Hello!

At the end of July we said farewell to Dr. Bill Pomeroy who left The Oaks surgery after being a GP in Swanley for 32 years. I asked Bill to tell me a little more than I already knew about him.

Bill was born in Hong Kong in 1950 to South African parents. His youth was spent in Cape Town and after national service he studied medicine at the University of Cape Town. He worked in various South African hospitals, then came to the UK and worked as a locum in many London hospitals, including Guy’s. Deciding in 1983 to go into general practice, he was offered a Registrar’s post at the Cedars in Swanley. He was asked to stay on there, and on completion of The Oaks in 1987 he moved with Doctors Brooman, Gregson and Love to set up the new practice.

Bill’s wife Zosia died tragically in 2002 and he had a hard time bringing up two young daughters on his own and being a full time GP. He now travels back to South Africa every year to take part in the Argus bike ride. He is very keen on cycling (he has completed the London to Paris ride 6 times!) and has sporting interests, including being a great Arsenal fan — which doesn’t please all his patients! These and other interests will keep him busy and fit for many years when he’s not working. Bill intends to work as a locum GP or take short term contract work.

In a message to this newsletter Bill Pomeroy said “It has been a massive privilege serving the people of Swanley and it is not without some sadness that I am leaving but not retiring”. We wish him well and thank him for his service, compassion and dedication to providing the best possible medical care for the people of the area over so many years.

Whilst saying farewell to Bill Pomeroy, we are pleased to welcome Naana Smart to the clinical staff at The Oaks.

(continued over)

Chronic Lung Disease

Come along to an event put on by the Oaks Surgery and Patient Voice to find out all about living with chronic lung disease and the help that is available. Includes advice for carers.

Friday 16th October 2015
2.30pm – 5.30pm
Alexandra Suite, St Mary's Rd, Swanley BR8 7BU
Dr. Smart-Yeboah qualified as a GP 3 years ago. She will be familiar to many of you, having worked as a doctor at the Oaks covering partners’ leave in recent years. Dr Smart said “Having worked as a Registrar in Swanley, I am very happy to be returning to The Oaks. I will do my best to fill the rather large shoes left by Dr. Pomeroy”. We wish her well in her work at The Oaks.

Best wishes to you all, and please note our AGM details on the next page.

Alan Thrussell (Chairman)

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**INTRODUCTION—CONTINUED**

Two members have recently joined the Patient Voice committee. They tell us about themselves.

**Liz Davies**

I have lived in the Swanley area for over 40 years after settling here as a young married woman. It was ideal for commuting, yet green spaces were not too far away. After fifteen happy years in the Bank of England, I had a family of two daughters and we all enjoyed the local facilities: good schools and places of recreation. As the girls grew up I worked part time in various roles, then continued my career at Swanley town council for another eighteen years. I headed the community team which I thoroughly enjoyed, being a people person!

I was fortunate to be involved in lots of projects in my last working role which I think improved the lives of the residents and I met many different people from businesses, community groups, schools and individuals alike. Swanley is a vibrant community which has much to offer for everyone with many organisations and clubs offering support, leisure facilities and social activities for all. Swanley’s community is its best asset; there’s always someone who can help!

Since recent retirement I am now involved in many different activities: school governor, WI, Hexara, U3A and the Big Sing Choir as well as keeping in touch with many old friends. I love my garden, historic houses and gardens, holidays and bird watching. When asked by Patient Voice to join I thought I may have knowledge to offer and I have enjoyed my first few months of belonging to this vital link between our excellent surgery, The Oaks, and the patients.

**Ian Francis**

On leaving school in 1964, I worked with the London Electricity Board as a trainee sales assistant, gaining promotion to Showroom Manager. I had the opportunity to become a Time & Motion Study Analyst, before moving on to become a Metering Manager, then Premises Manager at our Bexleyheath and Camberwell offices, with responsibility for all buildings on site, including health & safety, cleaning & maintenance contracts, security, despatch & filing and staff restaurants. I was responsible for a team of 80 staff, and was always looking for further opportunities and promotion as I enjoyed variety.

I was promoted to Projects Manager at Head Office, having to ensure that all LEB sites were complying with the Disability Discrimination Act and other acts. In November 2000 I left the Company (now privatised as EDF) and joined Bromley College as a Timetabling Manager, with responsibility for timetabling course classes, room bookings for meetings, and exams. I retired in October 2011.

I lived in Farningham until I got married in 1972, then Sidcup, and I moved to Swanley in 1976. I have two sons aged 33 and 30, who both work in education. My interests are steam railways, photography and walking.
**ANTIBIOTICS ARE NOT ALWAYS THE ANSWER**

This note is from Dr. Janet Hall, Lead GP for Prescribing in the Dartford, Gravesham and Swanley CCG (Clinical Commissioning Group).

Antibiotics and similar drugs have been available since the 1940s and have reduced illness and death from infectious diseases. However, because they have been used so widely for illnesses which may not need them, resistance has developed.

Antibiotics do not work in viral illnesses such as colds, sore throat, flu and many sinus or ear infections. They do not cure these infections, they will not stop you passing on the infection to other people, and they will not help you feel better. In addition they may cause harmful side effects.

Recently, the chief medical officer for England, Dame Sally Davies, said “Antimicrobial infection poses a catastrophic threat. If we don’t act now, any one of us could go into hospital in 20 years for minor surgery and die because of an ordinary infection which cannot be treated with antibiotics.”

And the message for patients?

1. Do not expect to receive antibiotics for flu and other viral illnesses.
2. Discuss with your GP whether antibiotics are likely to be helpful in your case.
3. Alternatively, consult your pharmacist and get advice on what you can take to help relieve your symptoms.
4. Be realistic about the length of time it takes to recover from a viral illness.

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**Defibrillators**

We made a mistake in our last issue: The Cedars surgery does not yet have a defibrillator.

Remember they are around Swanley, to be used if someone has a cardiac arrest.

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**SMS SERVICE**

To improve the efficient use of resources in the practice, the Oaks staff are exploring the use of text messages as one of the means to communicate with patients. It is being used currently to advise people to book for flu appointments and it may be expanded to contact patients to make appointments for blood results or clinics for diabetes, asthma or COPD. No personal or medical information will be put in text messages.

Please make sure that the surgery has your correct mobile telephone number. If you do not wish to be contacted by means of text messaging, please let the staff know and a note will be made on your records.

Last year The Oaks had over 4000 missed appointments. These were slots which could have been used by someone else who was unwell. Missed appointments are continuing in 2015. In June this year, 263 appointments were missed out of 5077; that’s about 1 missed in every 20. If you know someone who misses appointments, please remind them to inform the surgery in advance. If SMS messaging is introduced here, a reminder service might be included.

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**Patient Voice — Annual General Meeting**

This year’s AGM will be held on Tuesday November 3rd at 7.30pm in Holy Apostles’ Church Hall, Sycamore Drive. Before the business agenda, Dr. Steve Gregson will talk on his recent experience on sabbatical working in the slums of Delhi and travelling in Nepal.

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**Patient Voice Committee**

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<th>Alan Thrussell (Chairman)</th>
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<td>Sue Creedon (Secretary)</td>
<td>Ray Harris</td>
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<td>Karen Dudley</td>
<td>Julia Young (Practice Manager)</td>
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<td>Ian Francis</td>
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43% of cancers are preventable through simple lifestyle changes!!!

That is a large number of avoidable cancers, and I am sure you are aware of all the lifestyle changes recommended. They have been collated by the European Partnership against cancer into a simple 12 point plan. Why not cut it out and stick it on your fridge?

1. Do not smoke. Do not use any form of tobacco.
2. Make your home smoke-free. Support smoke-free policies in your workplace.
3. Take action to be a healthy body weight.
4. Be physically active in everyday life. Limit the time you spend sitting.
5. Have a healthy diet:
   - Eat plenty of whole grains, pulses, vegetables and fruits.
   - Limit high-calorie foods (foods high in sugar or fat) and avoid sugary drinks.
   - Avoid processed meat; limit red meat and foods high in salt.
6. If you drink alcohol of any type, limit your intake. Not drinking alcohol is better for cancer prevention.
8. In the workplace, protect yourself against cancer-causing substances by following health and safety instructions.
9. Find out if you are exposed to radiation from naturally high radon levels in your home.
10. For women:
    - Breastfeeding reduces the mother’s cancer risk. If you can, breastfeed your baby.
    - Hormone replacement therapy (HRT) increases the risk of certain cancers, so limit use of HRT.
11. Ensure your children take part in vaccination programmes for:
    - Hepatitis B (if appropriate); Human papillomavirus (HPV) (for girls).
12. Take part in organised cancer screening programmes for:
    - Bowel cancer (men and women); Breast cancer (women); Cervical cancer (women).

The European Code Against Cancer focuses on actions that individual citizens can take to help prevent cancer. Successful cancer prevention requires these individual actions to be supported by governmental policies and actions.

**Feedback**

Would you like to give us some feedback about our newsletter or anything else? You could pick up a feedback form at Reception or email us at patient.voice@nhs.net

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**The Oaks website ————>**

A reminder - the website for our practice is at:

http://www.oakssurgery-swanley.nhs.uk