



End of an Era

NEW EDITOR IN THE CHAIR

Having been the creative force (and crikey, what a force!) behind the Eastbourne Twins Club newsletter for, well, ages now, Sharon has decided it's time to hang up her editor's hat. Twins Club membership, and therefore newsletter circulation/readership, has never been so high so, really, she's handing over while at the top of her game. I'd like first to thank her for being such an enthusiastic and creative editor during her time in the chair and, secondly, for trusting me to take on what she must have felt at times was another member of her family! Sharon has poured her heart, soul and every last drop of energy into researching and writing this fantastic publication over the past few years, even writing one leading article whilst on the toilet I seem to recall! Just watch circulation drop now I'm in charge! Thank you Sharon - we are all in awe of your efforts - I shall endeavour to keep up the momentum, but rest assured, if I write any of it on the loo I will spare you all the image!

This month's edition is jam-packed with interesting articles, helpful advice and, of course, useful information. I'd love to know what else you'd like to see and I hope that you enjoy reading my first issue. 🙏

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ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

All members welcome - Have your say!

Food and drinks provided

Wednesday September 17th

Venue to be confirmed
see p5 for details

Have You Renewed Yet?

MEMBERSHIP SUBS DUE!

July is upon us and most of you have renewed memberships that expired in April. Enclosed is a new list of all the current members. If you are unsure whether you have renewed, please simply check the list. If you are not on it then my wife, Sharon, is eagerly awaiting your £8 cheque. In exchange, she will laminate you a new **membership card** and send you a fabulous **members' pack** full of details of all the **great discounts** available to you, including a fantastic new one we have secured this year! Your membership fees are vital to keep the club running, and it also gives my twins a great chance to wreak havoc in our local Barclays, making a bee line for the racks of free pens, when Sharon goes there to pay the cheques in! If you have lost the membership renewal form sent out in April, you can fill one in at a meeting or ring me (Neil) or Sharon on ***** and we'll happily send one to you. Or you could e-mail Sharon on

sharon@eastbournetwins.org.uk



Some twins, yesterday

STOP PRESS!

As this newsletter goes to print, our brand new, first ever **website** is about to go live! It's a modest affair just now, but just watch it grow in the coming months! Check back regularly for dates and times of groups and other events as they are organised.

www.eastbournetwins.org.uk

Out of Africa

We have often been asked if we've ever been on any holidays that we could recommend. I thought I'd share my holiday experience and you can decide if it should be recommended or not!

"Don't worry, it'll be fine" is the refrain I was to hear over a number of weeks from my husband, about our impending trip to Eritrea to visit family and have a holiday. Aren't men lucky that they don't seem to have to worry about the practicalities of having children? Or that's certainly the case in my family anyway!

The first thing to worry about was what would entertain twins of 15 months and a 4 year-old on a fifteen hour journey? The drive to Heathrow was pretty uneventful, although we were at the check-in for over half an hour securing bulkhead seats on the plane. As the children had had such a good sleep in the car on the way to the airport it meant we had to entertain them for almost six hours on the plane to Cairo! Once there, they slept peacefully for a while, and then it was on to the next plane to Asmara, Eritrea.

Once we had arrived, the whole of Western culture seemed to disappear! After having to have numerous papers stamped and re-stamped, we finally got out of the airport at about 3 a.m. It was pouring with rain – monsoon type rain – our luggage was soaked in two minutes. One of my husband's cousins picked us up in his car. That meant one person driving, two adults in the front seat and 3 adults in the back with a child on each lap! So much for car seats! Luggage was piled around us, in the back and on the top of the car.

We arrived at a house that belonged to a family member and were very grateful to find two cots ready and waiting. It didn't even matter that one was made of woven string, which meant that feet and hands got stuck, and that the other had no side to it at all so we had to push it against the wall as best we could! I had envisioned sleeping on floors, with cockroaches, so this was certainly better than expected.

The morning came round too quickly and I had the daunting task of trying to find milk for the twins and food for my very hungry four year old. I heard that a very kind neighbour had walked miles to the nearest village to find me milk as there was none to be found in Asmara. There was all sorts – some in packets which looked fine, some in a big cauldron (which I think came from a goat and we had to boil for hours, as I guess it wasn't pasteurized) and some powdered. Eritreans don't drink milk and, of course, breast feed their babies until around two, so to have any at all was a privilege. We then had to get used to all the family visitors who piled in each day to see us. Our 4 year-old found this very difficult as he is shy by nature and all the hugging and kissing that went on was very daunting. Our 15 month-old twins didn't like it much either so stuck like glue to myself or my husband. I was very grateful that I had brought very few toys as it was obvious that the children visiting us had none.

My eldest was taken by surprise when he saw one of the chickens that had been strolling around the courtyard killed and then dismembered before him – even more surprised when he saw that, once the chicken's head was chopped off, the body kept moving and had to be re-caught under a bucket! Considering how many chickens were given to us during our stay and were then killed for us to eat, he seemed to cope remarkably well. On one of our trips to visit my husband's family in his home village, we had to share our car with a couple of live cockerels, who kept us entertained rather nervously throughout the journey! We were touched that we were the 'rich' visitors and yet the people from the village, who had nothing, gave us precious eggs, bread that could hardly be found anywhere and these chickens – so who were we to begrudge our fellow travelling companions?

We decided to go to Masawa, a beach along the Red Coast for a couple of days. This time we piled into a campervan type bus, for four hours, holding children on our laps, or rather balancing them on chairs as they refused to sit still, while the weather got hotter and hotter and hotter. It must have been 40 degrees in the bus by the time we arrived. Again, we had to go in search of milk and this time water too, which seemed difficult to find. We had a good time and the children managed amazingly in the heat and sleeping on one mattress on the floor. However, giving them all malaria tablets was very difficult. However much we tried to disguise them in bananas, bread, or milk they still managed to discern the taste and refused to eat or drink. Fortunately they didn't get bitten much by mosquitoes anyway. (Well, let's hope not anyway!)

I could go on and on, but I think I've given you enough of a taste of our holiday! I'll leave it to you to imagine how the journey home went – this time with no bulkhead seats and leaving at 2a.m! Certainly my husband's "Don't worry it'll be fine" refrain seemed to work, as it amazes me how much children can adapt to their surroundings. I was very worried about how they'd fit back into their routine when they got home, but after the initial cry of being put back in a car seat or high chair, they've been fine. ¶

High spots:

- Seeing baboons a foot from our car window
- Walking into clear, beautiful, warm sea
- Waking up to continual sunshine

Low spots:

- Continuous dust – there was hardly any point bathing my daughter who was still crawling
- No home comforts

DO YOU HAVE A HOLIDAY EXPERIENCE YOU'D LIKE TO SHARE?

WHAT ARE YOUR RECOMMENDATIONS FOR TAKING TWINS AWAY?

TELL US YOUR STORIES OF MULTIPLE-FRIENDLY HOLIDAY DESTINATIONS, AIRLINES OR EVEN SIMPLY LOCAL RESTAURANTS AND SHOPS THAT HAVE GIVEN YOU A POSITIVE EXPERIENCE.

Send your thoughts to:

neil@eastbournetwins.org.uk

Twins Club first (Annual?) Garden Party

What?	A sizzling Summer barbecue (<i>bring your own food to cook</i>)
When?	Sunday 10th August 12:30 - 4:30 - drop in any time
Where?	Our back garden
Why?	Well, we just thought it might be a nice idea to all get together!
Who?	Any Eastbourne Twins Club members

Last summer we held our Twins Club picnic in Hampden Park, and a very successful affair it was too, but this year we thought that we'd have a garden get-together instead - less chance of a child going AWOL (*our garden is big enough, but not too big!*) and twin-friendly changing facilities right nearby! So here's the low-down. We'll provide the garden, some garden toys, some live chickens to look at (!), and a barbeque for if you want to cook something. We can even warm bottles if necessary! All you need to bring along is your family, your picnic and anything else you would normally bring with you for a picnic. We have a few garden chairs and rugs but you may want to bring something to sit on. Feel free also to bring garden toys your children might like to play with. We'll get the barbeque up and running and, for anyone who fancies upgrading their cucumber sandwich to a steak one, just bring along anything you want to cook. As with any outdoor event held in the British summer, we will be keeping our fingers crossed for good weather. If it is looking a bit dodgy on the day give us a ring on ***** to check if we are going ahead. ¶

The map below should help you find us, otherwise give us a call for detailed directions ...



HAVE YOUR SAY OR SHARE YOUR EXPERIENCES

One of the great things about the club newsletter is the contribution members make to it by sharing their experiences, good or bad, of life with twins, triplets or more. If you have something you think may help others please get in touch. We have a few ideas in the pipeline. For example, it would be nice to have a feature on breastfeeding. Did you have a good experience that you would like to share? Or did you want to breastfeed, but were unable to for one reason or another? Or maybe you choose to bottle-feed from the word go and would like to let others know how you fared and about the amount of sterilising and preparing that is involved with a multiple birth. It would be great to have a mix of views on the subject and we can't do it without you - your experiences would be helpful to other new Mums, or prospective Mums, faced with making a decision. ¶

Get in touch today: e-mail the editor on neil@eastbournetwins.org.uk

Travel Tips

GOING ON HOLIDAY OR HAVING A DAY OUT? HERE ARE SOME TIPS FROM OTHER CLUB MEMBERS.

If you are ever travelling on the M40, the services at Junction 10 have a great children's playground at the rear, secluded from the noise and smell of the motorway and with a nicely shaded outdoor picnic area - enough in itself - but a short walk from the playground leads you to a huge field at the rear where you can exercise the dog and your children can burn off some pent-up energy for a while, before being strapped back into the car seats for the next 100 miles - fabulous!

Friends of ours told us that when they drive to Cornwall (and I guess this would apply equally to any long journey) they avoid spending a fortune by not stopping at the motorway services at all, and instead stop at an ASDA supermarket just off the motorway to eat for a fraction of the cost. Why hadn't I ever thought of doing that?

If you are travelling by train to London, you can buy very cheap group tickets in advance from the Tourist Information Office in Eastbourne - great for a day in the capital. Some tickets can also be used to get 2 for 1 entry at many London attractions such as London Zoo. ¶

KEEP US UP TO DATE

Are you moving home, changing your mobile or home phone number, or perhaps getting a new e-mail address?

Don't forget to let us know if any of your details change so we can keep in touch.
Contact Sharon on ***** with any changes.

Bourne Academy *of Performing Arts*

NEW Dance classes for pupils aged 3-5 years
Mondays & Fridays 1:30 to 2.00pm

St. Phillips Hall (opposite the Fire Station)

£2.50 per class payable termly/half termly

First lesson free, 10% discount for siblings

Also, after school classes in ballet, tap, modern and musical theatre for boys & girls aged 3-16

All enquiries to Gina Leonard

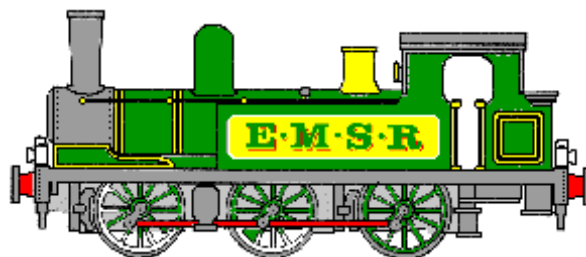
01323 649097

Mobile: 07833 763698

Eastbourne Miniature Steam Railway

LET YOUR LITTLE ONES LET OFF SOME STEAM!

We recently visited the Eastbourne Miniature Steam Railway, on Lottbridge Drove, and had such a great day out that we thought we would give the place a mention. It was our first visit and, whilst we knew they had tiny trains to ride on, (steam and diesel, leaving every few minutes) what we didn't realise is that there is so much more. There is a huge play area for children of all ages with loads of slides, swings, picnic tables, a community of tiny play houses hidden among the trees and even a fairly tricky maze. A nature walk takes you around a beautiful lake, teeming with wildlife of all sorts, to another picnic area and playground half way around. The food on offer is very reasonably priced, with a good range of light snacks or lunches, including baked potatoes, cream teas, sandwiches, fruit, confectionary and even picnic boxes containing several items. But the other thing that grabbed our attention was the annual family membership that they do. A family of four can buy a year's membership for £40 which allows unlimited entry. It doesn't include train rides, but for access to the excellent play areas all year it does seem good value in comparison to many other local children's attractions. If you haven't been yet, it's well worth a visit.



The family who run the railway kindly donated a family day ticket for our raffle at the Teddy Bears picnic, for which we were very grateful. Other local business that kindly offered prizes included **Drusillas**, **Eastbourne Theatres**, the **Curzon Cinema**, **Knockhatch**, **Middle Farm** and the **Sea Life Centre**.

Raffles are a great way for us to raise funds so donated prizes are always welcome. If you work for a company that may like to donate a prize for our Christmas raffle or even if you don't, but know someone who does, then please contact Sharon on ***** with the details. ¶

Masterpiece have moved

As mentioned in the last newsletter, the popular paint-your-own pottery shop, **Masterpiece Studio**, has moved to Golden Cross. They are one of the local businesses that offer members a **discount** and enclosed with this newsletter is a new flyer with a map showing where they now are. We took a trip out there a few weeks ago and can absolutely recommend a visit, especially if your children are like ours and enjoy having free range chickens, ducks and peacocks wandering around them! Or, if you just fancy a huge slice of cake or an all day breakfast, then take a table in the tea rooms next door.

Use Clubcard vouchers to visit Drusillas

Given that, according to some sources, 1 in 8 'retail' pounds are spent at Tesco, then it's likely that you have a Clubcard nestled in your purse somewhere, and maybe a few Clubcard vouchers waiting to be spent. But did you know that those vouchers don't have to be redeemed at the checkout in Tesco? You can also redeem them online in exchange for vouchers to get you into loads of attractions in the UK. And for every £1 in Clubcard vouchers that you redeem, you get £4 in 'days out' vouchers in return - that's a **75% saving** on normal entry prices! Vouchers can be used at loads of UK attractions and locally you can use them at **Drusillas**. Really handy if your children have annual membership and you want friends or relatives to take them there for a day out - they could get in for just a quarter of the normal entrance fee. ☹

Contact us ...

If you fancy writing an article, have items *For Sale* or *Wanted*, events to be listed, or simply want to find out more about Eastbourne Twins Club, then there are several ways to get in touch:

BY PHONE

Neil *****
Nicky *****

BY E-MAIL

neil@eastbournetwins.org.uk
nicky@eastbournetwins.org.uk

MEMBERSHIP QUERIES Sharon

tel: *****
e-mail: sharon@eastbournetwins.org.uk

items FOR SALE

2 Britax Asis stage 2 car seats

in shades of grey. Slight wear but lots of life left in them! Good for use as a second set.

£10 each or £15 the pair

Call *****

items WANTED

Twin buggy with toddler seat

urgently needed!

Call *****

2 bedguards needed soon!

Portability a bonus

Call *****

Do you have something to sell? Is there something you need that you think another member might be keen to part with?

e-mail neil@eastbournetwins.org.uk or call *****

Next edition will be out in October, so there's plenty of time for a sort out over the Summer!

LAST WORD ...

Keep **Wednesday September 17th** free in your diary - it's the date of this year's **AGM** and we'd like as many of you to come along as possible. If you need convincing, there'll be free food and drink! But more than that, it's a chance to have a say in Twins Club's future activities and to catch up with other members who you might see at meetings but never get the chance to have a proper chat with because your attentions are elsewhere! Venue is still to be confirmed, but we hope to see you there.

Huge thanks are due to **Sharon** for passing on years of experience and getting me up and running, then also to **Sharon, Sylvia, Wendy** and **Nicky** for their contributing roles. So - what do you think? Have I kept up the standard you're used to? What else would you like to see? I'm all ears ... See you at the Garden Party on August 10th! ☹

Neil

neil@eastbournetwins.org.uk

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Tuesday 8th July 10.30-12noon

TODDLER TWINS

Shinewater Children's Centre, Milfoil Drive

Friday 18th July 2.45-4.15PM

JUNIOR TWINS

Willingdon Trees Children's Centre, Oakwood School, Magnolia Drive

Sunday 10th August 12:30 - 4:30

SUMMER GARDEN PARTY AT NEIL & SHARON'S HOUSE

Bring your own food - we'll provide the garden! (See p3 for details)

Friday 29th August 2.30-4pm

JUNIOR TWINS

Willingdon Trees Children's Centre, Oakwood School, Magnolia Drive

Tuesday 9th September 10.30-12noon

TODDLER TWINS

Shinewater Children's Centre, Milfoil Drive

Friday 19th Sept 2.45-4.15pm

JUNIOR TWINS

Willingdon Trees Children's Centre, Oakwood School, Magnolia Drive

Wednesday 17th September 8pm

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Venue to be confirmed (see p5 for details)

Tuesday 30th September 10-11.30

BUMPS & BABIES

Shinewater Children's Centre, Milfoil Drive

Tuesday 7th October 10-11.30am

BUMPS & BABIES

Shinewater Children's Centre, Milfoil Drive

Tuesday 14th October 10.30-12noon

TODDLER TWINS

Shinewater Children's Centre, Milfoil Drive

Friday 24th October 2.45-4.15pm

JUNIOR TWINS

Willingdon Trees Children's Centre, Oakwood School, Magnolia Drive

Tuesday 4th November 10-11.30am

BUMPS & BABIES

Shinewater Children's Centre, Milfoil Drive

Tuesday 11th November 10.30-12noon

TODDLER TWINS

Shinewater Children's Centre, Milfoil Drive

Friday 21st November 2.45-4.15

JUNIOR TWINS

Willingdon Trees Children's Centre, Oakwood School, Magnolia Drive

Tuesday 2nd December 10-11.30am

BUMPS & BABIES

Shinewater Children's Centre, Milfoil Drive

Tuesday 9th December 10.30-12noon

TODDLER TWINS

Shinewater Children's Centre, Milfoil Drive

Friday 19th December 2.45-4.15pm

JUNIOR TWINS

Willingdon Trees Children's Centre, Oakwood School, Magnolia Drive

DISCOUNTS

Simply flash your new membership card at the following local businesses to qualify for a discount!
(and if you're as forgetful as me, these discounts are all helpfully listed on the rear of the card)

Nursery Warehouse 3 Star Road (behind Waitrose) – Eastbourne 01323 417775 10% off purchases over £50

Just Kidding 5 High Street – Hailsham 01323 840084 10% off twin purchases

The Funky Viking 52 Grove Road – Eastbourne 01323 648070 10% off purchases over £50 (excludes café and haircuts)

Masterpiece Studio Unit 3, The Holmes Hill Estate, A22 – Golden Cross 01825 872225 10% off for your twins' pottery or hand/foot casts

Hop, Skip & Jump Dance Class Tutts Barn Lane – Eastbourne 461589 £5 off per ten-week term for twin bookings (i.e. £25 for first child & reduced rate of £20 for the second)

Freedom Leisure (Soft Play Area only) Hailsham Leisure Centre, Vicarage Lane – Hailsham 0845 803 5515 £1 off for each twin

Blackberry Farm A22 at Whitesmith 01825 872912 2 for 1 entry for twins

Monkey Bizness Cliffe Industrial Estate – Lewes 01273 488898 Second and third children admitted for half price

Rockys Soft Play Royal Parade – Eastbourne 642833 Children under 2 years - £1.95, over 2 - £3.60