



# Christmas Newsletter

WINTER ISSUE 2023

## OPA wins Healthcare Support of the Year Award 2023/24



We are delighted to share the wonderful news that our charity has received its second prestigious award: the 'Healthcare Support Non-Profit Organisation of the Year.' This remarkable recognition underlines our dedication to raising awareness of acid reflux and providing crucial support to individuals affected by oesophageal and gastric cancer.

This esteemed award acknowledges the outstanding efforts of our devoted team and the substantial impact we have had on the lives of cancer patients and their families. We are extremely honoured to be recognised for our leadership, innovation, and unwavering commitment to enhancing the quality of life for those battling this devastating disease.

Through our resources and support, we have strived to cultivate a nurturing and compassionate community

that empowers individuals affected by cancer. This acknowledgement reaffirms our belief in the transformative power of unity, compassion, and hope as we tirelessly strive to make a meaningful difference in the lives of those we serve.

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to all our supporters, volunteers, donors, and partner organisations who have played a vital role in our success.

Without your dedicated support and belief in our mission, this achievement would not have been possible. Thank you for being part of this incredible journey, and for your continued support.



## Merry Christmas & A Happy New Year!

As we approach the festive season, we want to take a moment to express our gratitude for your unwavering support throughout the year. Together, we have achieved remarkable success in our mission to raise awareness and supporting patients, caregivers, and their families.

### In this issue

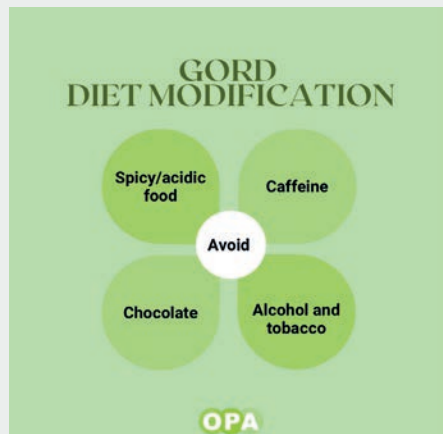
- OPA wins Healthcare Support of the Year Award 2023/24
- Awareness Campaign Update
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- Fundraiser Events
- Teddy Bears
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- Christmas Cards



Scan QR code to visit our website  
[www.opa.org.uk](http://www.opa.org.uk)

Registered Charity  
No.1194327

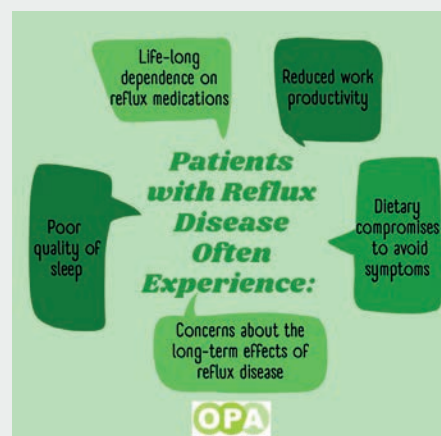
For more than three decades, the OPA has fought against oesophageal and gastric cancers. Whether you are in the early stages or further along in your journey, the OPA is dedicated to offering support and guidance.



We set aside a specific section on our website to highlight the Awareness Week, and we conducted an extensive social media campaign that reached individuals throughout the entire nation.

As a result, we not only expanded our follower base on social media but also achieved our highest website performance to date. Furthermore, we distributed informative materials to patients and healthcare professionals through posters, awareness packs, newsletters, and mailshots.

We eagerly anticipate this year's Awareness Week, **20th-26th November 2023**, during which we will build upon the successes and insights gained from our efforts in 2022.



## Reflux Awareness Week 2022 Update

In November 2022, we launched the third successful UK Reflux Awareness Week!

With over 13% of the UK population suffering from Gastro-Oesophageal Reflux disease, we believe that raising awareness of the symptoms, how to get tested and what the various treatment options are is critical to maintaining a healthy oesophagus.

### Our key messages of the campaign were:

**1. Get Educated** - Reflux is so much more than just heartburn. There are various symptoms that are associated with this disease,

and we wanted to make as many people as possible aware of this.

**2. Get Evaluated** - For some patients, diet and lifestyle changes are not enough to alleviate the symptoms and for these patients, we wanted to raise awareness of the different tests that patients can undertake to determine the exact extent of their disease so that the appropriate treatment plans can be offered.

**3. Get Treated** - We wanted to make sure patients were educated about all the different treatment options available to them to have an informed conversation with their GP or Reflux Centre.

## OPA Shop

The OPA have launched a new Notebook Organiser including sticky notes, sticky flags, with a satin soft touch finish pen and a new and improved OPA Stylus Pens.



Scan QR code or click the download button to visit our shop



Thank you to all our wonderful fundraisers  
for choosing to support the OPA.

Charlotte  
Badescu

Jayne  
Castle

David  
Robinson

Pamela  
Barton

Angela  
Bleasdale

Stacey  
Preston

Christopher  
Scudder

Katie  
Dennison

Alfred  
Stokes

Matthew  
Churchouse

Jack  
Waldron

Alison  
Harris

Tabitha  
Joyner

Ross  
Sadler

Stanley  
Armstrong

Adrian  
Dunlop

Gerard  
Mitchell

Lindsey  
Nicholls

Uop  
Equestrian

Kate  
Emsley

Peter  
Mosse

Tom &  
Emily  
Brown

Jane  
Wigmore

Megan  
Stevens

James  
Coulson

Will  
Matthews

Alexander  
Connolly

Karen  
Atkinson

Victor  
Jones

Tina  
Saxton

Lesley  
Kellar

Inverkeithing  
United

Paula  
Dale

Wing  
Kee Falle  
(Winx  
Falle)

Stacey  
Brooks

Thanks for the continued support of our  
Charitable Trusts and Foundations.



**This year, our fundraisers organised a series of successful events that brought together the community, raised funds and played a vital role in advancing our mission.**



### **Toms 300ft Bungee Jump**

"Tom is jumping for OPA as sadly his father Nigel, passed away at the age of 55 from oesophageal cancer. Tom is one of 5 so he was not the only one who was and is greatly affected by this. Toms family continues to expand with lots of nieces and nephews who sadly did not get the chance to meet their grandfather." – **Emily Brown**

### **Winx Falle – Thames Path 100km Ultra Challenge**

"I am delighted to report that I have just completed the Thames Path 100km Ultra Challenge which saw me walk from Putney to Henley-on-Thames in two days in the scorching heatwave! It was absolutely brutal and I had many 'dig deep' moments but I kept reminding myself who I was walking the walk for.

This will involve walking 100Km (62 miles) along the Thames from Putney to Henley-on-Thames split across 2 days. I have decided to take part in this to raise money and awareness for Oesophageal Cancer, a type of cancer that is not widely known and a type of cancer that my dearest friend Karen has just won her battle against.

My friendship with Karen dates back to 1999 when we met through our (now) husbands who have been childhood friends. In the 24

years we've known each other we have had some hilariously fun times together and one thing that is consistent is that whenever we are together we just laugh, laugh and laugh!" – **Winx Falle**



### **Tina Saxton – Head Shave**

"In May, my brother in law, aged just 48, was diagnosed with cancer of the Gastroesophageal junction, it is T4. He has had so many scans just to get to this point and a few weeks ago he had a JEJ feed tube fitted as eating and swallowing has been restricted. He will be starting his 4 cycles of FLOT chemotherapy next week. If the tumour responds to this, he will then undergo gruelling surgery to remove the junction of the oesophagus and all of his stomach, to hopefully remove all the cancer. Then after this a short break before more chemotherapy to mop up any other cancerous cells that may have been left behind. The OPA cancer charity offers information and help to people and families going through this journey. Shaving my head is the least I can do to raise some vital funds, please support me on our family journey." – **Tina Saxton**





## Stanley Armstrong - Ben Nevis

"I am supporting the OPA's mission to raise awareness for Oesophageal and Gastric cancers, as well as continue their amazing work in supporting patients, their families and also helping prevent this terrible disease – which doesn't get as much widespread attention as it should do – so, the more we raise, support and talk about the OPA the more aware people will be!

The OPA is close to mine and my family's heart as sadly my dad passed away in March after a hard thought battle with Oesophageal cancer.

We decided to honour my dad, Roy's memory by walking Ben Nevis for the OPA on a sunny day in early June, it was a great experience – even getting lucky enough to see the recently retired C130 Hercules fly past a couple of times at the summit which added to a very fulfilling day especially as my dad was a big fan of RAF aircrafts!

I hope the money raised will go a long way to supporting other families and individuals who are sadly going through a similar situation. hopefully, it's the start of many fundraisers to help the OPA continue the great work they do.' – **Stanley**



## The Teddy Lady

Hi I'm Annie, my husband Stephen is the Treasurer of the OPA.

My hobby is knitting (not so much the sewing up) and designing knitted garments. There are only so many knitted jumpers etc one can wear, so many years ago as Teddies are my other passion I started to knit for teddies.

I had just sold a huge amount of Teddies with their various outfits and was going to wind up my hoard of teddies when Maggie asked if I would dress some for the OPA charity and so I began again.

All the Teddies I dress are donated. They are washed, brushed up and blow dried (I haven't watched the Repair Shop for nothing) and then they sit on my desk while I considered them next persona.

Some are easier than others - they look good in any of the special teddy jumpers I have made.

The others may take a longer while and lots of attempts before their face lights up with the outfit I have devised. Every teddy is different (although some may have some similar hats and scarfs) and my imagination could run riot.

I have a very strong desire to keep them all but they are off on a different adventure and I wish them and you well.

Teddies listen, they absorb love and only give reassurance, never direction. My teddy knows all my secrets, fears and desires and he's always there. He was especially invaluable when Stephen was so poorly after his operation and although he now sits in his chair wearing a hat and slippers with his jumper and trousers because is very old, he will always be my rock and comfort, and Stephen knows place!



# London Meeting

Thank you to CP Hart Bathrooms, Carolyn, Deb and Team for supporting our OPA London Meeting and providing a meeting room. The presentation in London on the 16th of September given by Joanna Taylor, Oesophagogastric CNS GSTT, can be downloaded from the OPA Website in Microsoft Powerpoint and Adobe Pdf format.

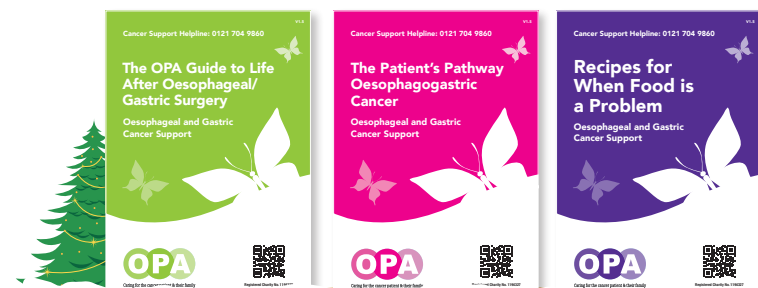


Scan QR code  
to download the  
documents from  
the OPA Website



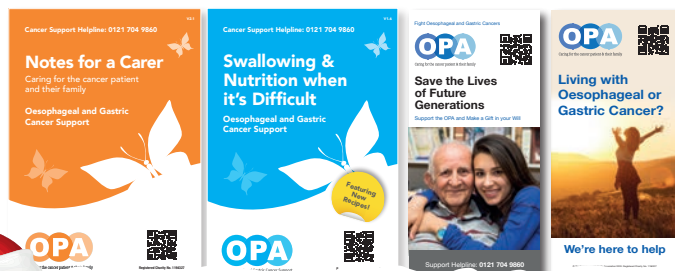
Download Button

The OPA are looking for dietitians  
to present at meetings and acid  
reflux recipes and tips. Please send  
information to [enquiries@opa.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@opa.org.uk)



## THANK YOU

To all our Buddies for  
their continued support.





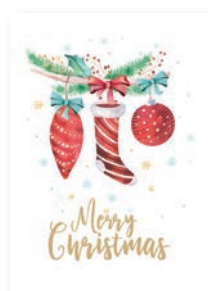
# Place your Christmas Card Order Here...

Post the order form below including your preferred payment method to:

The OPA Cancer Charity, Unit 4, Bordesley Hall Farm Barns, Storage Lane, Alvechurch, Birmingham B48 7ES

Or via the OPA Shop online here - <https://opa.org.uk/shop/>. All prices include postage and packaging.

Follow our NEW  
Facebook page



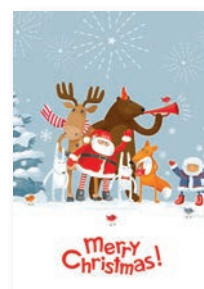
## Bows and Baubles

- ☐ 5 Cards £7.50
- ☐ 10 Cards £15.00
- ☐ 20 Cards £30.00
- ☐ 50 Cards £60.00



## Pom Pom Bear

- ☐ 5 Cards £7.50
- ☐ 10 Cards £15.00
- ☐ 20 Cards £30.00
- ☐ 50 Cards £60.00



## Santa and Gang

- ☐ 5 Cards £7.50
- ☐ 10 Cards £15.00
- ☐ 20 Cards £30.00
- ☐ 50 Cards £60.00



## Snowy Rooftops

- ☐ 5 Cards £7.50
- ☐ 10 Cards £15.00
- ☐ 20 Cards £30.00
- ☐ 50 Cards £60.00



## Snow Berries

- ☐ 5 Cards £7.50
- ☐ 10 Cards £15.00
- ☐ 20 Cards £30.00
- ☐ 50 Cards £60.00



## Christmas Mix Up

- ☐ 5 Cards £7.50
- ☐ 10 Cards £15.00
- ☐ 20 Cards £30.00
- ☐ 50 Cards £60.00



## Christmas Holly

- ☐ 5 Cards £7.50
- ☐ 10 Cards £15.00
- ☐ 20 Cards £30.00
- ☐ 50 Cards £60.00



## Christmas Valley

- ☐ 5 Cards £7.50
- ☐ 10 Cards £15.00
- ☐ 20 Cards £30.00
- ☐ 50 Cards £60.00



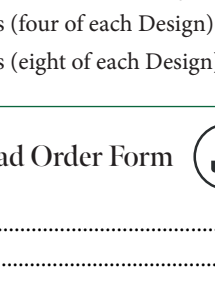
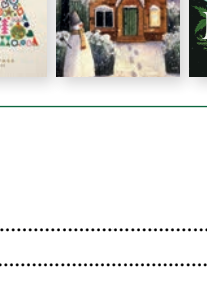
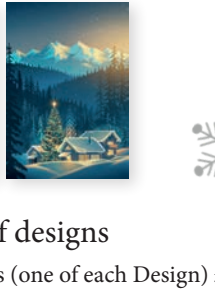
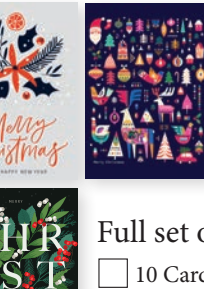
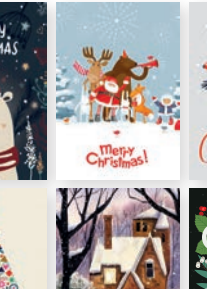
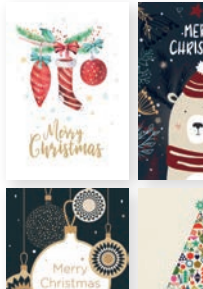
## Grand Baubles

- ☐ 5 Cards £7.50
- ☐ 10 Cards £15.00
- ☐ 20 Cards £30.00
- ☐ 50 Cards £60.00



## Christmas Allsorts

- ☐ 5 Cards £7.50
- ☐ 10 Cards £15.00
- ☐ 20 Cards £30.00
- ☐ 50 Cards £60.00



## Full set of designs

- ☐ 10 Cards (one of each Design) £15.00
- ☐ 20 Cards (four of each Design) £30.00
- ☐ 50 Cards (eight of each Design) £60.00

## Christmas Card Order Form

Download Order Form



Name:.....

Address:.....

Tel:.....

Email:.....

Amount enclosed for order:..... I would also like to donate £..... to the OPA.



### By bank transfer

Recipient bank: HSBC Bank,  
34 Poplar Road, Solihull, B91 3AF  
Sort Code: 40 - 42 - 12  
Account Number: 02301636

### To make an online donation visit:

<https://www.opa.org.uk/donations.html>

### By regular Standing Order payment –

Sort Code: 40-42-12

Account Number: 51354981

I wish to make regular donations to the Oesophageal Patients Association of (tick appropriate box)

☐ £2 ☐ £5 ☐ £10 ☐ £25 ☐ £100,

or other amount:

Please state amount in words:

every (tick appropriate box) ☐ Week ☐ Month ☐ Year starting on \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ until further notice.

### Your bank details

To: (insert name and address of your bank) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Sort Code: \_\_\_\_-\_\_\_\_-\_\_\_\_

Account Number: \_\_\_\_\_

### Boost your donation by 25p of Gift Aid for every £1 you donate

Gift Aid is reclaimed by the charity from the tax you pay for the current tax year. Your address is needed to identify you as a current UK taxpayer.

### In order to Gift Aid your donation you must tick the box below:

☐ I want to Gift Aid my donation of £\_\_\_\_\_ and any donations I make in the future or have made in the past 4 years to the OPA.

I am a UK taxpayer and understand that if I pay less income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax than the amount of Gift Aid claimed on all my donations in that tax year it is my responsibility to pay.

### Your Details

Title: (Mr/Mrs/Dr etc.) \_\_\_\_\_ Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Tel: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_

## Any other Donations

I am pleased to send a donation of £\_\_\_\_\_ Please tick here ☐ if this is to be treated as a Gift Aid donation.

Title: (Mr/Mrs/Dr etc.) \_\_\_\_\_ Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Tel: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_

For online donations – Account number: 51354973 Sort Code: 40-42-12

Please send this form to: Fundraising Dept.  
OPA Cancer Charity, Unit 4, Bordesley Hall  
Farm Barns, Storage Lane, Alvechurch B48 7ES  
Or email to: [enquiries@opa.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@opa.org.uk)

For further information please contact.  
The OPA on **0121 704 9860**



**TOGETHER  
WE CAN MAKE  
A DIFFERENCE**