



# Issue 35 Newsletter by the Chief Executive



Spring 2003 was heralded for me, on a superb crisp April day when, along with hundreds of thousands of spectators and TV viewers witnessing the London Marathon I saw our Chairman, Dr Greg Whyte, pounding down the Mall in a huge (the biggest we could get!) CRY heart running cheering with his hands



**Greg running down the Mall to the finish line**

above his head and achieving the goal he had been training for of being the first full costume runner to cross the finishing line. Rumour had it that Greg had run the whole 26 1/2 miles in this surreal way, his energy and enthusiasm captivating the famous crowds that make the London Marathon such a unique event. Experiencing the symbiotic relationship that develops every year between runners and spectators - where the inspirer becomes inspired - is truly an extraordinary phenomenon.

London Marathon contributions underpin our core funding and we are enormously grateful to our valiant runners and their generous sponsors for their tremendous fundraising efforts that it is anticipated will yield over £90,000. Nearly all places were filled within 2 weeks of being advertised with 78 runners on the starting line, including a team of 9 from the army running in memory of David Harry.

Our appreciation again to Kate and Robbi Fox our official photographers and our 14 stunning CRY heart costume runners, now in their third year, who are getting accustomed to being called tomatoes, apples, plums and cherries and are proving to be an established part of the kaleidoscope of costumes of this major colourful event.

We again had the inestimable advantage of being able to offer all our participants a reviving leg massage at our stall set out by tree XYZ, where we were able to enjoy hearing them regale their humorous and heroic

**Photographer Robi promises this was NOT a staged photo!**

tales of training and accomplishment. Greg's valedictory comment of "an absolutely fantastic day" encapsulated the feelings of us all.

A really special thank you to those 25 runners who not only ran but were part of our research initiative orchestrated by Dr Greg Whyte evaluating cardiac function in relation to running a marathon. This research was linked with a project run by Cancer UK. These special volunteers had ECG/Echo and blood taken not only pre-race at our reception on the Saturday, but



**Jan Forster giving an ECHO to a CRY Marathon runner**

also immediately after they had finished. Many expressed how important to them it was to have the opportunity to help in this way, and it is a very sad coincidence that an apparently fit and healthy runner did die during the event. Hopefully this research will contribute to the understanding of why such tragedies happen.

Congratulations to CRY's cardiologist and Trustee Dr Sanjay Sharma for having another important research paper published, this time in the highly prestigious Journal of American Cardiology (JAC). Sanjay says, "This is the first study that has defined the upper limits of normal in adolescent athletes giving us a gold standard to enable differentiation on diagnosis." If you would like a copy of the article please contact the CRY office.



**Sanjay being interviewed**

The British Heart Foundation have had 3 consecutive research papers printed in recent months (copies enclosed) on Sudden Adult Death Syndrome asking whether new statistics could be the tip of the iceberg; whether taking over-the-counter remedies for common complaints such as hay fever or indigestion can induce potentially fatal arrhythmias in some people; and highlight-

ing a test for risk that is being developed at Papworth Hospital. The BHF circulated a Press Release with CRY as the referral charity which has kept our phones zinging, provoking ongoing press interest in our work, culminating in numerous articles, TV and radio interviews. Copies of the articles are available via the BHF link on the CRY Homepage on our website.



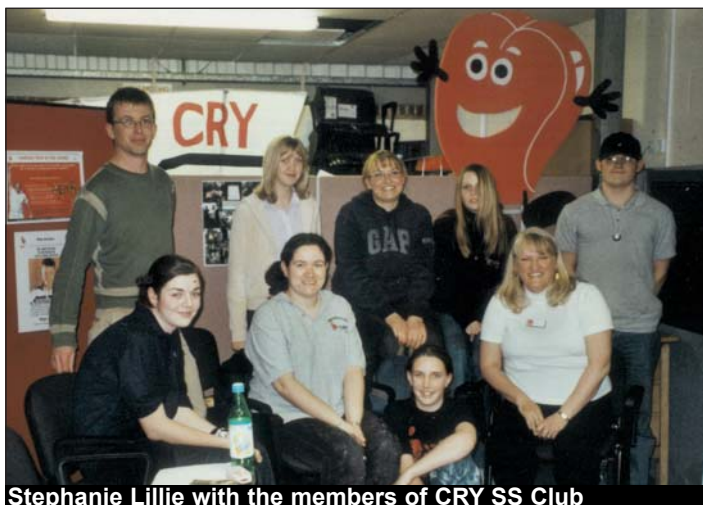
**Mat crossing the Sahara**

Mat Wilson has just completed his M.Phil in Left Ventricular Morphology and Function in Elite British Athletes. This is the first CRY sponsored post graduate qualification and was funded - year one, by the Nigel Foster Memorial Fund and year two, by the Andy Gard Memorial Fund.

Mat Wilson recently completed the Marathon des Sables running for CRY across the Sahara Desert. After a terrible fall down a sand dune from a height of 30 meters it was suspected that he had broken his leg. He insisted on completing the event with a knee that had been sprained so badly that it had ballooned to twice its normal size, and necessitated the use of a stick for support to complete the course. To read the full account of Mat's experiences go to [www.c-r-y.org.uk/Marathon\\_Des\\_Sables.htm](http://www.c-r-y.org.uk/Marathon_Des_Sables.htm)

I would like to take this opportunity of welcoming 3 new Divisional Representatives, Keeley Ashley, (sharing duties for the South of England with Sally Reid,) Dee Shackleton (with responsibilities for the Middle of England) and John Lundy who is replacing Sinead Chapman in Northern Ireland. Personal problems have meant that Sinead has had to withdraw from this position and I would like to say how grateful we are to her for all the efforts she has made for CRY at such a very difficult time.

Our CRY Surgery Supporter's Club was grateful to have a visit at their meeting in May from Stefanie Lillie, Cardiac Support Adviser for the British Heart Foundation. Stefanie's interesting and entertaining talk on the problems of rehabilitation after surgery was enthusiastically received by her young audience, and she in turn remarked on how much she had enjoyed speaking to such a unique and vigorous group.



**Stephanie Lillie with the members of CRY SS Club**

In February 2002 I was invited to a meeting with the Chairman of the Coroners Review, Tom Luce and his team, and even though young sudden cardiac death only represents a tiny proportion of the total number of death certifications, with great courtesy and consideration I was asked to highlight for the investigating team the difficulties that our families face with the current coroner's system.

My views on behalf of CRY on the systems currently in place for the investigation and certification of death were submitted after studying the consultation paper by the fundamental review of death certification and the coroner services published last summer. The details of my report were then forwarded to the Shipman team to be placed in the public domain as part of the material forming evidence for Dame Janet Smith's judicial inquiry.

The Review of Coroner Services has now been completed and if all the excellent recommendations are implemented will undoubtedly have a dramatic effect not only on the efficiency of the system but most importantly on those that are affected. Kind or harsh management at this time is something that has an impact on individuals for the rest of their lives and it is reassuring that the consequences of how families are dealt with has now been so carefully considered.

Finally a special thank you for the initiative of Mark and Debbie Loveday who were able to arrange through Jane and Clive Woodward the donation of an England shirt to CRY signed by his famously successful rugby team. Mark and Debbie, who joined CRY after the tragic death of their baby son Chad, organised a raffle of "the shirt" that was drawn at Twickenham on March 22 after the triumphant England v Scotland 4 Nations Rugby match.

This project not only raised £6,688 but also made a terrific contribution to our raising awareness campaign. Over 3344 tickets were sold, including many both through our website and at the ground on match day. The interest generated in being associated with such a high profile event has wide-spread ramifications and again underlines how - just by raising awareness of young sudden cardiac death - young lives can be saved.



**Captain Martin Johnson, all six foot seven of him, drawing the winning raffle ticket for the CRY rugby shirt**