



## Welcome to our first newsletter of 2003

Steve and Lillian Wall, their two lively boys and young daughter Sophie (who has just started walking) came to the Neonatal Unit in late December to present a tinsel-garlanded cheque for **£2,400**. This wonderful amount was donated on behalf of Sophie and her sister Lucy following their stay in the Neonatal Unit. Many of the staff on duty on 17 December remembered the twins and were delighted to see the family again. Steve (the fundraiser) wanted his fund raising effort to be a once in a life time – so he volunteered to swim with sharks at Deep Sea World. He had an interesting day preparing for this and then there was the immersion into the tank - Steve didn't say much about this!

The one thing both he and Lillian said, when talking about their quest to raise money to support NNUs at both The Simpson Centre for Reproductive Health and at Falkirk Royal Infirmary (they plan to purchase saturation monitors for community use) was how they valued the support from within their community. They received many offers of support and pledges of money so much so that they have been able to gift and equal amount of £2,400 to Falkirk and a small gift to SANDS.

Staff, parents and children of the "Happy Days" playgroup sent Special Care Babies a Christmas gift of **£100**. Their fundraising activities raised this and they sent it with all good wishes to members of the charity and of the Neonatal Unit.

### Visit and gift of knitting from The Mothers' Union

Margaret Gibbs of The Mothers' Union visited the Unit in January with a further gift of knitting by the ladies of the Edinburgh Diocese MU. Staff were delighted to see her and told Margaret of their appreciation of all the knitting given by the ladies. Bootees are the item the staff would now like and Margaret will take this request back to the branches.

The Mothers' Union is a Christian organisation with more than a million members in 70 countries. In celebration of their 125<sup>th</sup> year each UK member was asked to give £1.25 towards two large projects. The first to start was the funding of literacy programmes especially in writing skills. A pilot scheme was begun in Africa in 3 different areas and improvements began to show in the pilot villages. Examples include: urban water improvement, nutritional programmes, releasing children from farming/trading to attend primary schooling, environmentally friendly agricultural practices, and above all communication and developing craft skills to increase cash income in some very poor villages.

The second project is within the UK and started in 2001 to encourage parenting skills. Members undertake a rigorous programme leading to accreditation from the London Open College Network. Both projects are still ongoing and now many

more members are participating.

The Mother's Union run projects to help and support families, and members are delighted to gift their skills in knitting to help the families with babies in the Neonatal Unit

**LETTER FROM A RUNNER** (sponsored for Simpsons Special Care Babies) (aka Aunty Francis to Steven and Kenneth and a Simpsons Special Care Babies supporter):

"Have I always been a late starter or a slow learner? Or was it just with running that it took me to the age of 37 to start in earnest? While I've always enjoyed keeping fit – running was not part of my repertoire.

But a combination of events in 2001 suddenly made it easy for me to find the time to train.. And so I did with pride and determination.

Running plans, fartleks, hill training – all new scary words – some of which are still foreign to me. I can hardly bring myself to say "fartlek", never mind perform it.

It is true though – it does become easier with practice. Within 6 months I was running an average of 30 miles per week. My husband (the man who patiently used to accompany me on my painful 2-mile efforts) was, for once, lost for words. My goal in all this was the October 2002 Great North Run in Newcastle. By summer things were going so well that I planned to try an interim half-marathon.

But disaster struck. My knees gave up on me. Thinking I'd damaged them beyond repair, I visited everyone in the manual – the doctor, a podiatrist, a sports therapist and a chiropractor – in an attempt to find a cure. At the end of the day, and with an empty purse, I reckon it was just that I'd done too much on my poor old legs. Rest and recuperation did the trick and within 6 weeks I was back to 'normal'.

October was now a reality and the race day dawned a fantastic sunny day. 40,000 runners, port-a-loos that stretched for ½ mile and supporting crowds for the whole 13.1 mile-route made it a day to remember. It was hard work (why did they have to make the whole route up-hill?) and by 10 miles my body was begging me to stop. The thought of my sponsorship money spurred me on. I made it home in 1hr 56mins, while my husband did it in 2hrs (what was the bigger achievement – 13.1 miles or at last beating my husband at something?).

My work colleagues, friends and family really supported me with their sponsorship. I'm so glad that I can give it to such a worthwhile cause. Simpsons helped my twin nephews through their first difficult months. Steven and Kenneth are now 5, and are two of the healthiest, liveliest boys you could ask for.

Thank-you

P.S. I've become a bit of a fanatic and continue my running."

**Next SSCB meeting is the AGM – Friday 27 June 2003 at 7pm in the Neonatal Unit at The Simpson, Little France.**



Thank you Francis (number 32840) for the photograph and your inspiring story.

**Computershare at Sighthill** have chosen Simpsons Special Care Babies to be one of the four charities they will support during 2003 at their monthly dress down days. Margaret Mackay got in contact and we are delighted to be part of their Fridays in February, March and April.

**Donations:**

Sheila McGill, Treasurer of St John's Church Badminton Club in Bathgate was in contact to send the best wishes of the members to us together with a marvellous donation of **£200**. This was raised at the annual pantomime held by the club.

Both the pantomime and badminton pairs might share the cry: Behind you!

A delightful occasion with a surprise for all in the Neonatal Unit occurred on Tuesday 28 January 2003 when Colin Kay, Kirsty Lewis, Dawn Linkston and Billy Wilson from **HSBC at South Gyle** visited NNU. They represented all the staff there who have been involved during 2002 in fundraising for our charity. The surprise was that they presented Ian Laing with a cheque for **£9,250**. WOW.

Mark and Denise Turnbull brought their daughter to the Simpson recently and with them came the news that Mark will be running for Simpsons Special Care Babies in the Edinburgh Marathon on 15 June 2003. He, like Ann Affleck, are being sponsored for the event and if anyone would like to support them Gill Mitchell can get you in contact.

*See next page for more up to date information.....*

**Our support**

Some years ago SSCB supported the bereavement services provided by Barbara Herkes – Barbara has been most grateful for this and includes the charity in her annual summary of the service she provides. Here is a short excerpt.

“The counselling service provided for parent’s following pregnancy loss / neonatal death, continued to expand over 2002. Service provision expanded in December 2001, to extend support to parents who experienced very early pregnancy loss and who had previously attended the Pregnancy Support Centre.

.....Evaluation of the counselling outcome from the client perspective, remained a valuable indicator of how the service is perceived by the parents. Bereaved parents who contacted the Counselling Service following pregnancy loss / neonatal death indicated they found the counselling experience to be a positive one. Not only in respect of their presenting concerns but also the positive effects in adaptive to their situation and resulting life changes.”

Our contribution to this service has helped numerous people.

**Excerpts from Newborn News – the Autumn/Winter 2002 issue from BLISS**

The following is from an article on the newly launched Parent Information Guide a collaboration between BLISS and Tesco baby club.

**Parent Support**

Shanit Marshall, Head of Information & Support for BLISS said within the article:

“Parents have a huge number of questions when their baby is sick. Not only do they need to come to terms with the fact that their child is not well, but the neonatal unit – with its high tech equipment and endless procedures – can be an intimidating place. For some time, we have wanted to produce an information resource that was tailored to the specific needs and emotions of parents and families at this time and we-re delighted we have now been able to do so.”

**“Pipeline Industries Guild Annual Dinner raises £11,500**

Long term BLISS celebrity supporter Diana Rigg was guest of honour at the Pipeline Industries Guild’s glittering annual dinner at the Grosvenor House Hotel. The 1,500 Guild members in attendance raised a staggering £11,500 for BLISS. Ms Rigg accepted the cheque on behalf and gave a wonderfully moving speech. BLISS was chosen as beneficiary because Guild Chairwoman Ruth Allen’s daughter Harriet now four, was born nine weeks early.”

***They got up and gave!***

“The week began with BLISS’s live broadcast from the Simpson Memorial Hospital in Edinburgh. GMTV presenter Kate Garraway met babies, parents and staff on the Neonatal Unit and did a brilliant job explaining how the hospital and BLISS make a difference. Dr Hilary Jones, a long-standing BLISS supporter, spoke about the work of the NICU.”

**Next SSCB meeting is the AGM – Friday 27 June 2003 at 7pm in the Neonatal Unit at The Simpson, Little France.**

## LAST MINUTE NEWS FROM US TO YOU

### SSCB website

At the last SSCB meeting it was agreed that having our charity on the world wide web would be a positive informative and supportive way ahead. Accordingly a sub-committee was formed of Caroline Lismore-Kerr, Derek Houliston, Gill Mitchell, Anne Scott and Lorna Robertson. Julia Stout also joined the group and Elaine Walker informed and supported the group. The aim of the group is to formulate the content of the site and to write the pages. Several meetings later and the framework is there and the pages are being written. The site domain name has been registered and a holding page has been set up by Derek Houliston. All the sub-group members are hard at work writing the pages. Updates on this exciting project will be included in these pages.

The website address is : [www.sscb.org](http://www.sscb.org) - which is only the holding page, however there is an e-mail link for contacting the group. If you have suggestions that you would like the group to take into account, they would be very happy to hear from you.

The committee is sad to say goodbye to **Colin Burt** our Chairman over the past 18 months who has resigned due to increasing work and family commitments. Colin has been a much valued, energetic and busy Chairman in addition to being part of our merchandising sub-group. His ideas and forward thinking will be much missed.

Our thanks to Colin with our very best wishes.

The Annual General Meeting will be held on **Friday 27 June** of this year and Julia Stout our Deputy Chair will hold the reins till a new Chair is chosen.

**Our Cake and candy stall at the Meadows Festival - 7 June 2003.** A very popular stall with members of the public and this year Julia Stout offered to organise our stall.

You will have received a letter from Julia asking for you all to bake. She was so glad to receive positive feedback from a number of members and is very appreciative of their help.

The day dawned fair then there was a downpour. This happened again and again – we know this to be typical Meadows Festival weather. Fortunately Julia is always well prepared and organised, our **pavilion** was put up by Julia and Robert (lots of thanks to him, he is also a balloon blower-up par excellence) during one of the first downpours and thereafter all the baking, childrens clothes and helpers were happy and dry.

Our stall raised **£572 with donations of £110.**

Thank you so much to all helpers, bakers and supporters. We will put this into our savings so that the ultrasound scanner that Dr Laing is keen to purchase may soon be reality.

“Believe in yourself”



The Edinburgh Marathon is being held this Sunday, 15 June 2003 starting at Meadowbank Stadium. There are 2 start times: 08.43am for visually impaired runners and 08.45am for main race runners.

Simpsons Special Care Babies is proud to have five participants each of whom have done their utmost to gain sponsorship to support our charity and the Neonatal Unit.

They are:

Graeme Hamilton	4755
Ken Nicholson	5439
Colin Brown	3253
Mark Turnbull	4673
Ann Affleck	1212

Go and shout for them. The organisers have recommended places and timings:

08.45 to 16.00 Meadowbank stadium (limited seats)  
08.50 to 10.30 Holyrood Park  
09.20 to 10.30 Holyrood Palace  
09.45 to 11.30 Portobello Promenade  
10.00 to 12.30 Ocean Terminal  
10.15 to 13.15 Silverknowes foreshore  
11.00 to 14.45 Victoria Park

There are over 4,000 runners participating. Lets hope the day is fair but cool with no one getting blisters.

“Believe in yourself”

[www.edinburgh-marathon.co.uk](http://www.edinburgh-marathon.co.uk)

Feeling inspired? Next opportunity is the **2004 Charity Marathon Relay**. New for 2004 is a Charity Marathon Relay for teams of 4 to run the marathon route (about 6.5 miles each) along full distance runners. Further information on **Relay CAP's** will be available shortly after the 2003 race.