

Silver Star

MATERNITY FUND

SUPPORTING OXFORD
MATERNITY SERVICES

SUPPORTING
OXFORD
MATERNITY
SERVICES

50th Anniversary of
the Women's Centre

An *inspirational*
surrogacy story

Fundraising
efforts!



PROUD TO BE PART OF

**Oxford
Hospitals
Charity**

REGISTERED CHARITY NO. 1175809

Welcome

to this edition of The Silverstar Newsletter, supporting Oxford Maternity Services

This July it was the 50th Anniversary of the Women's Centre. The management team wanted to mark the occasion for our hardworking staff and provided an ice cream van which proved very popular!

Our very own Professor Chris Redman, who was a young Doctor when the Women's Centre first opened, came along and made a short speech, then cut the wonderful cake kindly provided by The Happy Cakes Company, along with Professor Meghana Pandit, Chief Executive Officer from Oxford University Hospitals Trust, and Sam Foster, Chief Nurse, Catherine Greenwood Clinical Director & Steve Bell, OSM. It was lovely to celebrate the day and spoil all our wonderful staff with a treat.



Thank you

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Emma & JP Bond – in lieu of sending Christmas cards

The Dunn family - in lieu of sending Christmas cards

James West – In appreciation

The Fox Family - in lieu of sending Christmas cards

Amy Prior – In appreciation

David & El Harvey – Celebrating Silver Star twins James & Fraser 9th birthday

Mat & Alex Hunter
– In appreciation

The Jardine family – In lieu of sending Christmas cards

Claire Steward

Paul Burness

Andrea A

Debbie Lock

Anne Migels-Bols

Theatres, Women's Centre

Freya & Annie

Iris Burness

The Wilcock family

Sam & Aitana Guest – celebrating the birth of their baby boy

Kay & Tony Guest - "Our precious Silver Star baby, Sam, (27/2/92)

has now become a father to Finn (16/6/22). Our eternal thanks to

Prof Redman and his wonderful Silver Star team"

The Cheshire Federation of WI's Clare Mackintosh

Mrs B Gant

Douglass family

Dr M Murphy

We hope you like our updated logo and newsletter. We continue to be really proud to support the Silver Star Unit, as we have done for over 40 years now! We are also excited that we are now able to offer extra

help across the wider maternity services in Oxford & beyond, meaning even more families will benefit from our extra support. If you are at the JR, do pop in and say hello at our new office, by the lifts near the delivery suite.

JANET AND DAVID – *Thanks a Million!*

It was nearly 30 years ago that Janet and David Goldsworthy joined the Silver Star family after an emergency transfer from a neighbouring hospital. I met them then for the very first time. This was their second child after the earlier successful delivery of Rachel.

I had no idea that this began a story, which would continue for the next nearly 30 years until now. In those first, fraught days, everything possible was done for Emma, who however was too small when she was born, to be able to survive.



There followed many months even years for Janet and David to come to terms with their loss and to try again. The decision came with pain trepidation and uncertainty. But it was the right one. Now Janet and David have two beautiful grown-up daughters, Rachel and Jennie. Behind each, is a helter-skelter story of the sort which will be familiar to some of you. A story of perseverance, faith, hope in an uncertain future, and of anxiety and bravery. Now they know and we can know that it has been a good story.

But then, what are our lives other than a series of stories? This, and others as complicated and difficult, are so important and moving for all of us in Silver Star

But this story is bigger. Janet and David have, since then, worked long, hard and caringly to contribute to our Silver Star society, antedating even Maggie our hard-working and long serving secretary/organiser.

Over the years the society has changed. Some changes have kept us up to date and most important in touch with previous and new Silver Star families. Other changes have been enforced by institutional rules or changes in the way maternity care is delivered, which have made it perhaps less easy to celebrate our achievements. But the

Goldsworthys have helped to sustain the Silver Star story and keep it alive for new, younger families, who in their own ways have needed the support and skills that we give.

So we are still here and still hearing your stories, sharing your growing families and benefiting from your support; for which Janet has worked long and hard, with Maggie.

Until now you may not have known that our all-important newsletter, which has continued to come through, thick and thin, with more or less news, continually, is largely owing to the writing and preparation of Janet. Now, after all these years, she is stepping down. This is the last newsletter that will come from her keyboard, and elegant writing.

Each issue has been a beacon to her continuing commitment to what Silver Star care means. Janet has many precious skills. Her heart is big. Her empathy is generous and, in addition, she shares what she gives in all that she writes.

Current readers will find it hard to believe some of our older stories: how we used to raise our own huge marquees on the front lawn for our annual fetes, which no



longer take place; how the RAF Red Devils parachuted in on us; how we organised pony rides and model railway rides; not to mention the city's fire engines for inspection, while the Kennington Silver Band played, as if there were no tomorrow

Behind Janet, David has always had a state-of-the-art camera to document our many and various ambitious activities; and a fund of IT expertise. David was an early Chairman of our committee, and set up our very first PC upon which our membership was organised. Each big event involved a massive mail out, which involved stuffing raffle tickets into hundreds of envelopes and sticking on hundreds of stamps, when the hospital post room was not able (/willing) to help. David reminds me of hard and long hours that it sometimes took

Thank you

from Chris Redman and all of the Silver Star Society, Past and Present



**www.silverstaroxford.org/donate
or scan the OR code.**



Bonar Family

My world crashed when pregnancy problems started whilst in France with baby number two. At only 10 weeks I was told there was a blood clot 10cm long, bigger than the baby, within the womb. I was mostly bed bound throughout, from pain and the relentless bleeding. Every time I was in and out of hospital, I was expecting the worst. Life was at an all-time low. It was tough not being at home for my lively two-year-old, and seeing him screaming when he had to leave me on the ward alone. But the joy he got from the kindness of all the ward staff on Level 6 and seeing the Christmas tree everyday made his memory of it all so much easier.

I had to get beyond 23 weeks; it was a long journey. I spent over 3 months as an inpatient on Level 6. It didn't get any easier, being told time after time that there was a fifty-fifty chance of losing my baby. I had to remain strong or I would go under. I taught myself how to knit on the ward, and was frantically knitting mini booties for my baby who was due to come out at 33 weeks.

Someone was looking over me when I was discharged home for Christmas, and even made it into the New Year before being readmitted on January 2nd. The day before my scheduled c section, my waters were leaking with meconium. I then had an emergency c section.



Hearing Raphael's cry and his warm soft peachy face next to mine was the most magical feeling I would ever experience. He was a fighter from day one. We only stayed three weeks on the SCBU, he didn't need oxygen and he was even breast feeding. He was a real fighter. HE kept ME strong, just like my oldest boy kept me strong when I felt low on the ward. I will forever remember the long scary nights where the midwives would hold my hand and be there for me when I felt very alone.

It was a long battle to feel mentally like myself again but I do now, and even feel stronger as a result. But I know without each and every one on Level 6 and MAU, I wouldn't have made it mentally either, so thank you Silver Star for being there for me throughout a very difficult and long journey for me and my family. I will be forever grateful and hold you in my heart.

-Melissa Bonar

Sheep Street Market Stall raises £5000

Following a very difficult pregnancy where the Silver Star team supported us throughout, our beautiful daughter Aliyana was born in December 2021, a precious gift to our family and a little sister for Reuben.

Myself along with Carol Matthews (my Mum), Matthew (my Brother) and family friend Rita decided to help raise awareness and start fundraising for the Silver Star Maternity Fund.



We began appealing for donations to start a stall at the weekly Sheep Street Market in Bicester. We started in January 2022 and so far have raised a total of just under £5000 which is amazing. We are so grateful for any donations from other supporters to keep us going. Books, toys and good quality gift items are accepted and can be dropped off to the stall on Fridays. We plan to continue our fundraising to help support Silver Star and Maternity services in Oxford

- Hollie & Simon Benson



Pre-eclampsia reared its ugly head much earlier

Back in 1997, my husband and I were thrilled to be expecting our first child, totally unaware of pre-eclampsia and its serious consequences. At 28 weeks gestation, the signs of pre-eclampsia were starting to show and I was admitted to hospital assigned to the excellent care of Professor Redman and the Silver Star Team. At 30+5, my baby was not moving and I had an emergency caesarean. Our beautiful baby girl Eleanor Charlotte was born, weighing 1.035 kg. Eleanor had a relatively short stay of six weeks in SCBU, and developed normally.

When expecting our second child, I was immediately referred to Professor Redman and had continuous scans and monitoring. Unfortunately, pre-eclampsia reared its ugly head much earlier. After another emergency caesarean, our beautiful baby boy, James, was born weighing a mere 600 grams, having obviously been severely affected by the pre-eclampsia. James was in SCBU for 5.5 months and was given a 50 percent chance of survival. Despite many lows and coming home on oxygen for the first year of his life, he has thrived.

Five years later Professor Redman looked after us when I was pregnant for the third time. This time I had a planned caesarean at 36 weeks and gave birth to another beautiful boy, Oliver, who weighed a hefty 2142 kg! Then, just before celebrating my 40th birthday, we had a surprise natural conception. Once again, pre-eclampsia appeared very early on and at about 25 weeks we were told our little boy would probably not make it. Once again, I was admitted to hospital at 28 weeks and had an emergency caesarean at 33+3 and our beautiful baby Sebastian was born. He weighed 1262 kg and spent 6 weeks in SCBU.

Needless to say, our family is complete. We can never thank both Silver Star and Special Care Baby Unit enough for giving us the gift of our four beautiful children. We wanted to share our story with you because when times are hard it's so uplifting to be able to read the stories of others and see the positive outcomes. We have recently had the proud parent moments of seeing both Eleanor and James graduate. Oliver and Sebastian are still studying.

Thank you for reading our journey and we hope this helps others in a similar situation.

- Lisa Thomas



A Star is Born, an *inspirational* surrogacy story



When midwife Melanie Kirkpatrick, offered to carry a surrogate pregnancy for her friends, nobody could have predicted the challenges which lay ahead. Her friends, Favell and Mehrdad Mansour-Tehrani, had struggled for years with infertility, when Melanie

conceived with their last frozen embryo. However, by nineteen weeks Mel was beginning to develop pre-eclampsia and at just over twenty-four weeks, she was taken to the John Radcliffe hospital and the care of the Silver Star team.

"It's a new situation," said the Consultant, ***"When the mother-at-risk and the mother-to-be are different."***

Mel was determined to reach viability, but when she became very unwell with HELLP syndrome, two lives were hanging in the balance. Silver Star stabilised Melanie for a little more critical time, until tiny Sofia was delivered, by emergency c-section at 25+4 weeks, weighing 520 grams (1lb 2oz). When Melanie and Favell, and both their husbands, saw Sofia in the Special Care Baby Unit, they were overwhelmed by her size and feared she wouldn't survive. Astonishingly, with her tenacity and stunning care from SCBU this tiny scrap overcame many hurdles to go home after five months, just before Christmas.

The result of this rollercoaster ride is a funny, intelligent and uniquely special young lady whom her family love dearly. This year Sofia turned eighteen, still petite, beautiful and incredibly determined. None will ever forget the life changing care they received at the John Radcliffe hospital.



- by Favell Mansour-Tehrani.



Over £600 raised



I am very proud to say that I completed the Reading half marathon in two hours and five minutes. I have raised £600 which I really hope can help to support the team to whom my family and I are so grateful. My son, Grayson's birthday is Christmas Eve.

At this time of year more than ever we are increasingly thoughtful about his birth and incredibly grateful to the team for delivering him safely and then saving my life after a post-partum haemorrhage.

The team acted quickly, with such professionalism and kindness. We are very aware that without their skills and knowledge life could be very different for us. On that day the team was led by Dr Brenda Kelly; what an amazing doctor she is, her skill saved my life. My anaesthetist Mike Raffles was such a support to me and made me feel safe in the scariest moments.

Our midwife Laura (I'm afraid I don't remember her surname) showed my husband and son such kindness and reassurance while I was in theatre. She looked after them both when I couldn't and I will always be grateful to her. My family and I will always be thankful to the team who looked after us.

- Helen and Ryan Osborne

The Fantastic Five - raised over £10,000

Many thanks to our London Marathon team of five, for their grit and determination in running the London Marathon for us on Sunday October 2nd 2022 and to all who donated, and supported them. Thanks go to Emily Davis, Lucy Brooks, John Dingle, Tim Durkan and Claire Hutt.



2023 London Marathon places available now. Contact Maggie for details.

Well done! To all those who took part in Oxford Half-Marathon raising £3,900 so far...



Level 6 Team
 Flora Shore
 Claire Hordern
 Aaron Lozano
 Joshua Lee-Tritton
 Hollie Stokes
 Maddie Hall
 Amy Swinson

Individual supporters also running for Silver Star:
 Rebekah White, Rob Wilcock,
 Ruth Daykin, Jim English,
 Debbie McIntosh.

2023 Oxford Half Marathon places available now. Contact Maggie for details.

Maggie receives a generous donation from the Mock Mayor Group in Woodstock presented by Phoebe, who was a Silver Star baby.

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Oxford Hospitals Charity

REGISTERED CHARITY NO. 1175809



Silver Star Experiences

By Clare Mackintosh – Silver Star Patron and bestselling author

My oldest Silver Star baby will turn sixteen this autumn. This makes no sense, because five minutes ago he was six, he was six months, he was just seconds old. Five minutes ago, he was sleeping in my arms, and now he is towering over the toaster, slotting in half a packet of crumpets. I've heard people say they feel old when their children hit these milestones, but I don't feel old, I just feel adrift. Confused, as though I've been found wandering from a residential unit and need gently steering back to my room. How can it be sixteen years since I lay in my bed at the JR, holding my bump and praying for a miracle?

That miracle is now turning sixteen. Sixteen! It's the biggest milestone, I think - bigger than becoming a teenager. More exciting than eighteen, because at eighteen the newly acquired freedom comes with a side order of adulthood, with all its pressures. But sixteen... oh, sweet sixteen! A sixteen-year-old can leave home.



They can get married (albeit with their parents' permission). They can have sex, drive a moped, join the army, consent to medical procedures. In Wales, where we now live, sixteen marks the age at which they can legally leave education behind. They are, to all intents and purposes, an adult.

'Obviously we're not actually going to let you do any of that,' I tell my son, after he's told me all the ways in which he could legally mark his birthday.

'What can I do, then?' he says.
 'Um...' I look at the list he's googled.
 'You can vote in local elections.'
 He stares at me. 'Is that it?'
 'Pretty much.'
 'That's rubbish. What's the point of turning sixteen, if you can't actually do anything?'
 'I guess it's better than not turning sixteen,' I say softly, and we share an unspoken moment, thinking of his brother, of how they would be celebrating together, if he had lived. He pulls me in for a hug. My head rests on his shoulder, and I feel adrift again for a moment. He's no longer a child, but an adult, his arms strong around mine. But then he releases me, and I see the same smile I've known for sixteen years. I see the same dark eyes seeking out mine, just as they did in the Special Care Baby Unit, all those years ago.

Our children change, but they stay the same, too. They are always our babies, no matter how big they get. Always our babies, no matter what birthday they reached.

Baby Names

**Aliyana Marjorie
Pamela Benson**

Born 1st December 2021
7lbs ½ oz

**Tyler Matthew
Gerring**

Born on 8th December 2021
8lb

**Evelynn Anne
Kathleen McBurnie**

Born on 18th December 2021
7lb 6oz

**Daisy Anne
Stevens**

Born on 18th February 2022
7lbs 2oz

**Mia Rose
Whicker**

Born on 15th June 2022
6lb 12 ¾ oz

**Jacob Christopher
Jeffrey Allen-Loy**

Born on 14th June 2022
8lb 10 ½ oz

**Zack Blake
Hari Merrill**

Born on 21st December 2021
8lb 8oz

**Georgia Kate
Wilkins**

Born 11th January 2022
5lbs 10oz

**Clara Marie
Cresswell**

Born on 12th May 2022
6lbs 14oz

**Cory
McIntyre-Patrick**

Born 14th July 2022
6lb 9oz

**Elsie
Merry**

Born on 19th July 2022
8lb 10 oz

**Antonia Nancy
Peggy Twynam**

Born on 10th February 2022
8lbs 5oz

**Jasper Peter
Walmsley**

Born 18th February 2022
4.105 Kg

**Jacob Christopher
Jeffrey Allen-Loy**

Born on 14th June 2022
8lb 10 ½ oz

**Alfred William
Garrard Chamberlain**

Born on 28th July 2022
3.915 KG

**Charlotte Sophia
Wilkins**

Born on 17th April 2019
5lbs 9oz