

Gloucestershire Eye Therapy Trust

Looking after the vision of your community

Charity Number: 1100501



GETT NEWSLETTER OCTOBER 2015

**Welcome to our autumn 2015 edition of
The Gloucestershire Eye Therapy Trust
Newsletter.**

I have the pleasure to announce some exciting news following our Trustee meeting in June. The Trustees have agreed to fund the purchase of an Axis Nano A-scan biometer, costing £4,150. This top of the range equipment is used for measuring the eyes of particularly vulnerable patients such as those with learning difficulties or dementia. These will be patients with advanced or complex cataracts.

This purchase has only been possible because of all our members and friends, their generosity and hard work in raising valuable funds for the Trust. One of our valued members, who works tirelessly behind the scenes is Andria Smith. Since summer 2012 Andria has raised an awe inspiring £13,850 for the cause! She has done this by sheer hard work and determination, organising events, running stalls and selling donated goods online. The Trustees have admired her skill and energy and want to offer their sincere thanks for her continued outstanding service to our charity.

The Trustees would like to thank Ric Caesar, consultant advisor to the Trust, who has managed to reinstate our website www.eyetherapy.org free of charge.

If any of our members would like to submit their own stories about experiences in our counties' eye units they will be greatly appreciated!

Rachel Chitty
Trust Secretary

*A huge thank you to all our friends who
have been raising much needed funds
for the charity.*



*Mrs Anne Cadbury expresses her gratitude to star fundraiser
Andria Smith from Coleford*

Marilyn's Shadowy Story / Fundraising

Marilyn's Shadowy Story

In childhood a favourite game was trying to jump onto my own shadow. Unsurprisingly, it didn't work: the shadow persistently leapt before or trailed behind me, firmly fixed to toes or heels. Seventy years on, I am again trying to jump on a shadow but not one attached to my feet; it appears to live inside my right eye.

Having eventually entered the blessed state of retirement, I enjoyed a range of hobbies and activities including reading, sewing, dabbling in artwork and playing in a saxophone group. It was this last one that alerted me to the advent of the shadow. At one memorable practice most of my time was spent in apologising for wrong notes as parts of the music began to disappear from view: my eyes refused to scan up and down the page, some areas registered as empty holes.

This first experience was scary, but there was more to come. Over the following month reading became increasingly difficult. Newspapers? – forget it. Large print books? – legible only in contrived, neck-aching positions.



Notices in shops and museums? – don't go there! Then my world started to change, it morphed into a stage set of undulating door and window frames and mug tops made of string – if you know Dali's painting of the melting clocks, that's the image. Even worse, at some distances people had no discernible features – think old movies where bank robbers depersonalised their faces with a pair of tights.

As the shadow engaged in more nasty pranks, crossing the road became a fearful operation and self-confidence began to wane. Something had to be done! I dialled the number of my optician ...

The first reassurance was that this was not all in my mind. I was shown my retinal photograph – it looked like the moon – and referred to the Gloucestershire ophthalmology team.

From my first clinic visit, for assessment and diagnosis, I have continually met friendliness, patience, reassurance and comforting professionalism. The official diagnosis was wet AMD (Age-related Macular Degeneration) and I'm now a regular attendee at the macular clinic at Gloucester Royal Hospital, where I am currently being monitored and treated with Lucentis, a drug proven to arrest, and sometimes improve this condition. I am just so grateful for its existence.

The GRH eye department is an impressive place with amazing staff, very effective organisation and an incredible array of diagnostic equipment. This wealth of healthcare is used, of course, to help patients of all ages suffering from a variety of eye conditions. I don't know the names of all the scanners, cameras and magnifying tools that have benefitted me alone but I do realise that they must be expensive to buy, to maintain and update.

I know that GETT has contributed hugely to the provision of the wonderful hardware used in eye therapy in Gloucestershire. The trust's input, the NHS, Emily Fletcher, Quresh Mohamed and the dedicated team have successfully started to stamp on that distinctly scary shadow. Thank you all so much.

Contribution gratefully received from Marilyn Baldwin.
July 2015.

Invitation to Sister Fasey Coffee Morning

You are all invited to attend our annual Dorothy Fasey coffee morning on Saturday 28 November 2015 from 10-12 noon at Emmanuel Church Hall.

Consultant Katy O'Connell has kindly offered to come and talk about her work in the Gloucester Royal Neonatal Baby Unit.

You will get the chance to meet our new Mayor, Councillor Duncan Smith and his wife Helen and also our MP for Cheltenham Alex Chalk.

Donations of good quality prizes for our wonderful raffle would be very welcome, as always. Please let me know if you would like me to come and collect.

This is our opportunity to thank our friends for their loyal support over the years. We look forward to seeing you there.

Gloucestershire
Eye Therapy Trust

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We invite you to the Dorothy Fasey

Coffee Morning

Sat 28th November 10am - 12 noon



Equipment Purchases

Purchase of New Retcam – July 2015

Thanks to the generosity of the GETT and Scoo-B-Doo, the Gloucestershire Neonatal charity, we have been able to purchase a new Retcam to enable us to continue to photograph the eyes of premature babies in the Neonatal Unit at Gloucestershire Royal Hospital.



Harry was born very early, 27 weeks into mum's pregnancy and weighing only 580g (half a bag of sugar). His parents have kindly shared his story of the challenges that he faced as his eyes matured during his early months in the Neonatal Unit.

During pregnancy the blood vessels at the back of a baby's eye (the retina) gradually grow out from the central optic nerve to the edge of the retina by 40 weeks (full-term pregnancy). Therefore, in very premature babies the vessels haven't finished this journey and sometimes start to develop abnormally. This is called Retinopathy of Prematurity (ROP). Weekly eye screening of very premature babies for ROP starts at 4-6 weeks after birth. In Harry's case his age was only 30 weeks. Many babies develop some degree of ROP, but in the majority this never progresses beyond mild disease, which resolves spontaneously without treatment. However, a small proportion develop potentially severe ROP. If untreated, severe disease can result in retinal detachment and serious visual impairment.

The Retcam allows us to take digital images of the back of the eye, up to and including the far periphery of the developing retina. These images can be compared in detail week to week, rather than trying to remember fleeting



glimpses seen with a head mounted ophthalmoscope and a hand held lens. This is invaluable, since the signs of progressing ROP can be subtle. It also allows us to share images with other specialists if further advice is needed before commencing treatment for ROP. If babies are moved to another neonatal unit, being able to share these pictures with their ophthalmologists reduces the risk of delayed treatment.

Unfortunately, Harry developed severe ROP. In common with other premature infants, he had already faced and overcome many early difficulties. The last thing he or his family needed was another hurdle, especially one with such potentially devastating consequences for his

vision. Harry faced the additional difficulty of very early severe ROP. His parents therefore had to consider whether to consent to traditional laser treatment or a new eye injection. Harry's parents found that being able to see his retinal images helped them to understand the nature of the problem and what treatment was trying to achieve. "There was so much information to absorb and a picture was better than a thousand words. It helped us understand the necessity of treatment". It provided reassurance that the changes in Harry's eyes were a significant problem, when weighing this up against the risks of treatment.

Harry underwent the newer treatment and happily had an excellent outcome. His retina recovered from his ROP and four years later he is a happy boy (pictured here with Dad) with good vision.



Thanks to the generosity of the GETT we are able to continue to provide the very highest standard of care for premature infants, like Harry, who are at risk of developing potentially blinding complications from Retinopathy of Prematurity.

Submitted by Katy O'Connell – Consultant

Please Support Us

Ways to Donate

There are several ways you can support us and raise vital funds for equipment and research. Here are a few examples, but please contact us if you need any more information, call us today on: **07841 144129**

Gift Aid

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Gift Aid is an easy and effective way to maximise the value of your donation to GETT. Your donations could be worth an **extra 25%** without it costing you more.



Donate online

Visit our web site, www.eyetherapy.org and click through to our Virgin Money Giving Page.



By Post

To donate by post, please make cheques payable to Gloucestershire Eye Therapy Trust and send to the address below.

Fundraising & Events

In order to continue our valuable work, we need your support. Without you we simply wouldn't exist. There are several ways you can help, and in doing so, you too can help preserve the vision of the Gloucestershire community.

Fundraising

Throughout the year we run several events, such as coffee mornings, open days at the hospital, awareness raising events etc, but as individuals you might be able to help too. Organising an event is a great way to raise funds for the equipment purchases and research we fund. If you are interested in planning a fundraising event for GETT, it can be anything from a coffee morning, quiz evening or charity dinner party, then we would love to hear from you.

Personal Sporting Challenges

We are also interested in finding individuals who might like to set themselves a personal challenge, such as participation in a running or cycling event in aid of GETT or something more extreme such as a trek or parachute jump.

We also have a link with Virgin Money Giving on our website www.eyetherapy.org so we can support you with a fundraising page.



money giving



Trustees

President

- Sir Henry Elwes KCVO

Chairman

- Charles Hartley FRGS

Trustees

- Anne Cadbury OBE JP DL
- Doctor Andrew Crowther MA BM Bch
- Elaine R. Day SRN
- Jacqueline E. Lane
- Professor Andrew I McNaught MD FRCOphth
- Steven F. Guilford

Officers

- Hon. Solicitor John Clarke, Esq.
- Hon. Advisor C.T. Hart Esq. FRCOphth
- Consultant Advisor Mr R. Caesar

Become a Friend

By becoming a friend you will be joining other people county wide raising money for the Trust and you will receive:

- A twice yearly newsletter.
- An invitation to special events such as open days at the hospital to meet staff and see the latest equipment you have helped to buy.
- Invitations to fund raising days.

To become a friend the annual subscription is £3 (minimum).

Contact Address

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