

# THROB NEWS

The Heart Rehabilitation Organisation of Berkshire



## A Lifelong Passion

John Sargent

In 2003, when browsing the web, I found a guy in San Diego who was marketing castings and sets of drawings for a quarter-scale model of the legendary Rolls-Royce Merlin engine. The Merlin powered numerous RAF aircraft in World War II but is primarily associated with the Supermarine Spitfire and the Hurricane. I couldn't resist and building this model has given me over fifteen-hundred hours of pleasure to date.

I'm not sure I could ever have been anything other than an engineer. When I was seven my mum and dad bought a three-bedroomed house which left a spare room for storage but dad soon decided it would make a nice little workshop with a small bench in the corner for me. I never looked back. Every spare minute was spent making models out of anything I could find. My grandfather had been a cabinet maker and although he died when I was two he left behind an extensive tool kit which was at our disposal.

When I was eleven we moved house again but plans to convert a bedroom hit the buffers when my grandmother moved in with us, so - Plan B. The house came with a brick-built garage and dad and I set about turning the far end of it into our



workshop. When we outgrew that we added a second workshop on the back. A year after we moved in a large housing estate started to take shape across the other side of the stream at the end of the garden so this became a very useful source of materials for a budding engineer. As a result, my friends and I had the best go-carts in the area. The brand new secondary school I attended came equipped with both wood and metal workshops and I'd never been so happy. I left school with O-levels in maths, engineering, drawing and metalwork and although becoming an engineer should have been blindingly obvious I decided to try for aircrew in the RAF!

I passed the RAF medical and aptitude tests but was told I needed to pass A-levels in Pure and Applied Maths and Physics, so I spent a year at Brooklands Technical College having a great time and as a consequence the end of year exams were a disaster. *Continued Page 3*

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## Energy Balls



An easy no-cook recipe - makes 10 balls.

### Ingredients

100 g almonds  
200 g chopped dates  
2 tbsp raw cocoa powder  
1 tbsp almond butter  
1 tbsp coconut oil  
desiccated coconut for dusting

### Method

**B**egin by placing the almonds in the food processor and pulsing until they are finely crushed.

Add the chopped dates and coconut oil and pulse until they're fully mixed.

Add the almond butter and cocoa and then mix again in the food processor.

Take a tablespoon of the mixture and roll it into a ball. Continue doing this until the mixture is finished.

Optional - Roll the finished balls in desiccated coconut to make them look even more appetising!

Place the rolled balls into an airtight container and store in the fridge.

Recipe: [deliciouslyella.com](http://deliciouslyella.com)

## EDITORIAL



Happy New Year  
to all our  
members



**I**n this first issue of 2019 you will notice that a few of the articles are longer than usual. We are always grateful and delighted to receive contributions from the membership and sometimes attempts to drastically reduce the size of an article can spoil the flow and interrupt the story, so on this occasion we decided to leave them pretty much as they were. I hope you enjoy the stories and that they inspire you to make a contribution of your own on whatever topic appeals to you, medical or otherwise. John Sargent's account of how he got the engineering "bug" shows that what we end up loving is often something that was introduced to us as a child – and Arthur's true story about George may remind you of someone you have known in your own life. Nowadays, George would not be considered quite as quirky or miserly as he might have been in the past since recycling, re-purposing and generally making things go further is all the rage now and definitely politically correct!

At the time of writing, winter has been pretty kind to us with very little ice or snow to trip us up, but of course spring is still a long way off and things can certainly change in February and March, so don't forget previous THROB advice about how to walk on icy pavements (flat footed - like a penguin) and stay safe. If you are one of the energetic hardy types who like to speedwalk or jog and get out in the cold weather – well done! Every winter I tell myself I'll be one of those people but I have never done it so I might as well face the fact that it's not going to happen. Indoor exercise for me.

Lesley Richards [lrichards48@virginmedia.com](mailto:lrichards48@virginmedia.com)

*N.B. The editorial board reserves the right to decide the magazine's content and to amend articles as necessary*



**T**HROB has just supplied the twentieth Automatic External Defibrillator to the community. The latest was to Swift House in Maidenhead, a development of retirement apartments, at the request of THROB member Tony Ash.

→ → By this time I was seventeen and it was time to do some soul-searching. After some blunt but honest input from my dad it was decided that I'd be better off going for an engineering apprenticeship. So for the next four years, starting in the Tool Shop, I spent time in every department ending up in Research and Development for a company that made large industrial fans and it was like being paid to do a hobby. I completed my apprenticeship in 1967 and a year later I married Annie - another good move.

After the arrival of our daughter in 1971 I needed more income and managed to secure a post at Castrol Research Laboratories in Bracknell. For a petrol-head like me it was as if all my birthdays had come at once. The company operated a shift system so during the wee small hours when things were quiet my model-making skills took a leap forward. In 1983 Castrol decided to create a dedicated installation department for the creation of new test-beds and the offer to join the six-man team didn't require much thought. I now had a whole workshop at my disposal and a team which included two electricians and a welder.

By 1990 my manager had been promoted and I had replaced him. However in 1996 I had my first heart attack - (the resultant spare time

during recovery helping me progress with some model-making - a quarter scale model of a Bentley BR2 engine). But in 1999 I had a second heart attack followed in 2000 by a triple by-pass which is still working just fine.

2001 brought the news that the parent company in the States was closing the test section and we were all being made redundant. For six months I was on full pay and able to please myself but I decided to become self-employed and set about creating a workshop at home. Then fate took a hand when my old company realised they still needed engineering support and took me on as a contractor. I spent ten happy years there before retiring in 2011.

I now spend some of my time working for REMAP a group of retired engineers who give time free of charge to design, build or modify pieces of bespoke equipment for the disabled. It keeps the grey cells active and the eyes and hands working. I sometimes charge but only by the bottle (preferably red). Exercise classmates Keith and Derek and I often go to model engineering exhibitions and its only when I see what other people are producing that I realise I still have a way to go.. but it keeps me happy.

The Merlin engine? It hasn't run yet but it will do some day.



**A Sort Of Farewell Letter from Ron Tull**

Sincere thanks to THROB and to all the instructors who took cardiac exercise classes from summer 2002 to date. The exercises were most beneficial and the pleasant social side more than compensated for the repetition. No apologies for the occasional minor disruptions, e.g. oral efforts to encourage classmates or comments during the 'hush' periods.

Arthritis prevents me from continuing. How to live a long life? Be very lucky in times of real danger.

Best wishes  
Ron Tull

P.S. to the Editor - thanks Lesley, you were my first instructor in 2002.

**From the Editor.** I remember it well. Occasional minor disruptions? I can think of quite a few! But you were, and are, a one-off and it was a pleasure to have you in the group Ron. You'll be missed.

**How did the Egyptians wash their dishes?**



## The Life Of George

Arthur House

George was seen by most of his associates as a somewhat controversial eccentric. He had cast aside much of the culture of the age, which was the period just after the second world war, having decided to live frugally by continuing to heed the wartime phrase of 'war against waste.' He had observed the world around him as becoming profligate and had elected to follow a path in his life to make the most of the 'throwaways' that were beginning to litter the streets and rubbish dumps of our urban environments. That is not to say that the population at the time were well off, everyone had to be careful as the nation was recovering from WWII and rationing still applied.

Little was known to his workmates about his previous life but it was rumoured that he had been married at an early age but it did not last very long, probably due to his 'meanness' as most people judged it to be. He was well educated for his post as an electronic development engineer and was creative and ingenious in engineering matters. Nevertheless I am leaving it to the readers to form their own opinion and judgement on George by describing some of his daily activities which may become more pertinent to our society in the future.

George would begin his working day with a quick visit to the local library where he read the newspapers briefly to ascertain their relevance to his daily existence and to decide whether to revisit in the evening if necessary. George would then set off to work on his improvised bicycle made out of spare parts obtained from rubbish tips and modified as required, hence providing a very basic form of transport from his home, at the one speed of about 10 mph only. His posture on the bike was very erect due to a handlebar extended vertically. He wore a multiplicity of overlapping garments (all obtained at zero cost) to protect against the weather. His hat was of a composite construction

consisting of a central dome surrounded by a wide brim to protect against the rain, like a small umbrella. When observed in the rain, it formed a screen with water dripping from the edges, which prompted one of his colleagues to remark that George should fit a gutter to it so that the rain would not obscure his view. In essence, George resembled a Don Quixote-type character off to do battle with the world.

George had acquired a considerable skill in needlework, quite deliberately, which he applied to all his clothing. Holes in his socks and pullovers were darned and patching applied to much of his underwear and jackets. He was not particular in his choice of matching colours resulting, for example, in his socks being multi-coloured dependent on what wool was available to him at the time. The materials for his repair work were usually samples of limited length distributed by companies to prospective buyers for sales purposes. Consequently his image to the external world was one of a somewhat nattily dressed scarecrow.



On his arrival at work he would quickly adapt to his working day in the laboratory by ensuring his instruments and tools were in place and had not been tampered with. It was his custom then to tour the factory floor where the electronic products were made and assembled, under the pretence of surveying the specialised test equipment that he had designed and installed previously. In reality his motivation was to discover any rubbish that might be of value to him which had been discarded by the workers the previous day, in particular any cigarette ends.

To avoid the embarrassment of being observed picking up the cigarette ends, George had developed an ingenious technique using a flapping sole in one of his shoes, he would slyly push the ends into his modified shoe with the other foot. Having acquired three or four tobacco ends, enough for a single whole, he would retire to the gents toilet to construct his smoke using the oily-type toilet paper → →

**With Pharaoh Liquid**



→ → and the gum from the typists' office. Two or three times during the day he satisfied his need for a smoke by this method, he had to observe a strict code of secrecy from the factory workers as he was aware that they would maliciously damage their unfinished ends in various ways to sabotage his efforts.

When lunchtime arrived George departed the laboratory after his colleagues had made their way to the main canteen entrance. He then slipped out to the back of the canteen kitchen where he would acquire his lunch and return to the now empty lab to consume it. It transpired that George had made an arrangement with the chef to have access to the food scraps leftover and he managed to select a suitable lunch each

day that way.

It was unfortunate that George's *modus vivendi* had created much hostility amongst his neighbours who vented their feelings to the local authorities by reporting to them that he was hoarding food in his house. This resulted in the police visiting George and discovering some mouldy bread in his kitchen cupboard, for which he was prosecuted and fined. The ending of George, in his late 60's, is worthy of note as a large number of relatives turned up at the funeral and afterwards. It had become widely known that George was a major shareholder in the company and quite a rich man.



### After A Fall

**H**aving a fall at home can be dangerous but even if no injury has occurred it can be an unnerving experience. Prevention, by staying fit and flexible, is the best approach but even the most nimble of us occasionally trip over our own feet so it's also important to be able to get up off the floor unaided.

Below is a good way to do this and it's worth practicing so that you are familiar with it.

1. If you end up flat on your back you'll need to roll onto your front. To roll to the left move your head and then your shoulders, arms, hips, and right leg over to the left.

Reverse for rolling to the right. **Picture 1**

2. Use your hands to push your upper body up and then pause and steady yourself. **Picture 2**
3. Slowly raise yourself onto hands and knees. In this position you can crawl to a nearby chair (or something firm) to lean on to help you raise yourself. **Picture 3**
4. Place your hands on the seat of the chair or firm surface and place one foot flat on the floor so that you are now partially kneeling. **Picture 4**
5. Pushing with hands and bent leg raise yourself turning slightly so as to sit on the chair or other firm surface. Rest and regain your composure. **Pictures 5 & 6**



## Intermittent Fasting In Type 2 Diabetes



The British Medical Journal has published a case study of three men with type 2 diabetes who

tried out planned intermittent fasting to see if it would help to ease their symptoms. (1)

Whilst drugs can manage the symptoms of diabetes and help to stave off complications they cannot stop the disease in its tracks.

The men were aged between forty and sixty-five and all were taking tablets as well as daily insulin injections. In addition, all had high blood pressure and high cholesterol. Two of the men fasted on alternate days for a full twenty-four hours, while the third fasted for three of the seven days a week. On "fast days" they were allowed to drink tea/coffee, water or broth, and to eat one very low-calorie meal in the evening.

They stuck to this pattern for around ten months after which, fasting blood glucose, average blood glucose (HbA1c), weight, and waist circumference were re-measured.

All three men were able to stop injecting themselves with insulin within a month of starting their fasting schedule. In one case this took only five days.

Two of the men were able to stop taking all their other diabetic drugs, while the third discontinued three out of the four drugs he was taking. They all lost weight (by 10-18%) as well

as reducing their fasting and average blood glucose readings, which may help lower the risk of future complications, say the authors.

Feedback was positive, with all three men managing to stick to their dietary schedule without too much difficulty.

This is an observational study, and as such, it isn't possible to draw firm conclusions about the wider success or otherwise of this approach for treating type 2 diabetes.

(1) Suleiman Furmli, Rami Elmasry, Megan Ramos, Jason Fung. **Therapeutic use of intermittent fasting for people with type 2 diabetes as an alternative to insulin.** *BMJ Case Reports*, 2018



Whilst this is a hopeful way forward there have been other successful reversals of the disease using a diet with very limited carbohydrate content. Anyone wishing to try this type of intermittent fasting should consult their doctor beforehand, but there is a scaled-down version that can safely be tried - limit all eating every day to a 6-8 hour window leaving a minimum of 12 hours overnight with no food. So if the last meal of the day was over by 7 pm, having breakfast the next day at 9 am would result in a 14-hour fast. People diagnosed with Insulin Resistance (pre-diabetes) can also benefit from extended overnight fasting.

**Lesley Richards**

### AN APPEAL FROM THE HEART

The committee urgently needs more members, including a social secretary to organise events throughout the year. Exercise and the conviviality of classes and social events are important aids to your recovery. Without THROB that support would not exist. To join us, contact any committee member and help keep THROB's heart beating.

## Before Their Time

*Pioneers who made important discoveries long before modern medicine existed*

### 8. DANIEL HALE WILLIAMS



Being a medical pioneer is not always about simply having the necessary skill and knowledge. It can also be about having the determination and courage to overcome prejudice. This was the case with Daniel

Hale Williams, the first African-American surgeon to perform successful pericardium surgery in 1893.

Williams was born in Hollidaysburg, Pennsylvania on January 18th 1856. His father was the son of a Scots-Irish woman and a black barber, and his mother was also of African-American mixed race. One of six children, he had a difficult childhood from the age of nine after the death of his father and the many subsequent moves as the family struggled to survive. As a young adult he ended up in Wisconsin and opened his own barbers shop. Eventually Williams became fascinated by the work of a local physician and decided to follow his path.

Starting as an apprentice to Dr Henry Palmer, Williams studied under him for two years. In 1880 he entered Chicago Medical College and after graduation in 1883 opened his own medical office in Chicago.

At the time of his graduation black doctors were not allowed to work in American hospitals but in his own practice he saw both white and black patients. However, in 1891 Williams founded the Provident Hospital and also a Training School for Nurses in Chicago in order to increase accessibility of healthcare to the

black population and his patients and staff were fully integrated from the outset.

In September of 1891 Dr Henry Dalton had performed the first ever successful pericardium surgery to repair a wound - with the patient recovering in full. But Daniel Hale Williams was not far behind. In July 1893 knife-wound victim James Cornish was admitted to Provident Hospital. After several hours Williams decided that surgery was needed or his patient would die. He performed the pericardial surgery without the help of antibiotics or blood transfusion. He was also working on a beating heart as the ability to temporarily stop the heart did not exist at that time. He later performed a further operation to drain excess fluid from the wound. About fifty days after the initial surgery Cornish left the hospital and survived for another twenty years.

Later that year Williams was appointed surgeon-in-chief of Freedman's Hospital in Washington DC, a post he held until 1898 when, having married, he moved back to Chicago. In 1897 he was appointed to the Illinois Department of Public Health where he worked to raise medical and hospital standards.

Despite many advances in cardiac surgery by inspirational doctors in the late 19th century heart surgery was not widely accepted by medical science until the second world war when surgeons were forced to perform more risky procedures to save the lives of wounded soldiers. Like many medical pioneers, Williams did not receive early acclaim but later, before his death on August 4th 1931, his work was fully recognised for its contribution to medical knowledge. His achievements were impressive by any standards but to have succeeded in a segregated society that saw black and mixed-race people as inferior, showed determination and courage that few possess.

**Lesley Richards**



Twenty-seven members of the three Magnet Leisure Centre classes enjoyed a Christmas meal together at the Stafferton Way, Toby Carvery on Friday 14th December. The event was organised by Magnet instructor Anjuli Dare.

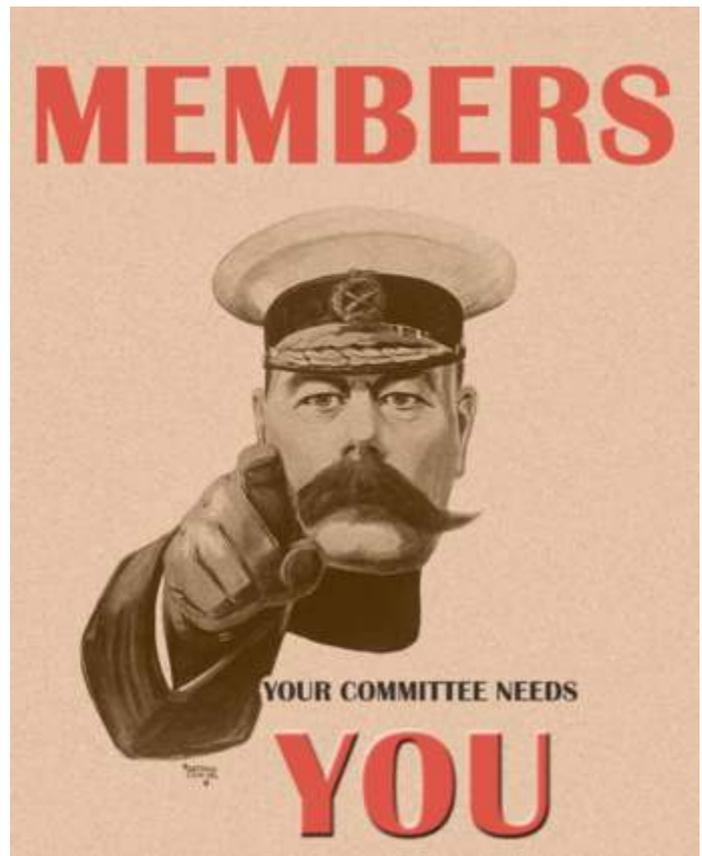
*We are tempted to ask where the other eighteen people are. Under the table already?*

## Three Cheers For The THROB AGM



Last year the attendance at the THROB AGM fell to an all-time low with fewer than 10 members present. Everyone knows that any AGM is not the most exciting event as official business has to proceed according to rules - but that is not the whole point of the evening. With a guest speaker invited every year and refreshments provided, a healthy membership attendance could turn it into **The Annual Great Meet-up!** A chance to meet fellow members, exchange ideas and make new friends. Something to look forward to rather than to avoid. Only you can make it so.

The life-blood of an organisation is its membership and without membership



involvement eventually any organisation dies. Our present committee has been virtually unchanged for many years and that cannot be sustained forever. We really do need you to come along, express your views, offer to help in whatever way you can, and ultimately have a really nice time. I look forward to seeing many of you on 5th April – let's make it the best attended Annual Great Meet-up that THROB has hosted since it began.

Lesley Richards

Come and join us. Enjoy a guest speaker, some cheese and wine and meet the committee. Have your say in running THROB.

AGM

7.30 pm Friday 5th April 2018  
Carnation Hall, Chavey Down Road,  
Winkfield Row, Bracknell,  
RG42 7PA



### THROB COMMITTEE

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The Heart Organisation Rehabilitation of Berkshire



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