

# Newsletter March 2020

## A personal note from Wendy Thompson, Trustee

Dear Friends,

Well it's already the 3rd decade of the 21st century, the years just seem to fly by.

Hope you have managed to have a healthy Christmas avoiding the nasty bugs which were around our family. Christmas for us stretched to the New Year due to our younger daughter having to work on both Christmas Day and Boxing Day. We spent Christmas Day with our elder daughter.

Last year was a very busy year of family celebrations starting with a barbeque for our grandson joining the RAF followed by his sister's 21st party. Summer saw a twinning trip to Germany followed by the restoration and rededication of the graves of Bill's grand-father and great grand-father in St Albans on the hottest day of the year. In autumn our daughter and son-in-law's Silver Wedding was followed by a joint party for Bill's 90th birthday and our 55th wedding anniversary. This was a lovely event joined by members of the Norgate clan from all over the country.

The beginning of 2020 sees the 50th birthday of our younger daughter with a 1920's themed party. After this Bill and I are going away on a 5 day Mystery Coach Trip.

I am arranging a Summer Lunch for the charity at the Expanse Hotel in Bridlington on 5th July. Members anywhere in the country are very welcome to join us for the lunch while spending a holiday in the area enjoying the beautiful Yorkshire coast. See full details later in the newsletter.



Best Wishes,

Wendy Thompson, Trustee

## Donation Form 2019

The Trustees would like to thank everyone who responded to the appeal for donations in our September 2019 newsletter. A magnificent total of £1337.00 has been received and in addition Gift Aid donations will be reclaimed at the end on the tax year. These donations will help us to provide support to laryngectomees throughout the UK.

**Thank you all.**

## Christmas Lunch Swindon

### Trustee Ros Oswald reports:

The Swindon Christmas lunch was held on Tuesday the 10th December at the Holiday Inn, Marlborough Road, Swindon. We have visited there before and the staff are particularly friendly and welcoming. It was very enjoyable to see so many familiar faces and some of the staff remembered us from last year. The food was excellent and the hotel had been refurbished since our last visit in 2018. It was so enjoyable to hear all the conversations going on. Notes were being compared about different ways of coping with issues common to laryngectomees and Cheryl, the speech therapist was able to chat to experienced laryngectomees and gain valuable insights. Although the weather was very wintry, there was a very warm feeling among the people who came and we are already talking about our next outing - hopefully in summer.



## Christmas and New Year Lunches

In addition to the Swindon event lunches for members have been held in Halifax, Rotherham, Lanarkshire and York. The Trustees thank the organisers of these events for creating social functions where members and partners can meet and share experiences.



## Worry in Partners of Cancer Survivors

**Louise O'Rourke, Trainee Clinical Psychologist at Liverpool University writes:**

*Cancer can have a huge impact on individuals and their families, both physically and emotionally. Even after the elation of finishing treatment with the all clear, a cloud of worry can still remain, the fear of the cancer coming back. It is a commonly reported concern, yet partners tend to worry more about the possibility of the cancer returning than cancer patients do themselves. Many studies have looked into the possible factors that may influence or contribute to why this fear is felt by survivors, but fewer questions have been asked about the people who go along that journey with them, their partners.*

*Through my research at the University of Liverpool, I am seeking partners of cancer survivors to take part in a study which aims to better understand worry about a partner's cancer returning. The survey will take approximately 20-30 minutes and will ask questions about how you think and feel about your partner's cancer returning and also about your own experiences of anxiety, low mood and worry. The responses that you do give will remain confidential.*

*As a thank you for taking the time to complete the research study, you will be entered into a prize draw to be eligible to win one of six £25 high street vouchers.*

*Cancer, no matter the diagnosis, is an incredibly difficult life journey to undertake. In order to help the individuals and families that are still yet to walk that difficult road, we would humbly ask you to please share your experiences so that we can help to improve our understanding as to how these fears can be better addressed in the future.*

Please contact Louise by email **[l.o-rourke@liverpool.ac.uk](mailto:l.o-rourke@liverpool.ac.uk)**  
or by post:

**Louise O'Rourke, Trainee Clinical Psychologist, University of Liverpool, School of Psychology,  
Ground Floor, Whelan Building, Quadrangle, Brownlow Hill, Liverpool, L69 3GB**

Further information can also be found on the following link: **[https://livpsych.eu.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_1GMAarFwMK7Wi2x](https://livpsych.eu.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_1GMAarFwMK7Wi2x)**

## Summer Lunches

Once again we are arranging Summer Lunches this year.

A lunch in Bridlington will be held at the Expanse Hotel on Sunday 5th July. If you would like to attend please contact Wendy Thompson, 10 Meadow Drive, Market Weighton, York, YO43 3QG  
Tel 01430 871561 Email [blwnt@outlook.com](mailto:blwnt@outlook.com)

The Expanse Hotel, North Marine Drive, Bridlington YO15 2LS, Tel 01262 675347 [www.expanse.co.uk](http://www.expanse.co.uk)

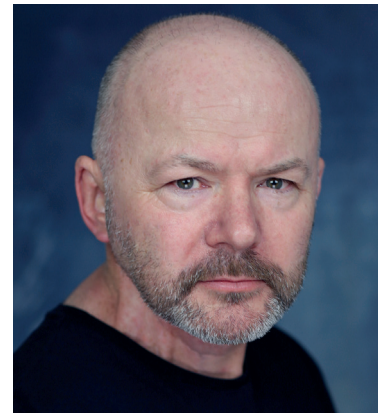
The Blackpool lunch at the Imperial Hotel on Sunday 7th June is being arranged by Mrs Sandra Waddington, 76 Rutland Avenue, Poulton-le Fylde, FY6 7SA.  
Tel 01253 899531 Email [waddington46@btinternet.com](mailto:waddington46@btinternet.com)



## Ray Coates the Voice

*Hello There, my name is Ray Coates and I am a singer/songwriter (a driving instructor as well), a throat cancer survivor and a Father of 5 children.*

*In 2008 (in a period of normal family life with the hullabaloo of 5 children and when I was married at the time), I was shaving one day and noticed a lump on the right side of my neck. I'd experienced a slight loss of voice at times, leading up to this, and several colds.*



*I decided to visit my GP. This is when my cancer journey truly began! I was very fortunate that my GP had previously worked in ENT oncology. She asked me a question that I will never forget, after examining my neck and mouth, 'what do you think it is'? I was a little perplexed that my GP would ask me! However, I replied - 'I suppose you think the worst'. I knew something deep in me was not as it should be, I had a sense of the cancer in me (I'll return to this thought later). My GP replied with the confirming words: 'well we cannot rule out cancer'! I then began a process of investigation (including pandoscopic and endoscopic investigations). This led to a consultation where myself and my wife at the time were told that I had a malignant tumour in my tonsil and that the cancer had spread to the lymph nodes in my neck! I asked the consultant, what would be the prognosis if I refused treatment (by this point I had prepared myself for what was to come, I knew I had cancer before I was told. MY body told me). The consultant said, if I refused treatment, I would likely die in a few 'months'. With 5 children, I knew I had to take the 4 hour surgery and 6 weeks (30 sessions in total) of radiotherapy on offer! The treatment was gruelling! 'Belt & braces' as one Macmillan nurse put it!*

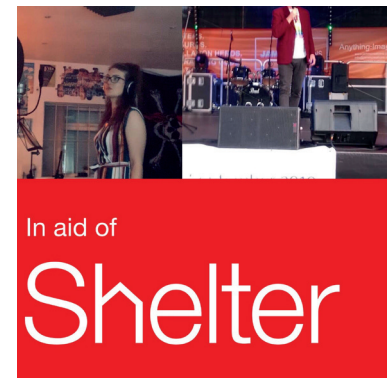
*I lost weight, due to not eating. I lost my voice, virtually completely, for close to a year. I lost my sense of taste for several months and I had severe blisters and bleeding around my neck and in the mouth, from the radiation. During that time I think I lost far more! I think I became disconnected and isolated mentally, emotionally and spiritually. Recovery was over a LONG period of time and sadly a year or so after my cancer my then wife and I separated and were eventually divorced. Before this I also discovered my Dad, who left home when I was 5 years old, had died. I never saw him in about 38 years! To say this time and the years after were tough is an understatement! I felt broken! However, there is a light at the end of this darkness, and there often is!*

*I was very fortunate to be diagnosed early. This led to early identification and intervention. I allowed my voice to be dampened at times emotionally and spiritually for reasons I would not like to divulge here.*

*I have learnt the Voice is a precious gift, taste is a precious gift, words can harm or heal! Therefore, in conclusion, I choose to use my voice for the greater good, through my trials I have earned that right (and it is a basic human right). A YEAR with virtually NO voice due to throat cancer treatment, is a LONG time! I guess for other reasons you could say it was longer! I want to use the voice I have for greater good! Everyone should be heard, no one should be ignored! I will continue to use my voice to make sure NO fellow human being feels disconnected, isolated and voiceless in any way at all!*

## Ray Coates the Voice

Recent projects have included the release of a charity Christmas single 'The Voice Within' for the homeless organisation Shelter. The single was written as a dedication to all those who feel disconnected, isolated and voiceless (whether by cancer or any other experience). It is performed by Zoe Evans, who has experienced facing homelessness herself. Additionally, Ray was commissioned by Charles Mattocks (executive producer and creator of upcoming TV show 'Eight days') to write a song. The award winning film maker, and best selling author, Charles, asked Ray to write, sing and record a song for his programme 'Eight Days', Charles Cancer docu series to be aired next January 2020 on the Discovery channel in the USA.



My single 'Your Journey' is now RELEASED and available on all digital download platforms, including:

### Amazon

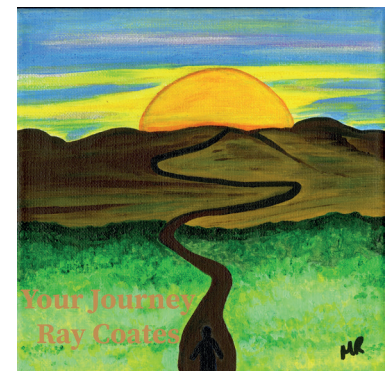
[https://www.amazon.co.uk/Your-Journey-Ray-Coates/dp/B081K1WXXP/ref=sr\\_1\\_1?keywords=Ray+Coates&qid=1577867603&s=dmusic&search-type=ss&sr=1-1](https://www.amazon.co.uk/Your-Journey-Ray-Coates/dp/B081K1WXXP/ref=sr_1_1?keywords=Ray+Coates&qid=1577867603&s=dmusic&search-type=ss&sr=1-1)

### I-tunes

<https://music.apple.com/gb/album/your-journey-single/1487904923>

I have also recently started a VLOG on my YouTube channel -

[https://m.youtube.com/channel/UCdk2RObf3eVPfkQq6H\\_yugw](https://m.youtube.com/channel/UCdk2RObf3eVPfkQq6H_yugw)



Additionally, I am releasing an album on May 1st at a live performance in Aylesbury at the Queens Park Arts Centre.

Ray Coates



FRIDAY 01 MAY - 8:00 PM

Standard: £10.00  
Concession: £9.00

ADD TO BASKET

GET IN TOUCH

Queens Park & Limelight Theatre  
Queens Park, Aylesbury  
Bucks HP21 7RT

E-mail: [info@qpc.org](mailto:info@qpc.org)  
Tel: 01296 424332

Join Ray Coates for an evening of uplifting, empowering and inspirational music.

Introducing the launch of Rays album 'Garden of Life'.

Follow Ray on social media:  
Facebook - Ray Coates Voice  
Twitter - @RayCoatesVoice  
Instagram - @raycoatesvoice



## 'Can You Hear My Voice' London Film Premiere

### Atos Medical-backed documentary "Can You Hear My Voice?" world premiere

Atos Medical together with Shout at Cancer hosted the world premiere of "Can You Hear My Voice?" by award-winning filmmaker Bill Brummel. The premiere which was hosted on Sunday 2nd February at the Odeon BFI IMAX in Waterloo, London celebrated the Shout at Cancer charity and choir, the cast, volunteers and filmmaker Bill Brummel for this great accomplishment.

Atos Medical is proud to have backed the making of the triumphant film, which is an inspiring testimony about the human capacity for resilience after a laryngectomy.

The film follows a unique choir formed by Shout at Cancer which is made up of singers who have lost their voice boxes as they prepare for their most ambitious performance. Interspersed with the concert preparations are the personal stories of the choir members, and the difficult transition from life with a voice box to one without.

Bill Brummel, director, had a laryngectomy in 2016 and after overcoming his own personal challenges, wanted to showcase the obstacles of living after a laryngectomy. So, he went in search of a story: one that was inspirational, moving and could capture the broad experience of being a laryngectomee.

"Through the film, I want to encourage people who are struggling through dark periods of recovery of any kind to hold on," says Bill Brummel. "The theme is universal. It's a story of survival and empowerment with a message that will resonate with people combatting other diseases, disabilities, or personal struggles, which — when you think of it — is all of us."

The film is a great success and the premier allowed everyone in the crowd to celebrate the Shout at Cancer choir with a standing ovation as the screen went black.

We would like to share some photos of this momentous occasion with you below:

