

# Silver Star

**MATERNITY FUND**

SUPPORTING OXFORD  
MATERNITY SERVICES

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OXFORD  
MATERNITY  
SERVICES**

**Milicia Redfearn, Acting Head  
of Midwifery runs the  
London Marathon for Silver Star**

**Hollie Benson and family raise  
over £14,000 for Silver Star**

**Stowaway Festival team  
supports Silver Star**



**PROUD TO BE PART OF**

**Oxford  
Hospitals  
Charity**

REGISTERED CHARITY NO. 1175809

# Welcome

to this edition of The Silver Star Newsletter,  
supporting Oxford Maternity Services



This year Silver Star has been able to greatly improve the facilities offered to our families, and staff. We would like to thank all our friends and supporters for making this possible. Your devotion and loyalty to Silver Star as well as your generosity, is appreciated by many people.

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We now have the Silver Star logo on the lift doors from Level 1 up to Level 7. We hope this will raise awareness of the Silver Star Maternity Fund to all visitors and staff.

## Contact Details

Silver Star Maternity Fund, Level 2, Women's Centre, John Radcliffe Hospital, Oxford, OX3 9DU



[silverstaroxford.org](http://silverstaroxford.org)



[silverstar.society@ouh.nhs.uk](mailto:silverstar.society@ouh.nhs.uk)



01865 221718



@silverstarbabies



@SilverStarOxford



PROUD TO BE PART OF  
**Oxford  
Hospitals  
Charity**

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# Thank you

## Donations & Fundraisers

Caroline McDonnell

Karen Reaney

JDN Clearance

MK Common

Mr & Mrs McCarthy

Mr & Mrs Hancock

Sophie Halls

Margaret Norridge

Matilda Bartlett

The Moore's Friends & Family

Davie Armour

A. Sullivan

Bicester Midwives

Blackpit Brewery

Paola, Francesco, Giovanni &

Silvia Fattori

To all our wonderful knitters out there who supply us with blankets, cardigans and knitted toys:

Irene Hutchinson

Kathleen Monk

Veronica Lewer

Sandra Warland

Diana Bollard

Sheila Merritt

Hayley Simmonds

Diana Dore

Patricia Haddock

Ruth Moss

Jane Wilks

Joolz Mulcay

Kim Treadwell

Francesca Holland

Beryl Belt

June Hudson

Pam & Paul Futter along with sister Margaret & friend Robyn in Australia!!

# An almost empty nest *by Clare Mackintosh*

**My children are almost adults. 'The days are long, but the years are short', people tell you, when life is nothing but breastfeeding and sleepless nights, and you grit your teeth and silently say 'oh do piss off', because frankly the years are feeling pretty bloody relentless too.**

But they're right, of course. The years go by in a heartbeat, and suddenly your children are learning to drive and considering career options, and life is so very, very different.

My nest isn't empty, not yet. This is the precursor to the empty nest; the taste of what's to come. And I wonder if I should be feeling excited for my freedom. I wonder if I should be planning cruises and enrolling on Open University courses, instead of standing in my empty kitchen reaching for the echoes of conversation. Will it always be this quiet from now on?

I had my children in quick succession: three within fifteen months. Hard work, of course, but how brilliant, I thought, to be done with nappies so quickly. What luck to be able to rid myself of the stairgates and car seats; no need to stash them in the loft until child number two (and then three) needed them. It never once crossed my mind that this parenting conveyor belt, which swept all three children so swiftly through each stage, would eventually sweep them right past me.

Eighteen years is a long time to be a parent, isn't it? It's an entire identity, acquired in layers wrapped so tightly around you it's hard to remember what lies underneath. I'm many things besides a parent. I'm a wife, a sister, a daughter. I'm an author, a columnist, a memoirist. I'm a wild swimmer, a gardener, a reader. But

for almost two decades, nothing has been as all-consuming as being a mother. I was without children for far longer than I've been with them, and yet when I try to remember what that felt like, it's like trying to catch fog. I try to make meals for two, yet still end up with leftovers; I take the covers off cushions to make up a full laundry load. I spend hours on travel sites, hunting down holidays that will tempt the teens to indulge us with their presence. The fact of the matter is: I miss them, and they haven't even gone yet.

This feeling won't last, I know. My life is full, and I have plans for the future, and this is an adjustment, that's all. So, while I'm adapting to this new phase of life, I resist the temptation to text the teens yet again, and when they decide not to come home for the weekend after all, I say 'no worries, have fun!' Because this is the deal, isn't it? That's our job. We raise them to be independent. We raise them to fly away.

**Our patron, Clare Mackintosh, is a former police officer and bestselling author. Her children were born at the John Radcliffe under the care of Silver Star. In March 2024, Clare will publish *I Promise It Won't Always Hurt Like This* – 18 Assurances on Grief.**



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or scan the OR code.



# Inspirational *Fundraising*

## Level 5 staff room - With thanks to

# *Blackpit Brewery*

Duncan Wheeler of Blackpit Brewery near Silverstone writes :

"Back in 2014, whilst we were expecting our first child, my wife Anne and I encountered complications with the pregnancy. Following our diagnosis, the care and support offered to us by the Silver Star Society was critical to helping us navigate our way through this incredibly difficult time. We are lucky today to have a healthy, happy 6-year-old boy named Huey. We will be forever thankful to all those at the Silver Star Society and the team at the John Radcliffe Women's Centre."

The support from Anne and Duncan Wheeler, along with their colleague Josh has been outstanding and we can't thank them enough. The recent donations of nearly £5000 from the Stowaway Festival & the Silverstone Woodlands events have been used to upgrade the Level 5 staff room which now has a lovely new sofa, coffee tables, dining table & chairs where our staff can enjoy their much-needed breaks.



Annabel England, Level 5 Manager says:

**'The new furniture and other items will improve staff well-being and mental health, allowing a peaceful and fully equipped rest area for staff to enjoy their breaks away from the ward area.'**

## Bicester *Market*

This wonderful group of people have supported Silver Star over the last 2 years by running a market stall in Bicester most Fridays as well as going to various village fetes to raise funds. So far, they have raised £14,800 - we are so grateful to them all.

Hollie Benson writes:

**'How thankful we are to all our supporters and for all the donations of goods. We continue to raise money with love filled hearts, for all that the Silver Star Maternity Fund did for our baby girl Aliyana. She continues to thrive in life and is growing in to a beautiful, confident, funny and loving little girl. We remain forever grateful for everything the Silver Star did for us!'**



*Well done!* Our wonderful marathon team; Sarah Harries, Angela Bugden, Fiona Perella, Joe Darby, Milica Redfearn and Heather Marsh...



...who collectively raised over **£12,000.**



## Oxford Half-Marathon Team

We had four wonderful runners taking part in the Oxford Half Marathon on 15th October. So far they have raised over £2000 which will go towards improving patient areas, staff education and equipment. Thank you Rob Wilcock, Will & Kirsty Jones and Tim Pegg for your amazing support.



## London Marathon 2024

We have four confirmed runners. They are:  
Our very own Acting Head of Midwifery, Hannah Oosthuizen  
Ed Rimmer (Silver Star baby)  
Reuben Muston

*Thank you*



**How Silver Star has funded this year thanks to your *support***

## Blenheim

## *Community rooms*

### The Ocean Room

## *a way through trauma*

With your help we have gone further still. Now we can offer a non-clinical room on Level 7, specifically for appointments for women who have gone through a traumatic birth, or experienced previous traumatic life events. Previous trauma can impact feelings about pregnancy and upcoming birth. This sometimes results in mental health issues such as post-traumatic stress disorder, severe anxiety and fear of birth.



The Ocean Room aims to provide a safe, welcoming environment to enable women and their birthing partners to feel comfortable enough to express their feelings during a vulnerable time in their lives. A great deal of thought has been given to choosing furnishings, lighting and pictures to promote a sense of privacy and safety.



The room will be also used for the birth reflections service, which is a postnatal debriefing appointment for families who have gone through a traumatic or intense birth experience, and need help to put closure on the experience.

These rooms are used by our Blenheim Community team to see patients, both ante-natal and post-natal. They had significant damage to the paintwork due to many changes and were looking really tired. They have now been redecorated and have new lighting. Silver Star paid for the artwork which has installed in the corridor and two patient rooms to give a brighter, more comfortable environment.



### Level 6 Patient

## *Well-being room*

In addition to the Level 5 Staff Room, we have been able to create a well-being room for patients on Level 6. Level 6 is an antenatal ward which gives a temporary home to women who face a long stay on the ward, away from family and friends. The purpose of the well-being room is to offer them and their families a quiet space, a 'home from home', where snacks and food can be prepared. A table, chairs and a sofa have been provided to allow relaxation. Soft furnishings, cushions, plants and crockery to enhance the space, are on order.



# The Isis Community Group

Silver Star supported the Isis community midwives based in Florence Park, East Oxford with a new kettle, milk frother & storage units.

Amanda Crudington, Isis Manager said:

**'This will make the staff happier; being able to have a hot drink, with their breaks, which in turn will have a positive effect on the mothers, babies and families and have a very positive impact on care. The new storage will aid communication between staff and provide a safe place to leave items. It will make the office much more efficient.'**



## Thanks to Silver Star from the staff at the centre in Chipping Norton:

'Thank you so much for our new kettle, toaster and microwave. They are all being very well used! Here is a little picture of how we celebrate a birth at the Cotswold birth centre.' Silver Star also supported their open evening with cakes and goody bags. Thankful to the department for the care and support received, both 24 years ago and again recently.'

## Complicated Pregnancies by Dr Murphy

Silver Star supports research into many pregnancy problems. Over the years the assistance of women who have had complicated pregnancies and/or fertility difficulties has been relied upon for use in clinical studies. In 1991, with colleagues then in NDOG (now NDWRH) Dr Michael Murphy began studying some of the possible long-term health issues which may affect women who have had fertility problems and/or treatment for this. The study took place in Oxfordshire and West Berkshire.

It collected data from local hospital records covering the 1970's and 1980's, but linked those to the women's national health records continuously until 2013. So, any woman who sought assistance for infertility locally before 1990 may

have had their hospital records used in the above study, without being made aware of the research.

Since NDWRH believe that analysis of this data may still be useful for interpreting any risks associated with the modern forms of infertility treatment now used, as well as the underlying causes of subfertility, Dr Murphy wants to regain access to the data to do this.

However, Data Protection Legislation has changed since the study began, so the researchers must try to inform the women concerned that their hospital records may have been used

in this way, before being allowed to use the data.

If any woman wishes to object to this possible use of their historic records, or wants to know more about the study, please contact Dr Murphy: Telephone: 01865 872984. Email: Michael.murphy@retired.ox.ac.uk.



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or scan the OR code.

# Two generations of *Silver Star*

**Rebecca Edwards, Silver Star Mum and Grandma writes:**

'Here is my Silver Star baby with his Silver Star baby. Nathan born 22nd October 1999 and Roman born 31st May 2023. Both are truly amazing and we are so very thankful to the department for the care and support received, both 24 years ago and again recently.'



## Baby Names



Born on 26th October 2022  
3.79Kg



Born on 8th November 2022  
7lb 11oz



Born on 1st November 2022  
8lb 12oz



Born on 30th December 2022  
8lb 2oz



Born on the 4th January 2023  
7lb 5oz



Born on 6th January 2023  
2.21Kg



Born on 23rd January 2023  
905g



Born on 25th January 2023  
8lb 3oz



Born on 9th March 2023  
2740g



Born on 8th March 2023  
6lb 3oz



Born on 28th April 2023  
8lb 3oz



Born on 17th May 2023  
7lb 7oz



Born on 30th May 2023  
2.17Kg



Born on 31st May 2023  
5lb 3oz



Born on 22nd June 2023  
2.19Kg



Born on 19th June 2023  
8lbs 12oz



Born on 4th July 2023  
10lb 10oz



Born on 9th July 2023  
985g



Born on 11th July 2023  
3530 Grams



Born 17th July 2023  
6lb 3 1/2 oz

Not previously published:



Born on 20th November 2020  
6lb 15oz



Born on 25th November 2022  
8lb 8oz