

The Neuro Bureau

Newsletter 40-Dec 25



Welcome

We may be physically challenged but we are differently able.

Welcome to our **40th** newsletter! Please enjoy the features and photographs. If you would like to make a contribution for a future edition, please get in touch with our editor, Lesley MacLeod.

New members are always welcome. Copies of this newsletter can be emailed to anyone who requests a copy. Recent newsletters can also be downloaded from the Sequela website – sequelafoundation.org.

Since 3rd January 2025 we have been meeting every **FRIDAY** between 1030-1400 for coffee/chat/exercise and sandwiches at:
St Mark's Crescent Methodist Church, St Mark's Crescent, Maidenhead, SL6 5BQ

Please note our contact number is: 07863 661468



Anke's end of year message

Hello everyone,

What a wonderful Christmas lunch we had at Maidenhead Golf Club – see pictures in this newsletter. Sadly, it was our last time there but change is the only constant in life and hopefully we'll find another equally good venue for 2026.



Let's have a little recap on this year: in January we moved into our new home, St. Marks Crescent Methodist Church and I'd like to think that it was a very good move indeed - more space, longer hours and a very welcoming community. It has meant that we could start after lunch activities again, including some very interesting speakers and fun games. Also, we can offer massage again thanks to Sally Lane who also supports us in her role as carer every other Friday.

David has continued to spoil us with cake every week, and sandwiches are now sourced from Greggs in town who are always very friendly. Jill and I have been taking it in turns to pick these up early in the morning. Thank you, Jill!

We've welcomed a few new members and volunteers but sadly some 'old' members have not been able to join us recently. On the subject of volunteers, I want to repeat what I said at our lunch yesterday: a huge thank you for your continued support, and the same goes for my fellow trustees - your support is invaluable!

On the exercise front we still have Conny, Elizabeth, Tina and now also Kuldip, our newest crew member. Thank you, ladies, for making the exercise sessions so enjoyable.

Another big thank you goes to *Right at Home* who continue to support us by sending us Jagdeep every other Friday.

This year has not been without personal challenges for myself, and it has made me focus more on the here and now. Enjoy every moment, find what makes you happy and do it more often!

With that in mind, I wish you all the very best for the festive season and the New Year. May the goodwill of the season last throughout the year.

With love,

Anke



News snippets

Christmas/New Year break

Our last meeting this year will be on **Friday 19th December** when Christmas jumpers and Santa outfits will be welcomed 😊.
The first meeting in **2026** will be on **Friday 9th January**.

Who remembers Grove Park?

When Lesley & David recently visited Woodlands Park, they took a drive over to Grove Park and found ...



Donation from Maidenhead Millennium Trust

The Millennium Trust of the Rotary Club of Maidenhead Thames has made a very welcome donation of £900 to Sequela.

Anke made an application to the Trust for money to help us with the costs of hiring our exercise and singing professionals.

David is seen accepting the cheque on 21st November from Kenneth Jackson one of the Trustees.



Support from Lloyds Bank in Maidenhead

We have more good news, also due to Anke's initiative: Anke heard that Lloyds Bank in Maidenhead supported local charities and dropped in to the branch. In early November, they informed her that Sequela would be their one and only charity for their Christmas fundraiser!

We have since had an update that the amount already collected is **over £800** which will be matched by the bank! The fundraiser is open until Christmas so the likelihood is that the final figure will be even higher.

Member subscriptions for 2026

Your committee has agreed an increase in the annual member subscription fee which is going up from £35 to **£40** for 2026. Please be ready to pay your subscription in January. David is happy to take cash, an online transfer or a cheque payable to 'Sequela Foundation'.

Fundraiser for 2026 – Thursday 19th February, 7pm

This is advance notice for a special event planned next year as a fundraiser for Sequela. The former paralympian rower, **Naomi Riches** (a 'local' lady from Marlow) won a gold medal as a member of the GB mixed coxed four at the London 2012 Paralympics. She also has a bronze Olympic medal and eight world championships. She will be presenting a motivational talk which will be of interest to a wide range of people.



It's our membership of BNI that has led to this opportunity. One of the other BNI members – *Visiting Angels* – is assisting us in making the arrangements. The plan is to hold the meeting at Maidenhead Rugby Club in the evening and charge an entrance fee of £15 which will come directly to Sequela. There are 100 tickets for sale so we could raise a significant sum. Please make a note of this date and tell EVERYBODY about it. Naomi is an experienced speaker and her talks are well known for a wide range of topics, including adversity, marginal gains, mental resilience, and disability awareness.

Checking your personal information

Sequela Foundation is registered with the Information Commissioner's Office as a Tier 1 'DATA Controller'. All members and volunteers provide personal information to be held and processed by Sequela Foundation.

Sequela has a published Privacy Policy that explains how we keep your information safe. The information you gave us is recorded in a password-protected spreadsheet. We are currently setting up a secure area on the Sequela website where this information (and all of the documentation needed to manage the charity) will be safely located.

David is preparing an individual letter to each member and volunteer containing a copy of the information you provided to us when you joined. The purpose is to confirm with each of you that the information held is correct and up to date. There will be space in the letter to make corrections/updates and add your signature as confirmation.

We plan to place a paper copy of this information in your Sequela name badge to make it accessible in case of an emergency. If you have any questions on this, please speak to one of the Trustees.

Profile: Pam Fletcher

Pam's story as told to Jill

Pam, a true Maidonian, was born and lived at the family home with her brother, until she was 18 years old. Pam was born very prematurely and severely deaf; she spent her first eight months inside the airing cupboard – basically a makeshift incubator- having to be fed every two hours.



Pam's early years and education were disrupted by numerous hospital stays. She left school to work in Furze Platt Bakery, necessitating 4am morning shifts.

At 18, Pam left home and started training on a SRN course in Wexham hospital and then transferred to Roehampton, specialising in Paediatrics, Burns and Special Needs. She went on to set up a Special Burns unit and always encouraged those in her care to live successfully and be happy with their individual conditions.

Despite Pam's own challenges, she was/is very determined to overcome obstacles and was often described as 'seriously stubborn'! Her mantra is "I CAN DO IT – JUST DO IT!!" Pam hopes that this attitude of dealing with whatever life throws at us, motivates others to think and do the same.

Pam has had many hobbies, including swimming, rowing and sailing. She joined Sea Rangers, Ocean Club and discovered Tall Ships Sailing International.

Her sailing adventures meant travelling extensively for competitions around the world. At the age of 34, Pam was awarded 'English Ladies Champion in Competitive Sports'.

Pam married in 1970 and went on to have two daughters, Susie and Jackie.

Pam then registered as a Special Needs Nanny Carer – with extensive nursing experience and great affinity and insight into the needs of the children in her care. Pam cared for 16 children during her time as a Carer and even had a caravan in her back garden to cope with any overspill.



Pam had many happy years fostering, getting involved in MENCAP, Toy Library, TVA Playground, Holiday Play schemes and much more.

Now retired, Pam has a much quieter life: her daughter Susie is now in Australia and has her own unit for Teenagers with Severe Special Needs. Jackie is a microbiologist. Pam still supports 'Save the Children' by crocheting blankets and baby clothes for a maternity unit in Sierra Leone.

Pam has led a very busy life, helping others – children and animals being her lifelong passion. This article does not do justice to her working and personal life.

Pam says "Sequela supports and encourages members to leave the house for friendship and exercise – thank you"

Leaving a gift to Sequela

David MacLeod

Like many of you, I feel immense pride in the achievements of our small charity and the caring environment that has been created by current and former trustees and volunteers. However, sustaining these efforts and reaching even more people depends on ongoing support. One powerful way you can help secure our charity's future is by leaving a legacy in your will.

In recent years, Sequela has benefited from legacy gifts from former members. These members were kind enough to leave donations to Sequela in their wills to help maintain the services that they enjoyed as members.

Since I became a trustee and treasurer in 2018, Sequela has helped more than 50 people with neurological conditions, through our programme of exercise and interesting speakers, combined with outings, companionship, fun and games.

Leaving a legacy is straightforward: simply state in your will that you wish to leave a gift to the Sequela Foundation. Every contribution is deeply appreciated and will be used wisely to further the purposes laid out in Sequela's constitution.

Many people use a solicitor to draw up a will or a professional will-writing service. When Lesley and I prepared our wills, we used Which?, the consumer champion organisation. Their service is online and is much cheaper than using a solicitor. If your family and financial affairs are straightforward, it's a good choice.

If you need help in writing or adding a codicil to an existing will, remember that one of our recent speakers, Caroline Romero, offers support through her company Grey Matters Consultancy.

If you need any more information on this subject, please feel free to talk to me or any of the other trustees.

Thank you.

David



Christmas Lunch at the Golf Club

Maidenhead Golf Club hosted us for our annual Christmas gathering on Tuesday 9th December and served the usual excellent lunch. Once again, Anne's husband John used his membership of the club to our advantage to get a 20% discount on the welcome drinks – thanks John!

Sandy and helpers sold plenty of raffle tickets and raised £320; Anke also sold tickets to members of the BNI group and raised a further £85 making a total of **£405** for Sequela's funds. Thanks all!

The Golf Club choir entertained us with a selection of Christmas songs.



Anke, Anne & Tina on raffle duties





Treasurer's report: David MacLeod

Here is my brief annual report on our finances. As a registered charity, Sequela is regulated by the Charity Commission which requires that we submit an annual report. As our income is less than £25,000 pa, the report is very simple and has to state only our gross income, total expenditure and any income from Government grants.

INCOME: our income for 2025 has the usual four main sources:

Member subscriptions (27 paid members)	£950
Donations from individuals or groups	£829
Raffles	£950
Grants (community organisations or council)	£900 **

** donation from the Maidenhead Thames Rotary Millennium Trust
As also advised elsewhere in this newsletter, it's likely that we will receive a donation from Lloyds Bank of between £1,600 - £2,000 before the end of the year.

In addition, we have benefited from Give as you Live donations of **£109.48**.

The charge for the sandwich lunch was increased to £4 in March to cover the higher costs of sandwiches bought from Greggs. The charge is intended to cover the cost; to date, we have paid out c£2,626 and collected in £3,575 which includes £96 in advance payments. The cost from Greggs is likely to increase next year but as we're running a surplus, we can expect to keep the charge at £4.

EXPENDITURE: our principal expenditure is of course the hire charge for the Church rooms which is £66 per session (four hours plus a free half hour at each end to set up and clear up). By the end of the year, we will have paid room hire charges totalling **£2,904**. This compares very favourably to last year's charges for NMCC Sports Bar of £4,400. We have been notified of an increase in the hire charge for 2026, from £66 to £70 per session.

Other major expenditure categories have been:

Payments to exercise professionals	£780
Public liability insurance	£242
Website hosting	£60
Bank charges (monthly £5 fee dropped)	£43.20

As I said last year – but it's worth repeating – the numbers don't reflect the many 'little extras' contributed by our trustees/volunteers plus the overpayments from many members.

We will end the year with a healthy bank balance of approx £6,500 plus a likely donation from Lloyds Bank in addition.

Jenny's Gems

We are "the Bridge" (From Facebook)

My name's Richard. I'm 74. I sometimes think our generation is the bridge between two worlds — one made of dirt roads and handwritten letters, the other made of satellites and screens in our pockets.

I was born in a house without air conditioning. Summer meant open windows and the hum of a box fan. We knew the neighbours by name, and if your bike chain broke, you knocked on any door until someone found a spanner. We grew up on patience — waiting for the postman, waiting for the library to open, waiting for the radio to play our favourite song again.



Then the world sped up. Phones shrank, music became invisible, and the news didn't take days to reach us — it arrived in our palms before we finished breakfast. We learned to type, to swipe, to tap. We learned to talk to machines and have them talk back. We learned... because we always had to.

We've seen milk delivered to the door in glass bottles, and we've scanned groceries without a cashier. We've dropped coins in payphones and made video calls across oceans. We've known the sound of silence — no buzzing notifications — and the sound of an entire world pinging at once.

Sometimes younger folks think we're behind. But here's what I know: our generation knows both worlds. We can plant tomatoes and write an email. We can tell a story without Google, and then fact-check ourselves with it. We know the weight of a handwritten letter because we've held it, and we know the reach of a message sent in seconds because we've pressed "send" and watched a reply arrive from thousands of miles away.

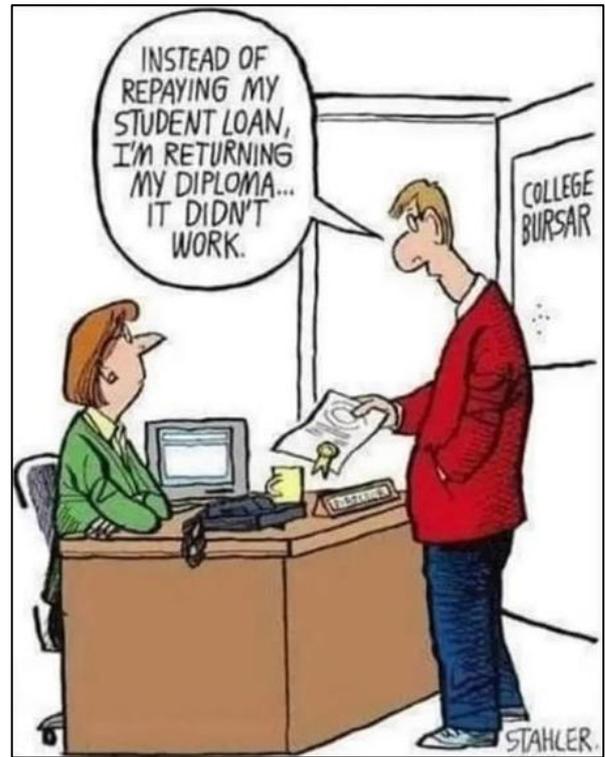
We are proof that you can change without losing yourself. That you can honour where you came from while learning where the world is going.

We've buried friends and welcomed grandchildren. We've watched diseases disappear and new ones arrive. We've known paper maps and GPS, postcards and emojis, patience and immediacy.

And maybe that's our real gift — we carry the memory of a slower, quieter world, and the skills to navigate the fast, loud one. We can teach the young that not everything needs to happen instantly... and remind the old that it's never too late to try something new.

We are the bridge. The middle chapter. The link between what was and what will be.

Jenny's Gems

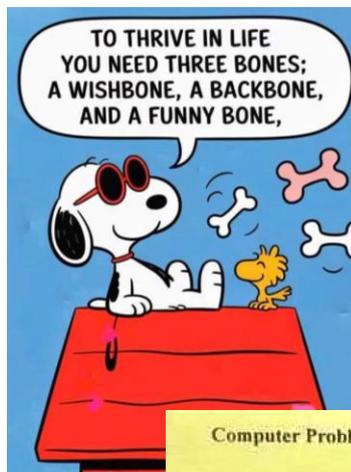


An old, tired-looking collie wandered into my yard one day. I checked his collar and saw he was well-fed — clearly had a good home. He followed me inside, walked down the hall, hopped up on the couch, got comfy, and fell fast asleep. 🐾

After about an hour, he woke up, went to the door, and I let him out. He wagged his tail and trotted off home.

The next day, he was back! Scratched at the door, came in, took his nap on the same couch, and left again an hour later. This went on for several days. I finally got curious and pinned a note to his collar that said, “Your dog’s been taking a nap at my house every day.”

The next day, he showed up again — with a new note pinned to his collar that read, “He lives in a home with four kids. He’s just trying to catch up on his sleep. Can I come with him tomorrow?” 😊



Computer Problems? NO PROBLEM! Use this manual data entry device.

P.E.N.C.I.L.

Personal Emergency Non-Computerized Information Lifesaver

ENTER DELETE

Ant definitions ...

5 ants + 5 ants in a house = Tenants	An ant that occupies a flat = Occupant
To bring an ant into the country = Important	An ant that doesn't keep moving = Constant
Ant that is looking for a job = Applicant	An ant that is important = Significant
A spy ant = Informant	An extremely fast ant = Instant
A very little ant = Infant	A noisy ant = Rant
An ant that is a specialist = Consultant	A huge ant = Giant
A proud ant = Arrogant	An ant that annoys = Irritant
An ant that is friendly and lovely = Coolant	An ant that maintains good odour = Deodorant
A bad ant regrets and turns good = Repentant	An ant that wastes resources= Extravagant
An ant that isn't willing = Reluctant	An ant that lacks knowledge= Ignorant
An ant that looks after the money = Accountant	A victorious Ant = triumphant

'Sequela website

www.sequelafoundation.org

Copies of the four most recent Sequela newsletters can be viewed and/or downloaded from the website.

**Useful contacts**

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