

**REPORT OF THE MEETING OF THE EAST OF
SCOTLAND BRANCH OF ATAXIA UK
LASSWADE HIGH SCHOOL CENTRE,
SATURDAY 6 SEPTEMBER 2008**



<http://www.ataxia-east-scotland.org.uk>

Present: Derek Main (Chairman), Liz & Pete Dalby, Penny Gardner, John Reid, Susan McVicker (speaker) & Frances Wright

Apologies: Andrea Bothwell, Ronnie Brown, George Foulkes MSP, Liz Griffin, Anne Green, Andy Hogg, John Hunter, Janice Heath, Jim Shepherd, Alan Smith, Richard & Anne-Marie Thomson, Tom & Doreen Vandeppear and Professor Will.

1. Welcome and Minutes of last Meeting

Derek welcomed everyone and we all made the usual introductions. Susan McVicker lives in Bonnyrigg and works from home providing beauty therapy reflexology & aromatherapy treatments. Penny apologised that she has not yet typed the report of the AGM held on 10 May 2008. Derek introduced Susan McVicker, our speaker for the day – this arrangement was kindly made by the school

2. Speaker - Susan McVicker, Aromatherapy and Reflexology

Susan said she would talk first about aromatherapy and asked if anyone has had treatments. The oils are very potent can be used medicinally for variety of therapeutic relief purposes as well as emotionally. Floral oils can lift emotions eg rose oil (which is very expensive) only use a tiny little amount. Come in 10ml bottles which give 100s of treatments (mix the essential oil with a base oil before treatment, 2 or 3 drops to 100ml). The oils are absorbed through your skin into bloodstream. Tea tree oil is antiseptic, helps kill infections – even kitchen work surfaces. OK for bathing cats & dogs – use very diluted eg one or drops in the water (less is best). It is good for insect bites too. The best oil for warding off bugs is citronella.

It is very important to use a very tiny amount. For example lavender oil can help you sleep - put a drop on a tissue and waft it a good distance away – or one drop on a cotton wool ball on the radiator. Don't throw it all over your pillow, your brain will be over stimulated and you'll wake up with a headache. Citrus oils are invigorating – good for a massage if you are achy or sore. Need to take height and weight into consideration – quantity needs to be adjusted.

If essential oils are used properly by a qualified therapist, they can be very effective. If using them yourself, be very careful and sparing with quantities. Maximum 2 drops around the home in minimum egg cup full of water.

Susan got into using the oils after she had a very premature baby at 24 weeks. He weighed 1lb 4oz – the odds were against him. He celebrated his 10th birthday last May. You have got to understand how oils work eg people with diabetes & epilepsy have to be careful; medication you are taking may have a reaction etc.

Susan then gave Liz a treatment on her hands and Liz felt a definite benefit. Susan used a different oil on each hand – a body shop one first, then a more expensive pure aromatherapy oil. The Body Shop one left more of a residue and was also quite strongly perfumed. She then gave John Reid a hand treatment too, to improve his circulation. Frances and Derek followed. Various treatments and their benefits were discussed.

Susan gets 'Muscletone' from Iso in Newington, a rub which has glucosamine & mussel extract and she charges £15 for a back massage and £25 for a full body massage - prices for hands, feet, neck shoulders on quotation. The Branch committee has agreed that 1 free treatment for each person with ataxia would be paid for by branch and available before the next meeting on 15 November eg 11 -1. People can put their names forward & say what they want done. Foot to knee takes about 20 minutes. Hands to shoulders takes 15 – 20 minutes. If treating head, neck shoulders with oil she will need a screen for privacy. Head, neck & shoulders without oil through a T shirt is quicker and easier. Back, neck & shoulders takes about 30 minutes.

NB Because the report of this meeting didn't go out in time, and Susan was not well on the date of our November meeting these treatments will now be available before our meeting on 24 January 2009. Alternatively, local members can contract Susan directly to arrange a treatment in their own homes. Phone number is 454 9480, email Soosin.mcvicker@btinternet.com

3. Treasurer's Report

Since May income has been approximately £216 including regular standing orders from Mr & Mrs Smith and Claire Sheppard, collecting cans from Lasswade and members' subscriptions.

Expenses included a donation of £1500 to Head Office of Ataxia UK for research, £50 to the Seagull Trust (which arranged the barge trip at the Falkland Wheel), £70 social expenses and £12 for teas and coffees at meeting. £1,632 in total.

The bank statement on 31st August showed a balance of £1256.93, with £33 miscellaneous income (received today) still to be added.

4. Social Events

The Falkirk wheel trip on Sunday 10th August was a great success. Derek, Frances & her niece, Penny, Gus, Liz, Pete (and grand daughters) Anne-Marie & Richard came. A new member also came along to say hello but did not come on the boat.

John Reid has a lot of 1p 2p 5p pieces to pay in. Frances advised him to use the coinstar machine in local supermarket or bag it up and local shop keepers often happy to take it (they have to pay the bank for small change).

We are planning a meal after the next branch meeting on 15th November at the Laird & Dog in Lasswade. This was excellent last year, good value for money and staff very friendly and helpful.

5. Date of Next Meetings

The next Branch meeting will be held on Saturday 15 November 2008 at Lasswade. We are planning a meal at the Laird and Dog again, immediately after the November meeting.

YOUR BRANCH COMMITTEE

Chairman: Derek Main		0131 477 4371 derek@ataxia-east-scotland.org.uk	
Secretary and Vice-Chair: Penny Gardner		0131 332 5218 penny@ataxia-east-scotland.org.uk	
Treasurer: Frances Wright		0131 555 5665 frances@ataxia-east-scotland.org.uk	
Committee Member: John Reid		johnreid@ataxia-east-scotland.org.uk	
Committee Member: Liz Dalby liz@ataxia-east-scotland.org.uk		Email committee Member: Susan McPheat	

ADDRESS FOR MAILING:

East of Scotland Branch of Ataxia UK,
Penny Gardner, Branch Secretary
3 Craigleith Gardens
Edinburgh EH4 3JW

USEFUL WEB LINKS

If there are any suggested additions to this list please let us know

www.ataxia-east-scotland.org.uk: our Branch website

www.ataxia.org.uk the Ataxia UK website, it has many good links.

www.ohbother.co.uk: by an Ataxian and full of very useful information.

www.bbc.co.uk/ouch for an inside view on disability news.

www.evoc.org.uk: for local disability information in Edinburgh.

www.digg.org.uk: Glasgow's online resource for disability information.

www.gig.org.uk Genetic Interest Group

www.matchinghouses.com: re: accessible holiday house swaps.

www.skill.org.uk information & advice for disabled students

www.simr.org.uk/pages/news/index.html seriously ill for medical research

E MAILED REPORTS

If you would prefer an e mail instead of a hard copy, please let us know your e mail address:

Name _____ Telephone No. (optional) _____

E Mail address _____

Please post to the Secretary, Penny Gardner, at 3 Craigleith Gardens, Edinburgh EH4 3JW or e mail penny@ataxia-east-scotland.org.uk

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MEMBERS VOLUNTARY SUBSCRIPTIONS.

Please send a contribution if you can - £5 per household is suggested,

Please send a cheque, payable to East of Scotland Branch of Ataxia UK to:
Frances Wright, Flat 8, 25 Queen Charlotte Street, Edinburgh EH6 6AX