

On a very personal journey with Claire Dean

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concludes enthusiastically. Multiple sclerosis can be a tiring condition and after a short career in offshore and private banking Claire realised that it suited neither her nor her illness. The classically trained young woman, who had always sung and had flirted with the sounds of Bon Jovi in her youth and moved into the meaningful and folksy tunes of Tori Amos and Jewel, soon realised that she belonged with Nev in his studio at the bottom of the garden. "It is so fantastic to be involved in something that both excites and interests me. To cap it all, in the studio, the equipment and computer are all within easy reach. There I can do something meaningful. It's a good feeling. On top of that the studio is warm in the winter and cool in the summer - what more could I ask for?" she

concentrate on her lifestyle and make choices that benefit her health. Exercise is particularly important for people living with multiple sclerosis as it assists in keeping muscles moving and Claire exercises on a daily basis combining gym work, physio, stretch classes and rowing in a specially adapted boat all complemented by meditation, swimming and a strict diet. "I'm very lucky. Nev does all the cooking and works wonders with fresh ingredients - mainly vegetables and salad with some fish for good measure - making sure that our diet benefits us both. The balance of exercise and nutrition is working for me and I feel healthier now than I have done in years." Motivation plays an important role in this condition and Claire has it in spades. She is

an inspiration to be around and indeed was one of the first people with multiple sclerosis that Robert Hall coached on the river Wey in a specially adapted rowing boat. Whether Claire accomplishes her routine alone, or with Nev as the driving force, clearly evident is a very real, honest and healthy "can do" attitude. Claire is a modern day Alice in Wonderland, polite well-mannered and deeply inquisitive. While Alice takes us "Through the Looking Glass", Claire gives us "Mirror, Mirror", a song taken from her "Love and Carrots" album which she has written and recorded. To top it off, Nev has made the video accompaniment and within the production the two worlds of Alice and "Team Dean" become one.

**VOLUNTEER ASSISTANT  
PHYSIOTHERAPISTS  
NEEDED  
at the Centre  
Contact Jackie**

## ALL CLUED UP

Then join us for a Quiz Night at 7.30pm on the 23rd October at the Clock House in Milford. Proceeds are being shared between us and St John's Church, Milford which is a wonderful example of joint fundraising.

## ARE YOU SPORTY AND ACTIVE?

We are always looking for sporty, active people who are prepared to run, cycle or walk on behalf of The Samson Centre. Claire Dean, and many others with multiple sclerosis, would like to but aren't able to. But perhaps you can do it on behalf of Claire and others like her. These are the people who benefit from the physiotherapy, gym, exercise and oxygen therapy sessions that we are able to provide due to the help and generosity of others. Could this be **YOU?**

## Contacts

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## Rhythm and Blues delivering choral writing at its best



The Occam Singers

On Saturday 17th October Todd and Sarah Class and solo piano and solo soprano The Occam Singers will be directed by David Gibson voice weave and blend in holding yet another one of the concert includes Todd's delightful aural tapestry. This is an It begins at 6:30pm with The Samson Centre. Taking upbeat setting of the Latin talks from Sarah Class and place at the Holy Trinity Mass and a brilliant blend David Gibson. Sarah, an Church musicians and music of driving jazz, grooves Emmy and Brit nominated lovers alike will be interested and clear, strong, choral composer and described in this event. Written by Will writing against which the by HMV Classical Reviews

magazine as one of Britain's "brightest young musical stars." David holds the post of Musical Director for New London Sinfonia Orchestra. Ticket prices: £15.00 on the door; £11.50 pre-booked with Jackie; £7.00 Students - contact Jackie.

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**samson**  
centre for MS

Newsletter  
September  
2015

Celebrating the opening of our new.....

## Physiotherapy Suites

The sun shone brightly on The Samson Centre as we warmly welcomed HRH The Countess of Wessex to open our brand new physiotherapy suites in July. During her visit HRH The Countess of Wessex met with members, carers, fundraisers, volunteers, trustees and staff who were all able to provide a more detailed insight into the facilities that are available to our users. It was an amazing day that could only have been made more special if every single one of our members could have joined us to mark the occasion. However, there was always going to be room for our own celebratory lunch which took place on an even warmer Sunday in August. Many of us gathered with family and friends to enjoy a wonderful "Samson Summer Lunch", good conversation and laughter all washed down with a refreshing glass or two of Prosecco. **Martin Dent, Chairman - Samson Centre for MS**



HRH The Countess of Wessex opening our new Physiotherapy Suites



Member's Lunch

## Keeping you in touch

It is so important that our users and supporters know exactly what is going on at the Centre. There has always been a long gap between issues mainly because of living with MS in your area. Support an event, host an event or simply tell your family and friends about what we are doing to help people

the sheer amount of work involved with articles to source and write, photos to find and so on and all falling on the shoulders of your volunteer Editor. Now Denice our new Fundraising Manager has joined us I have the benefit of a roving reporter and with the two of us working together we have decided to increase the number of issues by introducing a smaller monthly edition in between the release of the full Newsletter. I hope you find it useful and you are kept better informed about the many exciting things that are going on at the Centre especially the wonderful fundraising activities arranged by our supporters along the way. With over £200,000 in annual running costs we couldn't operate without the assistance we receive from many quarters, not least the people of Surrey. Each event hosted enables us to continue to provide the very vital physiotherapy, exercise, gym and oxygen therapy sessions all for people who are living with multiple sclerosis right here in Surrey. Support an event, host an event or simply tell your family and friends about what we are doing to help people

Providing therapies for MS sufferers  
in and around West Surrey

The Samson Centre for MS:

Charity No: 1157827

Guildford Waterside Centre, Riverside, Guildford GU1 1LW

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*On a very personal journey with  
Claire Dean*

## “Mirror Mirror”

was to be short lived as six places became seven and Claire promptly went through to the auditions where she won a place. Music was a fundamental tune in a life that has witnessed Claire sing for County Schools’ Choir, she had to overcome the hurdle of a nerve-racking first round selection. Like everyone else on that day she duly sang a rendition of “Happy Birthday to You”. With six places on offer Claire was not short listed. With her hopes dashed she was quite simply reduced to tears. Claire has multiple sclerosis which is a debilitating disease that attacks the central nervous system and is the most common neurological condition among young adults today. A fact that Nev knew long before he fell in love with the girl he first set eyes upon in the yellow swimming costume at the local pool. Her diagnosis came while Claire was in her second year at university. “It began with an altogether strange sensation in my left arm. It would suddenly shake and shudder uncontrollably without notice or warning. At the time my friends and I thought that it was quite amusing, this arm having a mind all of its own”, she vividly remembers. “This was closely followed by tripping over my own feet as opposed to obstacles or uneven paving,” she continues. She knew something was wrong and after some swift tests a diagnosis of MS quickly followed. Continuing with her studies she completed her degree in English Studies at Leicester University whilst remaining immersed in her music.

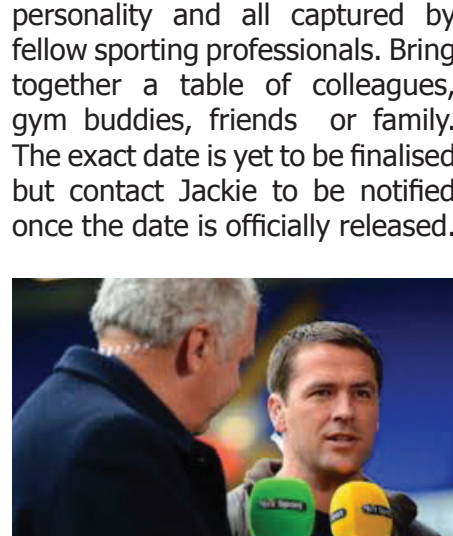
**Each month we will print a personal journey of one of the Samson Centre’s users to provide a unique insight into the role that multiple sclerosis has played in their life.** When Nev Dean looked into the eyes of his wife Claire on their wedding day and sang the words to the song he had written for her, the lyrics to “You Make Me

Whole” were both poignant and true because from that day forward two became one to form “Team Dean”. It is difficult to tell Claire’s story without reference to Nev as their lives are inextricably interwoven. Born in 1979, Claire moved at the age of four to a small village in South Wales. Claire found her own voice at an early age. With her ultimate goal an audition for the County Schools’ Choir, she had to overcome the hurdle of a nerve-racking first round selection. Like everyone else on that day she duly sang a rendition of “Happy Birthday to You”. With six places on offer Claire was not short listed. With her hopes dashed she was quite simply reduced to tears. However, the disappointment

## AN EVENING WITH....

As previously mentioned support for The Samson Centre for MS comes from many quarters and that includes the world of professional sport. The event will be held at the Cobham Hilton Hotel and Michael Owen is joining us along with sports commentators Ian Darke and Peter Brackley, renowned after dinner speaker. Ian and Peter will be posing the questions in what is sure to make good viewing! This event will be one of the highlights of The Samson Centre’s winter calendar. Tickets are £65 per head for tables of eight. This includes a three course dinner and table wine followed by a charity auction. Michael Owen has enjoyed a career as a top flight club and international footballer. This is going to be a fantastic evening full of wit and wisdom and providing a rare insight into the life of a sports

### MICHAEL OWEN



personality and all captured by fellow sporting professionals. Bring together a table of colleagues, gym buddies, friends or family. The exact date is yet to be finalised but contact Jackie to be notified once the date is officially released.

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## Olga Bobrovnikova... renowned piano diva is visiting the Holy Trinity Church in Guildford on 30th April 2016...

...to play at a concert in aid fundraising which has seen of The Samson Centre for her travel all over the world. MS. Born in Russia Olga During this time she had her first piano lesson has taken an interest in at the age of eight under research into the ‘brain and the watchful eye of Natalie musical performance’. To this Sherwood who advised end she has written books Olga’s mother to purchase and has a close connection an 1890’s Schroeder which with the “European Brain Olga still loves and has today. Association” for which she Married in St Petersburg is an Ambassador. Olga in 1987 to internationally continues to be able to play known violinist, Mikael over 350 major works from Bezverkhny Olga became his memory and it is an honour accompanist and Trio partner. to be the beneficiary of A turbulent period of her such an incredible concert life between 1995 and 2000 kindly assembled by the resulted in Olga becoming Rotary Club of Guildford. divorced, remarried, widowed Further details will shortly and diagnosed with MS. “But be available from Jackie. life is strange, from that disastrous period of life has come a new life”, she quotes. After which Olga then started to play exclusively for multiple sclerosis awareness and



### PUTTING THE FUN IN FESTIVE FUNDRAISING....

.....WITH AN ADDED SPRINKLE OF CHRISTMAS CHEER



Christmas Fair

Each year we seem to talk anyone would like to take We have a great selection about Christmas earlier. This a stall at our Xmas Fair on of stalls including baked year is no exception. Whilst Saturday 5th December goods, hand-made gifts, the weather during the school between 10am and 2pm at greeting cards, tombola, holidays has been a bit of a the Clockhouse in Milford raffle and lots, lots more. wash out, we still cling to the please get in touch. Tables It is an event for all the family hope of an Indian Summer are £25 each. “Our Xmas as well as putting the fun into for the months of September Fair is an annual event and fundraising with an added and early October; Jackie provides an ideal opportunity sprinkle of Christmas cheer.” however has no option but to find that special little For more information or to to talk about Christmas. If stocking filler or Xmas gift. reserve a stall, contact Jackie.

### HELPING OUT ON THE STREET



Street collections provide a valuable source of income for charities. The smaller the charity potentially the more valuable they can be. Ironically though the smaller the charity sometimes the more difficult it can be to take advantage of these occasions. “Sadly it is not the lack of opportunities as local authorities and major supermarkets welcome our applications”, comments Carol Kitching who is the volunteer street collection co-ordinator for The Samson Centre for MS.



“What is more limiting is would be most appreciated.” the number of people we Collections mostly take have available to take part,” place at weekends meaning continues Carol. “As our that all sorts of people users have multiple sclerosis can get involved including it won’t come as a surprise students or city bankers. If you can help, please cannot stand and hold a contact Carol Kitching.