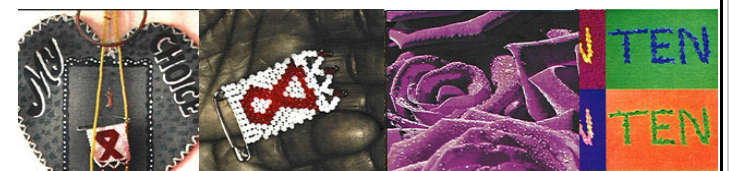
REPORT FROM WORLD AIDS DAY 2005

Thanks to everyone's hard work and support this year's events for WAD have yet again been really successful, both in raising awareness of HIV and also in raising money for our Client fund. Well done to everyone who took part in all the events and contributed towards making the events so successful.

We even managed to paint the town red when Southampton City Council lit up the clock tower in red for the week and also flew the red ribbon flag over the Civic Centre. The opening of the "Positive Reflections" Photographic exhibition at the City Art

Gallery was a brilliant night and really well attended. The exhibition was very powerful and there were some fantastic comments recorded in the comments book. We would like to thank all the people who worked so hard to take the photos and create the exhibition. This could not have been achieved without the help of Anna of Mount Pleasant Media Workshop who gave so much of her time to support this project.

We would also like to say a big thank you to Ray, Dave and all the staff at the London Hotel who organised a fantastic fundraising event, which raised £2523



WOMEN, PREGNANCY AND HIV

Massive improvements in the care and treatment of pregnant women with HIV mean that women can now consider pregnancy as a real option. There is still confusion in the UK about the treatment a pregnant woman with HIV should be offered and what is the best method of delivery. It's important to get as much information regarding HIV and pregnancy as possible if you are considering having a baby and to work with health profes-

sionals involved in your care. It is also important to meet other women who have been through the process. The Ribbons Centre is delighted to invite you to meet Susan Cole from Positive Nation, who herself gave birth a year ago. Susan will be visiting the centre on Thursday 2nd March at 12.00 to talk about HIV and Pregnancy and her experience of giving birth. If you would like to attend please contact the Centre to book a space.

for the Centre. Customers and staff at the Freedom Café also held a successful fundraising event at the Centre and raised £131.59. All the money raised goes straight into our client fund and is used exclusively to support people with HIV in financial hardship and helps to make a real difference to people's lives.

OPEN ALL HOURS?

Well no, not quite! But we are extending our evening hours to a Thursday evening. The idea came from service-users who wanted another evening to be able to meet because of day time commitments.

We are going to open on a Thursday evening from 6pm-9pm. We won't be providing a full meal to start with – it's probably going to be soup and a roll or bag of chips evening.

We will be launching this new evening from February 2nd for a three month trial period. The monthly Discussion Group will be moved to a Wednesday from Feb to accommodate the new session. The discussion forum will now take place on Feb 22nd, March 22nd and then will always be on the last Weds of the month from April.

We're reliant both on our volunteers to help staff the evening and also on service-users to support this extra evening and want your feedback on how we can maximise its usefulness and success.

DESKTOP SMS COMES TO RIBBONS CENTRE

As part of our lurch into the 21st Century and to improve communications to you all we have introduced a desktop SMS utility. It sounds complicated but it basically means that at the touch of a few buttons we can now send a text message to all service-users, PACT members, volunteers or any combination of groups or sub-groups.

The messages will appear to come from +4476244 809277 and will usually begin "From Ribbons:".

Please note that this is a desktop num-

ber and doesn't belong to a mobile phone so you cannot phone this number to talk to someone at the Ribbons Centre. You can however send texts to this number and they will be delivered to an Inbox on Darryl's computer.

We've already been sending messages out to you all so if you haven't received one then we either don't have your mobile number or we have the wrong number - in which case please update your details with us. (Or, of course, you don't have a mobile phone at all!).

If at any time you decide you don't want to get messages from us about

meetings, events and Christmas dinners you can simply send a text saying "NO THANKS" to the desktop number and we'll strike you off the caller groups.

So what next.... perhaps 3G mobile video conferencing next year???

We are running a one day course at the Centre on Weds 8th February on Public Speaking. If you are interested in finding out more about how to talk more confidently in public and maybe do some public speaking, then this is the course for you! To book a place please contact Ginny at the Centre.

Since the free Yoga classes began at the Ribbons centre 2 years ago, some of the regular attendants have reported unusual patterns in their CD4 counts. This has not affected everyone, but has affected some. The seemingly unexplained rises lead me to investigate further, and I was surprised at the findings.

In North America Yoga is as ordinary as going to waking up. It is more accepted there as the positive health system that it is, than anywhere else outside India. It would be unusual not to have a Yoga teacher working for the local HIV support centre. These teachers are reporting that the regular students are seeing sustained rises in their CD4, helping to improve immune, and keep those who are not on medication to stay off it for far longer periods as a direct result.

The funding bodies in the US prefer to shy away from HIV, and a study into Yoga & HIV has yet to be funded and exercised.

I have been very lucky to be introduced to an eminent health psychologist who has offered to conduct what will be the world's first study into the effects of Yoga on patients with HIV to see if this can be proved. Dr Gidrons' work is well known and he often appears in established medical

'YOU MAY BE PART OF SOMETHING LIFE CHANGING'

journals such as 'The Lancet'. His work looks at the effects of relaxation on the mind, and how that combats chronic disease.

We are therefore looking for people who would like to volunteer to either attend weekly Yoga classes, or just to report your blood results for an initial period of 3 months, possibly 6, starting in March 2006. The classes are specifically written for the study, and the emphasis is on meditation & relaxation, so don't worry if you think Yoga isn't for you, these lessons are for everyone!

The study needs at least 10 people

DISCUSSION GROUP UPDATE

The Discussion Group continues to be popular, currently meeting on the last Thursday evening of each month. January sees Perry from THT coming to do a presentation about the implications of prosecutions against people with HIV for "deliberately" or "recklessly" infecting their sexual partners.

Keep an eye out for a change of evening from February onwards as we extend drop-ins to Thursday evenings.

to participate in Yoga classes, and 10 people to be a control. These 20 people need to be pairs of similar sex, age, origin and status, so it is likely that we may need to talk to many people before we get the 20 we need.

The blood results are self reported - i.e. we will not be taking blood samples from you, but will ask that you report the results after 3-6 months.

If the study is proved, then we have a chance to make a very positive impact that could keep future generations of HIV patients free from medication for longer by increasing their CD4, and reducing viral loads. This will improve their health, their ability to fight infection and their quality of and longevity of life.

Through my membership with the Yoga Alliance, which is a global collection of teachers, I am confident that teachers could be found to teach in similar centres across the world.

If you would like to be considered, please contact the centre, or e-mail me at james@yogibear.co.uk

Warmest wishes,
James

Tuesday 17th January Celebration of John's life 6pm

Thursday 26th January Discussion Forum 6pm. Talk by Perry French on implications of recent HIV criminal prosecutions. *Discussion forum moves to last Wednesday in the month from February.*



Sunday 29th January Bowling evening—all welcome

Wednesday 1st February Positive Women's Group 11.30 am—1.30 pm

Wednesday 1st February P.A.C.T (Partners and Carers Together) Support 7-9 pm

Thursday 2nd February Thursday Night Drop-in New session every Thursday evening 6-9pm

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY



Wednesday 8th February Public Speaking Course 10am-4pm

Thursday 9th February Welfare and Benefits Session with Caroline Munro—Hampshire HIV Social Worker 11am-3pm

Wednesday 22nd February Discussion Forum 6pm.

Wednesday 1st March Positive Women's Group 11.30 am—1.30 pm

Wednesday 1st March P.A.C.T (Partners and Carers Together) Support 7-9 pm

Thursday 2nd March Talk on pregnancy & childbirth by Susan Cole 12 noon followed by lunch

Tuesday 7th March Welfare and Benefits Session with Caroline Munro—Hampshire HIV Social Worker 6-9pm



Thursday 16th March Bingo Night at the Centre. Eyes Down 7pm. All Welcome

Wednesday 22nd March Discussion Forum 6pm.

Wednesday 5th April Positive Women's Group 11.30 am—1.30 pm

Wednesday 5th April P.A.C.T (Partners and Carers Together) Support 7-9 pm

Thursday 6th April Welfare and Benefits Session with Caroline Munro—Hampshire HIV Social Worker 11am-3pm

Thursday 26th April Discussion Forum 6pm.

NEW PROJECT OPPORTUNITIES AT THE CENTRE

An application from the Ribbons Centre to join a partnership called EPF has recently been successful. 'Ensuring Positive Futures' (EPF) is a development partnership of 15 organisations encompassing the HIV sector, trade unions, employers and public sector organisations.



The EPF project is designed to combat discrimination faced by people living with HIV and AIDS (PLWHA) in the workplace, and to test support mechanisms to help beneficiaries integrate/reintegrate into the labour market. Within the target group of PLWHA, additional issues faced

by beneficiaries include those related to discrimination on the grounds of race, sexuality and multiple disabilities.

The project will enable us to start to provide some skills training at the Centre using outside facilitators. This is the first time we have joined in a national partnership (even Transnational!), and will hopefully provide some useful skills for our service users. We hope to start the first course in April this year and would like you to give some feedback about the kind of skills you would like to develop.

Please complete the enclosed questionnaire and return it to the Centre by the end of January.

As most of you will know by now we were very sad to learn of the death of one of our Directors last November. John played a very special part in the life of the Ribbons Centre, and served on the board of Directors for over 2 years. John's family have made a donation on his behalf to an educational project working in Albania.

John gave a lot to the Centre in time, commitment and support and will be sadly missed. We are holding a commemoration of John's life at the Centre on Tuesday January 17th at 6pm. Everyone who knew John is invited to attend.

NEEDS ASSESSMENT UPDATE!

We have recently been informed that the needs assessment has still not received ethical approval by Southampton City PCT. Until it has been approved this research cannot be carried out. Sorry about the delay but keep watching this space for future updates.