

The Irish Hard of Hearing Association

HEARSAY!

REGISTERED CHARITY NO. CHY. 10529



Sponsored by

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Newsletter for the Hard of Hearing

BEING A MEMBER OF THE IHHA

Many people are members of the Association and enjoy the benefits it can bring. Many others are lapsed members and did not see why they should continue many others never bothered to join because they thought they would get nothing from it.

Without the IHHA, all of us would be in a poor way. Have you any idea of what the Association is doing and trying to do, all on your behalf? Over the past few years great strides have been made to make the public aware of our needs. Sub titling has been tackled and now there is 80% subtitling on RTE 1. We are constantly monitoring what is being done and how, and there are constant negotiations about the speed, quality and positioning of sub titling. Our access committee is tackling many aspects of public and semi public access and loop systems for the hard of hearing. These include negotiations with Dublin Airport authorities. Parish churches, Garda stations, Post offices. Banks, Theatres and Cinemas. We are also active in connection with the Building Regulations 2000, Access for people with Disabilities, and are making our recommendations. There are still many more areas to cover.

Seminars are held on subjects of particular interest to the hard of hearing. There are on going social events of all kinds including hill walking, amblers walks, play reading and theatre visits. National Gallery lectures, outings and visits to places of interest, music nights, garden visits, competitions and many others. All of these are wonderful for meeting others with similar problems and to see how they cope.

Then there is Hearsay, our own magazine which comes out three times a year. This gives members information of what is going on and how others are coping with their hearing loss. This is your magazine and readers are encouraged to write in and express your views and needs.

All of these are run by a few dedicated people, each of whom has a hearing loss. Finance is always a big problem and prevents us from doing even more. Your contribution is essential. The subscription has been kept at € 10 per year for a long time now. All of these events are financed from the subscriptions you pay and any donations from people who care. Without your subscription, many of these things could not be continued and you would be the loser. If you are a member and have not yet paid you subscription, please do so now. If you are a lapsed member, re-join, you get far more than you realise for your subscription. If you are not a member, please contact us for an application form.

Apart from all these activities, you can gain so much by just meeting other people who share your own problems. Don't forget, we are all in the same boat. We all have a hearing loss.

Contact us at ;

The Irish Hard of Hearing Association,
35 North Frederick Street, Dublin 1. email: ihha@nadh.ie

Ken.

OUR SPONSOR

Once again we are indebted to Bonavox Hearing Aid Suppliers for their extremely generous sponsorship of our newsletter 'Hearsay'.

A.G.M. 2006

The Royal Dublin Hotel, situated right in the city centre, made a perfect venue for this years A.G.M. and so is easily accessible for everyone.

Pat McKenna, our President, welcomed everyone and thanked the Council for all their hard work. He then gave a brief outline of events and issues during the past year.

Our financial balance stands at a healthy €9297.37c and Michael Tighe, our Hon. Treasurer reported on the details.

The Election of Officers for the coming year followed:

President:	Pat McKenna
Vice President:	Mairin O'Kelly
Hon. Treasurer:	Michael Tighe
Hon. Secretary:	Jarlath Byne
P.R.O.:	Michael Costello
Council Members:	Peter Derbyshire, Gina Robins, Ken Edwards, Jo Curran.

Committee and Activity Reports followed and details can be had on request.

Finally Pat asked Ann Kenny to act as Facilitator and threw the meeting open for questions and comments.

Jacqueline

RED WINE

RED wine has long been praised for its ability to protect against heart disease. Now it seems a glass of your favourite Bordeaux could stop you going deaf. Experts found the drink can act as an antidote to ear damage, often caused by loud noise and antibiotics. The hearing damage is done when tiny hairs in the inner ear suffer exposure to chemical agents known as oxygen free radicals. Red wine contains antioxidants which help neutralise the radicals and stop the hearing loss.

The team of researchers, led by Dr Jochen Schacht, said the same effect could be got from taking aspirin or drinking green tea.

Researchers tested two groups of patients, one with a daily dose of aspirin followed by an antibiotic, the other with a dummy pill and then the antibiotic. In the first group the aspirin reduced the risk of inner ear hairs being damaged by 75% and that the same effect can be had with green tea or red wine. "It certainly can't hurt to increase the amount of red wine or green tea that you consume," Dr Schacht told

New Scientist magazine. The researchers said moderate amounts of red could

help protect against heart disease and cancers.

Penel

SILENCE IS GOLDEN

An elderly couple were attending church services, about halfway through she leans over and says, "I just did a silent fart, what do you think I should do?"

He replies "I think you should put a new battery in your hearing aid.*"

DON'T THINK ABOUT IT DO IT!

Marie, a regular contributor to these pages, believes Evelyn Glennie, the world famous percussionist must be one of the most inspiring examples of single-mindedness and determination.

Born in Aberdeen in July 1965 Evelyn showed an unusual understanding and aptitude for music and enjoyed it without external pressures from an early age. She noticed that she was having difficulty following every day speech. Tests followed resulting in Evelyn being fitted with hearing aids. The hearing specialist recommended she be sent to the Aberdeen School for the Deaf. Her Mother was devastated. She simply had not realised how serious the problem was. Her daughter had made little or no fuss while coping with her difficulty.

Evelyn refused to go. She had no intention of being cut off from music choosing the local secondary school instead. There was a strong music department with two full-time teachers. Aural tests, from a tape, were given to all first year students to find out who was musical and who was not. Evelyn did not score well as she could not hear the tape properly. All the more puzzling then for her teacher when Evelyn asked to be included in the weekly percussion class. Even more surprising for the teacher was the fact that Evelyn had passed Grade 6 at piano and also was gifted with perfect pitch - the ability to hear the precise pitch of a note in one's head and place it exactly in relation to other notes.

Evelyn successfully got a place in the percussion class and at once felt at ease with the array of instruments, the xylophone, the timpani, the drum and many more. Evelyn relied on lip-reading. She became an expert at it. She developed her own way of 'hearing music' i.e. sensory awareness to such a degree that she could 'feel' each note resonating in her body. With few solo percussionists in the world and the notion of making a living from playing percussion, unknown in the UK, Evelyn aspired to do just that. She successfully obtained a place to study at the Royal Academy of Music in London. Three years of study saw her discovering how broad the musical range was for percussion and just how much adapting could be done from the music of Bach, Mozart, Vivaldi and other great masters. She began to attend rehearsals by leading orchestras such as the London Symphony and the London Philharmonic. She would take along the 'score' and use the opportunity to familiarize herself with the music. By the time of the actual performance she knew it off by heart and could concentrate on the orchestra's performance and presentation. She observed how the different sections communicated with the conductor and in particular how soloists interacted with the orchestra and conductor. She graduated, with honours, from the Royal Academy and was also awarded the Queen's Commendation Prize for all round excellence (the Academy's top accolade). She now performs all over the world, the U.S. and Japan.

Evelyn Glennie - the woman who could not and would not take NO for an answer.

Marie

NOISE FREE TRANSPORT!

There is no mode of transport quite like it - 17 passengers tucked tightly into small compartments. Within seconds of lying sideways, the basket was dragged along the ground righting itself and lifting off rising higher and higher. Silence total. Everyone just hoping for the best. In moments the voice of the handsome pilot instructed us to stand up and get the cameras out. The gentle breeze quite cool

punctuated by a comforting rush of gas releasing a blast of warm air on our backs and faces.

Dawn cuts across the sky and with it herds of animals grew more visible, silent shadows became rivers, flat topped acacia trees below yet almost touchable. Hippos meditating in a river, zebras chasing away in their hundreds, giraffes waking up and drifting off. Travelling in a balloon without any unpleasant sounds, noise, strain for a whole hour. No one wants to talk it is almost too intrusive to do so. It's worth going into debt to go up in a balloon anywhere you possibly can just to capture the silence in the air and feel the breeze brush your face. An hour to move in the open air glimpsing moments of beauty spread over thousands of miles of wild grassy plains.

Diana

GLOWING!

There is an old saying 'Horses sweat men perspire but women merely glow'. During the month of July I glowed. This had disastrous effects on my hearing aids. Clear, well defined tones became 'muzzy' in spite of stay dry tubes. I began to panic. After trying three Hearing Aid Centres in Dublin I came to Advance Hearing Centre. They produced an answer to my prayer. 'Cedis Drying Capsules. One's aid can be placed (without battery) in a dry bag containing a capsule which absorbs the moisture. Full instructions, and easy to follow diagrams, are enclosed in each kit. Nothing could be simpler. The kit is not cheap but the capsules can be re-used many times.

€10 for peace of mind seemed cheap to me

Penel

RTE SUBTITLES QUESTIONNAIRE

Many thanks to all of you who returned the questionnaire. RTE relied on us in the IHHA to get the feed back required for analysis by the ITFC in London. They do the subtitling for RTE's major news bulletins on TV. The results showed that people generally find "scrolling" (words trickling down the screen as they occur) rather than "block" (words appearing in a bunch) to be better favoured by those of us who responded.

Glad to be able to help you RTE!

TIPS AND WINKLES

Just recently my hearing aid broke down and you know I learnt so much during the time it was "off the air".

The first thing I found never tell a hearing person you lip read or they will immediately make the most exaggerated lip movements, impossible to lip read. Yes, do tell them you are hard of hearing and may be ask them to repeat what they said.

Secondly give your natural hearing, however bad it is, time to adjust to no hearing aids and your lip reading skills a while to improve, it is amazing how much more you can "understand"

Thirdly don't avoid conversing with people; it is so easy just to take the easy way out.

Jacquie

MANY THANKS

Many thanks to Niall Keane of NAD for sponsoring our presence at the European and International Federations Conference for Hard of Hearing people held in Dubrovnik in May 2006.

IHHA President, Pat McKenna was the official delegate and two observers went too.

The proceedings have been reported on in LINK. The talks on Cochlear Implants were interesting in that implanting is seen as a threat to Deaf Culture by the Croatians as well as here in Ireland. Delegates from the northern countries (Holland, Norway, Sweden) were supportive of early implanting. Bluetooth technology is fascinating. You can use this now with your mobile phone and it promises great advances for hearing aids. The social side of the conference was fun but the weather was diabolical!

HELPFUL INFO

Just to let you know that the PRSI Grant for hearing aids has been increased to 50% of the cost of a hearing aid up to the maximum of €760. This was 700

Note that not all classes of PRSI are eligible for this grant - usually those who have paid the full amount of PRSI.

Hearing aids come under the treatment benefit grant. One is also entitled to claim the hearing aid as a medical expense

And finally, the Irish Society of Hearing Aid Audiologists contains a list of its members who are registered with them to practice in Ireland.

Emma

LEPERS

Anne Roberts visited a leper colony in West Uganda and was appalled to see people there with parts of their hands, feet or faces missing. Yet they sat there happily singing and content.

Anne Roberts said that they were the most radiant people she had ever met.

It made me think about us. All we have wrong is that we can't hear well. Are we happy and radiant? Shouldn't we be happy for having so much that others do not and cannot have? Maybe we should take another look at ourselves. Maybe we should be enjoying what we have got and not worrying about what we do not have.

Think about it for a moment.

GLOPDUMP!!!

I'm reasonably ok on the phone with family and friends, once I know who the caller is I can relax, but when strangers call my nerves immediately kick-in and I have quite a lot of trouble understanding what the caller is saying. Just recently I had a call and I realised instantly that I didn't know the person calling. The only thing I could be sure of was that it was a woman's voice.

Anyway, I managed to catch my name and after that she said what sounded to me like "twa shaney glopdump yang". I knew of course that this was gibberish so I cut in and said "I'm sorry; I have a hearing

problem, could you please speak slowly and clearly". She said "ob sharry" and then carried on speaking in exactly the same tone of voice she had used before. She again said "twa shaney glopdump yang". Once again I tried to explain that she must speak very clearly or I wouldn't be able to understand what she was saying. She said - in an angry way - "qua wite" and then shouted "twa shaney etc etc"

By this time I was so fed up with the whole business I said "sorry, I just can't understand a word you're saying, I'm going to hang up" She said "now dong hog youp" which I imagine was her way of saying; no don't hang up. Then she said, (yes, you've guessed it) "twa shaney" and so on.

Have any of our readers figured out some way of getting the message over to callers that they must speak very clearly. If so could you please write in and tell us about it.

PS. I still haven't the faintest idea what the lady was talking about!

Peter

TRAVEL TIPS

Not being able to speak the local language dispelled any inhibitions about trying to hear.

Have you noticed how much people love to practise their English on you which can be a real strain to lipread? Sometimes a quick gesture or two like a smile or pointing to the ear using a phrase like "I'm deaf I can't hear you" can work a treat. The porter politely dropped the small talk focussing on carrying the luggage to the room.

Similarly in taxis the driver stopped talking and we could sit back and enjoy the ride.

'Im deaf I can't hear you" why did I never think of this years ago I ask myself...?!!!

HOME TRUTHS

Sheila Inchley always boasted to her friends that her husband never snored. But when she regained her hearing after thirty years of partial deafness, one of the first things she noticed was that hubby Michael is a very loud snorer.

Sheila underwent a revolutionary operation to restore her hearing. The surgery was a complete success and I was delighted with the outcome" She said "But being able to hear without a hearing aid brought me face-to-face with a few home truths".

Metro newspaper.

HELPFUL HINTS

Have you got a new digital hearing aid? Have you got a new soft plastic mould to go with it? They are great aren't they. In spite of this, I have found a slight snag with my new combination of aid and mould. After about three months, my aid suddenly started to make funny sounds on me, for all the world as if there were a few ticking noises every half minute or so. When I brought it back to my supplier, they knew all about it and told me that the tubing between the aid and the mould has to be renewed every three months because they are so sensitive. I changed the tube and now I am back in business again for another three months.

OBITUARY

Tony Keenan - Past President, Treasurer and member of Council of the IHHA.

Tony died on 6th May 2006 leaving those who knew him to grieve his loss. At the age of 46 he was too young to die.

He was passionate about the needs of people with a hearing loss and did a lot to provide social outings for us in the IHHA. He came on our walks and to the theatre and arranged table quizzes and golf outings and fussed about the dearth of lipreading classes during the summer breaks!

He underwent a Cochlear Implant and turned up at the IHHA Christmas Dinner at the Montrose Hotel the very evening of being "switched-on"!

He left his mark with us.

We sympathise with Nora, his wife and his close family and friends.

Thank you Tony for your enthusiasm and courage.

Rest in Peace.

CONGRATULATIONS

Many thanks to Connie Conway who did the women's mini marathon again this year. She raised €170 which she has donated to the Irish Hard of Hearing Association.

Many thanks Connie and well done.

THEATRE OUTING

This is becoming very popular these days and even attracts members from the country. At the last event, Marie O'Meara joined us for a great night out.

Good to see you there Marie.

AID TO MUSIC

Thank you for the copy of the journal. I have become more friendly with my hearing apparatus. The most important adjustment is that I now know how to get the best out of it when playing the piano because I hear bass notes easily (it's the treble notes that disappear first) I remove the left aid completely. Then I screw the volume down on the right aid (there are seven grades of volume below the normal on my rather sophisticated apparatus) and then change it to the music channel (four channels - normal, full loop, partial loop and music). Sound is then reproduced accurately and the mezzo-soprano I accompany says that my level of playing is quite ok.

COPING TIPS

Don't be ashamed. You didn't cause your hearing loss, nor can you help the fact that it's there.

See your doctor for a complete check-up. Be cautious and curious about any changes in your body. Rule out other contributing ailments. Deafness, especially sudden deafness, can be caused by any number of things: multiple sclerosis, meningitis, autoimmune disorder, encephalitis, a virus, vascular problems, temporal bone fracture, concussion, acoustic trauma, fat embolism leukaemia, just to name a few.

Learn as much as you can. Search the Internet. Go to the library. Speak to others with similar symptoms. Find out about the latest technologies, procedures and medicines.

Find a specialist you can trust and share information with.

Lean on your other senses. Let your eyes become your ears as much as possible. Watch people carefully as they speak and try to be aware of what is going on around you.

Keep your stress level low. Some conditions (like TMJ) are actually exaggerated by stress and anxiety. Get adequate rest and don't give in to fears.

Join a support group. Find others online or in your community who are dealing with hearing loss and get together for coffee or lunch.

Tell those with whom you communicate on a regular basis that you have a hearing loss. Expect them to be understanding and helpful. Don't settle for anything less.

Don't let anyone treat you poorly. You are not unintelligent or unobservant; don't let others treat you that way. If necessary, get bold: Tell them when they hurt your feelings. If this is difficult for you, find a mediator who can help you (and work on your assertiveness!).

Maintain a positive outlook at all costs. Don't let anyone or anything get you down.

Hearing Health Magazine

Evidence that the workings of the inner ear can be regenerated to treat a common cause of deafness is published today.

An American team reports way to trigger the growth of new hair cells, the inner ear the sensory cells that pick up sound vibrations that are lost as a result of ageing, disease, certain drugs and the cacophony of modern life.

The new understanding which one day could help millions of people worldwide is published today in the journal 'Nature' by Dr Neil Segil and colleagues at the House Ear Institute, in Los Angeles and University of Southern California, Los Angeles. They have shown that 'supporting cells' from the post-natal mouse inner ear retain the ability to divide and turn into new sensory hair cells in culture. Named after the hair-like projections on their surfaces, hair cells form a ribbon of vibration sensors along the length of the cochlea, the spiral, seashell-like structure in the inner ear that detects sound, receiving vibrations through the eardrum and bones of the middle ear, hair cells convert them to electrical signals carried to the brain.

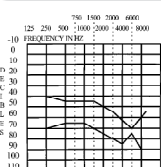
Daily Telegraph

INFECTIOUS DISEASE

I can't remember where I was, but I do remember being somewhere talking to someone. Suddenly there was a burst of infectious laughter. Everyone turned around and gradually the laughter increased. I have no idea what was going on or what the joke was but when I looked around I saw everyone was caught up in the laughter and enjoying it themselves. I know they didn't know what was going on either, but we were all enjoying the spontaneous outburst and fun.

You don't always have to know what is going on to enjoy yourself you know.

Please note. Anyone who wants further information, contact the address below.



The opinions expressed in this newsletter do not necessarily reflect those of the IHHA.

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