

ROAR!



RED LION
Pouch Support

AUTUMN 2024

#67



New St Mark's gets rousing reception

See pages 4-5

PLUS...

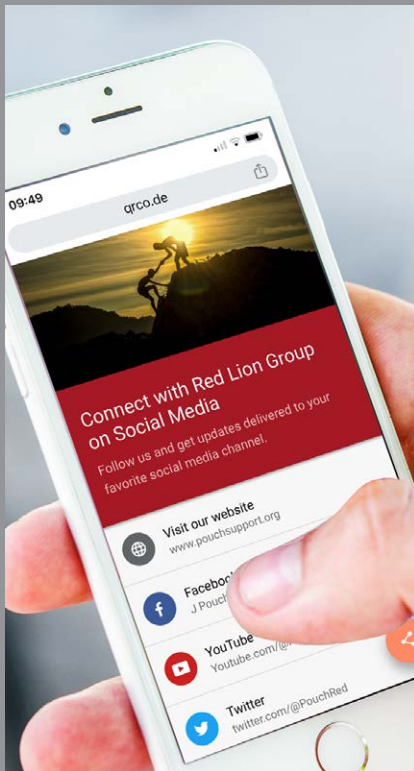
Spreading the word
RLG websites keep
on growing

**Marathons can be
fun too!**

Ultras take the
scenic route

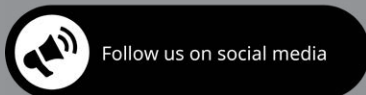


HOT TOPICS



IT'S GOOD TO TALK!

To visit any of the RLG social channels, simply scan the QR code below



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Cover image shows Trust CEO Pippa Nightingale (l) with Brent East MP Dawn Butler

The Red Lion Group is a charity run by volunteers with advice from St. Mark's Hospital (pouch department). The content of *Roar!* aims to help people with an internal ileo-anal pouch and anyone considering this type of surgery. It is not a substitute for professional medical advice or a medical examination. If in doubt consult a specialist. We do not promote or recommend any particular treatment or course of action.



RED LION

Pouch Support

All donations, however small, towards expanding the work of the group will be gratefully received. You can donate online via the donate button on the RLG home page pouchsupport.org

Please support the Red Lion Group

Registered Charity number 1068124



NOTES FROM THE EDITOR



We're in the news again, dear Lions and Lionesses! One of the highlights of the opening of the new St Mark's at Central Middlesex Hospital in July was a tribute to the Red Lion Group by Pippa Nightingale, CEO of the hospital trust, praising our online events and activities which was greeted by a loud burst of applause from the assembled guests.

Although - technically - the new St Mark's has been open for almost three years, the official opening on 14 July, 2024, was a day to remember with eminent consultants, surgeons, doctors and research fellows mingling with politicians and peers and a large group of former patients (you can read all about it on pages 4-5 of this issue).

Highlights of 2024

The official opening of St Mark's has certainly been one of the key moments of 2024, but there've been other highlights too which we've tried to reflect in this issue of *Roar!*

We'll start with health and physical fitness - and a little teaser.

What's the difference between a marathon and an ultramarathon? Quite a lot it seems. You can read our own Marathon Man Andrew Millis's report in the *Roar!* special on pages 12 to 14. I think you'll find Andrew's analyses and insights encouraging for both beginners and pouch-holders who aspire to active exercise regimes.

Another RLG activity that has been bedazzling our members and supporters is the spread of the internet. Our own website, pouchsupport.org, and the Facebook group are thriving more than ever before - thanks to Gary

Bronziet's and David Davies's ingenuity and hard work.

You can read about the popularity of our Facebook site and its soaring numbers on page 8 and the rise of global visitors to our own website in Gary Bronziet's report on page 9 - and a world map showing the country-by-country figures in the centre pages of this issue.

'We are looking for one or two keen and enthusiastic Lions'

a family. Congratulations Michelle! This means we're looking for one or two keen and enthusiastic Red Lions/Lionesses to join the committee. There are only four Zoom meetings a year and the rest is all fun. Well, quite a lot of it is anyway! Does that sound like you? If it

does please contact David Davies at info@pouchsupport.org

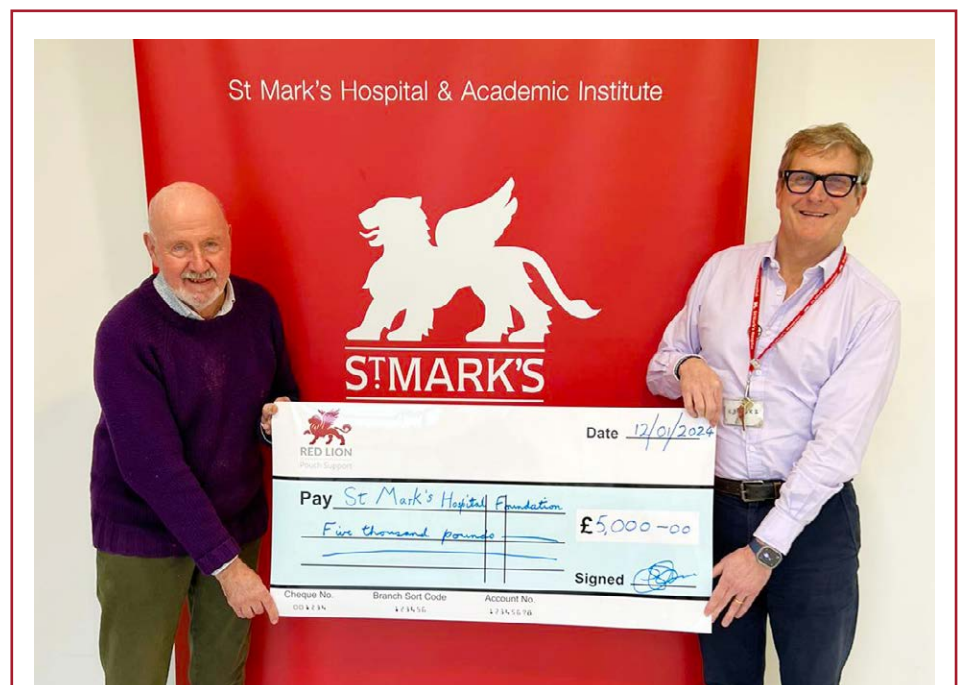
Finally, a very happy rest of 2024 to you all!

Christopher Browne
Editor

cbrowne@brownmedia.co.uk

Why not join us on the committee

I'd like to end this report with a little appeal. Our hard-working communications officer Michelle Martin has left the committee to start



RLG donates £5,000 to St Mark's Hospital Foundation

Jason Bacon, St Mark's Hospital CEO(r), receiving a cheque for £5,000 from Christopher Browne, editor of *Roar!*



New St Mark's gets rousing welcome

After three hard and dedicated years of re-adjustment and change, St Mark's celebrates its move to Central Middlesex Hospital

Flypasts by the Red Arrows, multi-coloured balloons, happy revellers in bobble-hats, explosive displays of fireworks. None of these were needed at the official opening of the new St Mark's at Central Middlesex Hospital in London's Park Royal in August this year.

As most of us already know, much of St Mark's has already been operating from its new base (moving from its former site at Northwick Park Hospital, Harrow) for almost three years as the

after-effects of Covid struck and the need for greater space beckoned.

The hospital was abuzz (even more than usual!) at its auspicious opening on 14 August, as hospital staff mingled with consultants from the past, former patients and a group of distinguished guests including the local MP Dawn Butler, Labour MP for Brent East, and the Labour peer Baroness Pilkeithley to hear several rousing speeches from the key figures behind the move.

In her introduction, Pippa

Nightingale, CEO of London North West University Healthcare Trust, parent body of St Mark's, praised the activities of RLG, comments that were greeted with a burst of applause from the assembled guests. Medical co-directors Professor Omar Faiz and Miss Carolynne Vaizey explained the main reasons for the move and the achievements of the past three years. While incoming medical directors Professor Siwan Thomas-Gibson and Ian Jenkins reviewed some of the events in the hospital's future and Sir Tom Troubridge, chairman of the St Mark's Hospital Foundation, referred to the move as 'a remarkable journey'.

Among the day's highlights was a



THE MAIN EVENT

MAIN: The hospital's main movers and shakers flank the commemorative plaque

BELOW: Sir Tom Troubridge, St Mark's Hospital Foundation chair(r), and Professor John Nicholls with the plaque

BOTTOM: RLG's membership secretary Gary Bronziet, *Roar!* editor Christopher Browne and chair David Davies with the commemorative plaque



'The hospital was abuzz as the past caught up with the future'



lavish spread of food that would do credit to anything from Marks & Spencer (perhaps some of it came from M&S!). After which the by-now visibly jolly assembly divided into groups for a series of guided tours of the hospital's new departments, examples of its newly-installed and streamlined equipment with many admiring glances at its radical design features.

Suddenly the hospital was buzzing with excitement and anticipation as we assembled in the main atrium as the past caught up with the future and eminent consultants such as Professor John Nicholls, James Thomson, emeritus consultant surgeon at St Mark's, and Professors Robin Kennedy and Tim Orchard spoke with the current intake of newly-appointed consultants and researchers.

Finally Sir Tom Troubridge unveiled a commemorative plaque to mark the official opening of St Mark's new home.



And the Lions keep marching on

The Red Lion Group has had an event-filled 2024. Long may it continue says RLG chair **David Davies**

A lot has happened since the last issue of *Roar!*. We didn't win the football, it hasn't stopped raining and there was the small matter of a general election – but for us at RLG a huge milestone was reached with the 1,500th member of our pouch support Facebook group. A warm welcome to Amanda Nash and to all our other recent new members.

The “J pouch support (UK specific)” Facebook group is poorly named – for a reason. We have many non-UK members and the site covers W- and S- pouches as well as J- configurations and potential pouches too. The growth of this site has been dramatic and continues (see article on page 8); at the time of writing this document we were just shy of 1,570 members and climbing.

The site's popularity reflects several things:

- A steady growth in the number of pouches – although the rate of pouch surgery has dropped in the UK, there are still more than 200 operations being performed each year and that represents a whole bunch of potential new members;
- The reassurance that comes from knowing you are not alone, and that there is a community of supportive pouches out there who face similar challenges to a greater or lesser extent;
- The value of tips and advice to help cope in the early stages after

reconnection while your system is adapting and/or with persistent problems such as blockages and pouchitis;

■ In many cases – sad to say – the lack of local knowledge or support for some pouches in areas where their local medical staff are not familiar with the pouch operation and the potential consequences. We cannot expect our medical staff to know everything and there is often a case for gentle, supportive education of your GP and/or local nursing staff.

- Excellent and attentive administrators – Gary Bronziet and Sam Wainwright in addition to myself – who are right on top of inappropriate posts and who help to maintain our high levels of integrity and objectivity.

‘There are many ongoing pouch research projects’

The RLG membership and the Facebook group represent very large pouch communities and are a fantastic opportunity for medical researchers who are conducting studies into pouch-related matters. RLG is closely aligned to St Mark's Hospital, where pouch surgery originated, and currently there are many ongoing pouch-related research projects which we are happy to bring to your attention in case you wish to get involved. Well-designed, ethical research will drive forward the boundaries of pouch knowledge and will lead to

improvements for existing and future pouches. One of these projects is the latest research into fistulas by Dr Anand Easen, a research fellow with the St Mark's Academic Institute, who says he is delighted with the input from RLG members.

A huge thank you to the RLG members who attended the recent AGM and those who sent their votes in advance by proxy. The trustees are always available for discussion or suggestions about how we can work better to support you. So don't be shy to drop us a line at info@pouchsupport.org

On the same topic, the trustees are all volunteers and do a great job in driving the charity forward. However we are not getting any younger and two trustees were hospitalised recently with serious health issues that were not related to their pouches. I am delighted to report that both of them have recovered and are back at home and we wish them all the best with their continuing recoveries.

Former trustee Michelle Martin stepped down earlier this year for expanding family reasons (congratulations Michelle!) so it would be good to have a couple of new trustees to join the team and to spread the load. We have a fabulous small and dynamic team and we would be delighted to welcome new people. Please give it some thought.

Look after yourselves and enjoy what is left of the summer – I am still optimistic for a late summer heatwave!

David Davies
RLG Chairman

OUR POPULAR ADVICE LINE

RLG Facebook site joins the glitterati

The Red Lion Group has forged yet another source of support, report **David Davies** and **Christopher Browne**

A quiet but compelling source of help and support for the Red Lion Group's growing membership (I don't know of a noisy one – do you?) is its main Facebook page – namely the J pouch support (UK specific) link*.

The appeal of the site is that anyone who joins (and you don't have to be an RLG member to do so) can share their highly personal pouch-related issues – either anonymously or by name – with a group of sympathetic, knowledgeable and experienced pouchees. And in return they will receive sage advice, useful tips and guidance to aid their treatment and/or recovery and, crucially, to let them know they are not alone.

These posts are often shared during that critical period shortly before or after a site member is about to have a pouch operation – a time when they are looking for information and reassurance to help them make the right decisions before their op or while their body is still recovering from the early stages of post-operative surgery.

The post will usually attract an instant or, in some cases, a longer, more thoughtful reply from fellow pouchees. In fact the Facebook site's members include people who have had their pouches for up to 40-plus years and can pass on exceptionally valuable morsels of advice that can help and benefit a growing number of pouchees.

What is also reassuring about the site is that the replies to users' posts are sometimes ingenious and include useful and unexpected support at a crucial stage in a pouch patient's life.

The moderators of the site make clear that they are not medically qualified and that members have to use their own discretion over whether or not to follow the advice of others. They also advise members to seek medical advice if they are in any doubt about any of the surgical procedure.

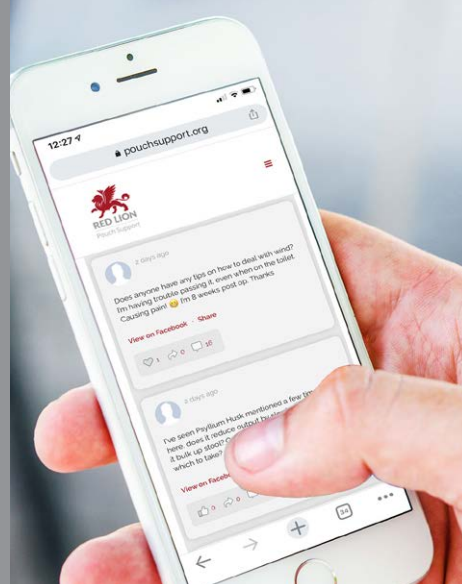
The Facebook group was founded approximately 10 years ago by two pouchees, Sam Wainwright and Sahara Fleetwood-Beresford; Sam is still a moderator and was joined several years ago by the RLG chair David Davies and membership secretary Gary Bronziet.

In April this year the group celebrated a glittering first its 1,500th member. Step forward Amanda Nash from South Lincolnshire who has had a pouch for 29 years.

So let's look at some facts and figures about RLG's pioneering piece of social software:

Fact number one: It's the largest pouch support Facebook group outside the USA.

Fact number two: The group is mainly UK-based but has drawn in members from such countries as the USA, Ireland, Italy, Australia, Canada, India, South Africa, Gibraltar and



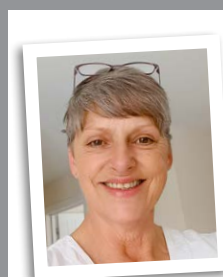
Switzerland and many others.

Fact number three: There are twice as many women as men in the group.

Moderator Davies says: "The site is a wonderful addition to our online services and the group is very active, with multiple posts and comments each day – from dietary advice to solutions for butt burn, from advice on pain relief during blockages to ways to reduce night-time leaks. No topic is off-limits for pouchees!" says David.

"We extend a very warm welcome to Amanda and to every pouchee and potential pouchee who joins up. Here's raising a glass to the next 1,500 members," adds David.

*The site also caters for members and users with W- and S-pouches.



Amanda Nash, who is the senior project manager of a global software company

and RLG Facebook website's 1,500th member, says: "I was delighted when I discovered the Facebook group and its super-supportive group of pouchees – it's great to be part of a supportive community of fellow pouch-holders who can help out with help and advice."




GETTING THE MESSAGE

Canada 
3,508

Ireland 
2,520

UK 
122,855

USA 
25,436

Portugal 
717

France 
960

A global pride of Red Lions

A country-by-country guide to the number of visits by 14 individual nations to the Red Lion Group website

Although the Red Lion Group is mainly UK-based, its website visitors and RLG membership span the globe - and the numbers have continued to rise since the website was revamped in 2018.

This surging wave of activity is down to the unstinting efforts of Gary Bronziet, RLG website host extraordinaire and membership secretary. The number of visits to the website now totals 175k. "This

represents an average of around 5,000 visits per month and we can definitely expect to hit 200k in the next 12 months," says Gary (see article on page 13).

Adds Gary: "Our website has a truly global reach. While the UK leads the league table for visitors, followed by the USA, Australia and Canada, there have been visitors from a total of 156 countries, in fact across every continent except Antarctica!

"We continue to improve and expand

the website to make it digestible for pouchees, potential pouchees, pouchee specialists and interested visitors alike. One of the key features is the search function which we have recently enhanced to improve every user's search experience."

Finally when you study the map, you will see the total of website visits from a selection of 14 countries. To see the full list of all 156 countries (to date), go to <https://pouchsupport.org/red-lion-group-website-hits-100k-views>

Netherlands 
961

Germany 
1,575

China 
801

Italy 
887

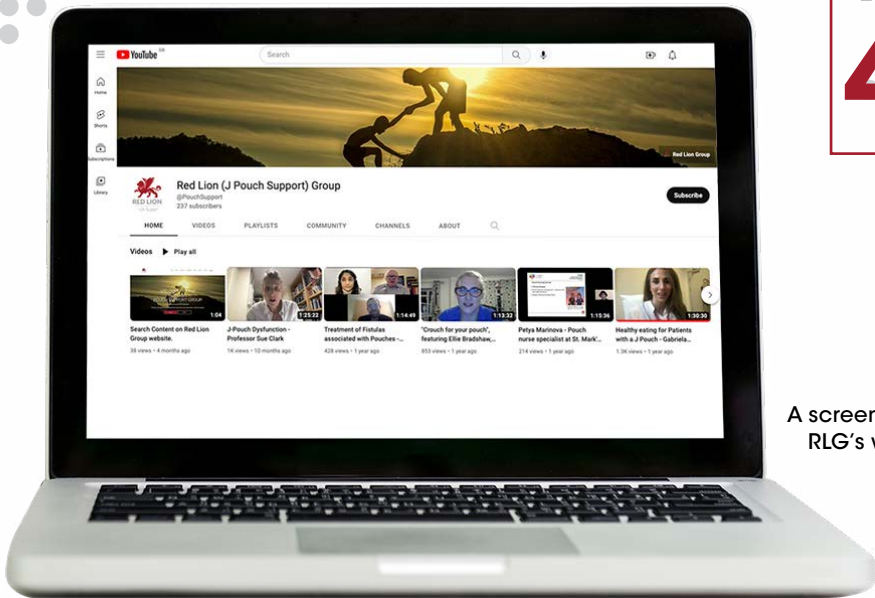
Romania 
1,022

India 
1,403

South Korea 
829

'Our website
has a truly
global
reach'

Australia 
4,026



LEFT:
A screenshot of
RLG's website



Let's take the scenic route, even if it's 30 miles or more

To laymen and women running or walking an ultramarathon seems a rather fearsome prospect but there are advantages too

What is it about our pride of Red Lions? Why do so many of us enjoy walking and running – and even competing in road races, cross country challenges and marathons?

One man who probably knows the answer is our resident Marathon Man Andrew Millis, a former chair of RLG, a long-time trustee and now the energetic distributor-in-chief of *Roar!* magazine. Some of you'll have read about his exploits in earlier *Roar!* magazines or more recently read out about some of the activities of our other resident maniac (sorry, marathon man) David Skinner, RLG's indefatigable liaison officer (see page 14).

Challenging feat

But there's another even more challenging feat that those with persistence and stamina might consider – as Andrew Millis discovered recently.

“I and a group of friends completed a 30-mile course, covering some rough terrain and climbing nearly 6,000 feet to the top of three mountains overlooking the town of Abergavenny



Bruce Willoughby competing in the 2023 London Marathon

in the Brecon Beacons national park near the Welsh-English border. The event we were taking part in was an ultramarathon or an ultra,” says Andrew.

“I asked the man hobbling somewhat painfully next to me in a muddy field at the end of the course why he did ultramarathons and he replied: ‘It’s a day out, a bit of a challenge, and you meet some fantastic people.’

“What an understatement!” I reflected.

Time and distance

“Marathons are based on timing and distance,” explains Andrew, who has completed 66 of them in 14 years. “A marathon is exactly 26.2 miles (or 42.2km) long. However an ‘ultra’ is anything further – from 30 miles (or 48.3km) or so up to 62 miles (100km) and even 100 miles (160.9km).

“When you run a marathon, despite the long distance, every second counts. Ask anyone who has completed a marathon in 4 hours and 35 seconds, for example, and he will have desperately wished he could have saved 36 seconds somewhere to bring his time to under 4 hours,” says Andrew.

“Your position at the start of the marathon depends on exactly what pace you expect to run, and you already know in advance when you are going to get more tired and your pace will begin to slow.

“Marathons are almost all run on flat road surfaces which enables you to compare them and gauge what time you have achieved the 26.2 miles in.

“An ultra, on the other hand, is usually a route that is anything but flat and, because of the additional distance, it is no longer practical to position marshals at regular intervals or at any particular junction on the course.”

Orienteering

Apart from distance, another key difference between the two formats is that ultramarathons include orienteering which needs maps and compasses – “and here technology can be a real asset,” says Andrew.

“For our Abergavenny ultra, we were sent an image of the route, which we could download on to our phones. Really well-equipped runners can also add the route to their watches,

showing an approximate map that vibrates if you stray off-course.

“The terrain on our Abergavenny ultra meant we needed to take great care not to fall when climbing rocks, navigating perilous inclines, or working out where the path went!

“It doesn’t matter what time you finish an ultra, as you can’t compare it with any other route or event. You can of course compare your time with other runners on the same course, but an announcement of ‘I finished’ seemed to be all that mattered for us and our fellow competitors.

“On our ultra we used no timing strips, or ‘chips’ on the numbers we wore. Timing was done by a man with a clipboard at the finish!

“The start of our ultra was an altogether different event to the marathon as well, with a ‘3, 2, 1, Go’ followed by a relatively loose amble off, rather than the marathon’s fiercely competitive push at a pace that everyone knows can’t be sustained!

Friendships

“On an ultra, you are running at a slower pace than a marathon, judging the terrain and gradients, and you have much more time to notice such features as wildlife, flowers and views. Stopping for the view is entirely

‘Ultras are run at a slower pace than marathons’

acceptable. And chatting is expected too! You can form friendships with such like-minded people.

“On our Abergavenny adventure, the weather varied enormously. In the sheltered valleys, we got quite warm, and the two

modest layers I was wearing, plus the backpack, which was like a coat, made me feel very warm. But up on the mountain-tops, the rain and wind turned the side of our faces and hands quite numb. So, dressing for this variable climate was quite difficult, as no one really knew what to expect.

“One of the benefits of ultras is that as runners age, or new runners start, the focus is more on a longer distance at a slower pace. Ultras are popular as the aim is to finish, rather than achieve a time to compare with the other competitors or runners. You still expend a huge number of calories! The runners tend to be supported by the organisers based on the time out there, rather than mileage points.

“Thus, a pouch-owner will find food and toilets at check-points more conveniently than in a faster marathon pace.

“What the ultra has in common with the standard marathon, though, is that the pain and tiredness is soon forgotten, while the glory of finishing, and a medal hung proudly round your neck, is remembered for a long time,” adds ultramarathon man Millis.

A man with a mission

Red Lion Group member Bruce Willoughby (left) is planning to complete the 1,030 miles from Land’s End to John O’Groats in June next year. “I never thought I’d be even thinking of doing something like this, but was inspired by others doing what seemed to me to be near-impossible things. There’s so much more to think about when you have a pouch but I thought what’s stopping me giving it a go?

“As well as aiming to complete the iconic journey, I’m hoping to inspire others to attempt to do their own near-impossible things.

You can read all about Bruce’s progress on his blog [lepetitjog.blogspot.com](#)

“I’ve no idea whether I’ll make it, but I’m going to give it a damned good go,” he adds boldly.



SPEAKERS' CORNER

The wonders of the webinar

It took a serious epidemic and much national soul-searching to start a trend that's won RLG a devoted audience

Who'd have thought that when an RLG trustee murmured something about webinars at the end of a committee meeting a few years ago that it would launch a glittering cast of guest speakers.

Led of course by the internet expertise of Gary Bronziet.

So where do we begin? Few of us thought we could repeat 2023's heady concoction of Zoom performers.

One of whom was the colorectal pioneer Professor John Nicholls. So who better to head our 2024 line-up?

The Prof, who co-created the ileoanal pouch with Sir Alan Parks in the mid-1970s (see the Winter 2003 *Roar!*), was greeted by the near-adulation of a record 100 registrants for his talk – and some of them said they still cherish their experiences with the eminent surgeon at St Mark's hospital.

Two of the features of this year's line-up were a pair of enlightening double acts. How much do you know about your surgeon, for instance? A lot, a little? One man who knows more than most is pouchee Ben Barbanel. Both he and his surgeon St Mark's Hospital's lead surgeon and RLG patron Janindra Warusavitarne have what they refer to as a "Surgeon/patient – a special relationship". This was the

theme of a talk they gave at the annual conference of the European Society of Coloproctology in 2023 and which they repeated to an enthusiastic RLG webinar audience in June this year.

Another double act with a difference was the "Dietary and Pharmaceutical Advice for J-Pouch Patients" webinar from Uchu Meade, recently appointed St Mark's Hospital's first-ever Consultant Pharmacist, and Gabriela Poufou, St Mark's Advanced

Specialist Inflammatory Disease Dietitian. These two much-admired professionals and friends gave us one of the most memorable, enjoyable and informed sessions of 2024 with something for almost everyone who attended this exceptional webinar. Such

was its impact that we will be hosting another Q&A session in October, 2024, to cover the key topics they had to omit due to time constraints. To register for this, check the Events page on the website (www.pouchsupport.org/events).

You can find recordings of all these webcasts on our YouTube channel – youtube.com/@PouchSupport Or you might have an idea for a topic or a speaker for a future webinar or Q&A session. If so please drop us a line at info@pouchsupport.org

David Davies & Christopher Browne



Dr Sonya Frearson

Head of the Psychological Medicine Unit (PMU) at St Mark's Hospital

How many of us mentally prepare for operations and procedures? Often it's the very thought of that major op that tends to dominate our thoughts. So, in some cases, it really needs the wisdom of a psychologist or perhaps a counsellor to guide us before the Big Event.

Enter Dr Sonya Frearson, Head of the Psychological Medicine Unit (PMU) at St Mark's Hospital. In her webinar, she gave a succinct account of how to cope with the prospects of surgery and how to allay some of the fears and anxieties we all experience while waiting for major events like surgery and key examinations.



Ellie Bradshaw

Biofeedback specialist

Did you know that RLG has its own superstar? Some of you may have already been treated by Ellie Bradshaw when she was the biofeedback specialist at St Mark's. Apart from her expertise as a pouch-emptying specialist, Ellie is an articulate and exuberant speaker and always adds a touch of pizzazz to her webcasts. Once again she kept her audience of 50-plus RLG members and professionals informed, entertained – and amused in May 2024.

'A pair of uplifting double acts with a difference'

WEBSITE REPORT



RLG web casts its magic spell

The Red Lion Group message is spreading from month-to-month and country-to-country, reports RLG website host and membership secretary **Gary Bronziet**

Roll up! Roll up for Gary Bronziet's numbers game. You'll find a lot of new and exciting activities to enjoy while playing it.

For our multi-talented website coordinator has been busier than ever keeping up with the growth of our fine, upstanding site (pouchsupport.org).

The number of visitors to the site continues to rise. As Gary says: "In the Winter 2023/2024 issue of *Roar!* I noted that we had hit the milestone of 100k visits since the inception of our new website in 2018.

"The good news is that now the site has reached 175k, averaging around 5,000 visits per month," he

says. And it is mainly down to Gary's eager, ever-watchful hosting of our online resource.

Says Gary: "We can definitely expect to hit 200k in the next 12 months. As mentioned in the last *Roar!*, our visitors come from across the globe (and you can see the countries that have accessed our website highlighted in the map on pages 8 and 9). For a fuller insight into our web activity see the updated version of pouchsupport.org/red-lion-group-website-hits-100k-views/ on our website.

Gary Bronziet
Membership Secretary and IT
membership@pouchsupport.org

Finally, do we have your email address?

We still don't have email addresses for some of you, our ever-faithful RLG members. If you are one of them, you could be missing out on important notifications of events and articles. So if we've been ignoring you, please send your email address to me at membership@pouchsupport.org and I will add your details to our database.

If you are not currently a member, then you can find out the benefits of membership at pouchsupport.org/join

Let's get quizzical!

A bumper summer quiz devised by David Skinner which is based on events and facts in 2024

- 1 Name the date of the D-Day Landings and where they took place?
- 2 What was the codename of the D-Day Landings?
- 3 In which city was this year's Eurovision Song Contest held?
- 4 Which country won Eurovision 2024?
- 5 Name the winning Eurovision song
- 6 In which year did this year's Summer Olympics host city Paris last hold the event?
- 7 How do you write 2024 in Roman numerals?
- 8 Which phenomenon was visible across North America in 2024?
- 9 Which country joined NATO in March this year, becoming its 32nd member?
- 10 How many MPs are there in the English Parliament?
- 11 Name the current Secretary of State for Health and Social Care
- 12 When is the US presidential election?
- 13 Where were the surfing events held during the Paris Olympics?
- 14 Which of the famous Chinese years is 2024?
- 15 Which element is the Year of the Dragon associated with?
- 16 Which city hosted the 2024 UEFA Euro Championship Final?
- 17 What is the capacity of Berlin's stadium?
- 18 The United Nations has designated 2024 as the International Year of what?
- 19 How many days are there in 2024?
- 20 How many states are there in the USA and how many 100 years ago in 1924?

Answers on page 15



MARATHON MAN

David's D-Day Landing

RLG's intrepid marathon runner and liaison officer **David Skinner** celebrated a historic event from the Second World War in his own inimitable way



David Skinner with his finisher's medal

We ran in the footsteps of heroes from Sword Beach – codename of the easternmost of the five landing strips used in the Normandy landings – to Caen in the heart of French Normandy almost 80 years after the memorable D-Day Landings.

Nearly 3,000 of us set off on a warm Sunday morning on 2 June, 2024 – four days before the actual D-Day anniversary when many of the world's leaders met to pay their respects to the veterans – both living and deceased – of this historic event.

Amid tumultuous cheers from the locals, hordes of excited, flag-waving visitors from the USA and Canada greeted a flypast of

Dakota C-47s, the main military transport aircraft used during the Second World War.

Meanwhile David's doughty group of runners moved from the south coast to a rural stretch of greenery, woodland and

hedgerows, an area known by the French as 'le bocage'.

Then fate raised its unsightly head!

After an extra-long toilet stop I was told I had missed my time slot for the next checkpoint. It meant that

under marathon rules I must either abandon the race and finish it by car or continue the race alone. After a heated exchange with the race officials, the last words I heard were: "YOU ARE ON YOUR OWN".

However this time fate came to my rescue. Like me a Taiwanese runner called Chihping Fu had been penalised by the officials for missing his time slot, so the two of us decided to link up and finish the race together

Although neither of us knew the route to the finish-line, Chihping managed to download some stretches of the course on to his mobile phone.

Both of us were determined to honour our coverage of the course to the finish and after much dithering and far too many wrong turnings, we eventually reached the finish an hour or two later.

■ You can read how David fared in his 10th Frankfurt marathon on 27 October 2024, in the Winter issue of *Roar!*

'We saw hordes of excited visitors from the USA and Canada'



Write for Roar!

Ideas, Ideas and More Ideas

Yes, *Roar!* thrives on them for it's ideas that make the magazine the readable package that we all like it to be.

Whether it's something that happened to you on the way to work, an interesting holiday or personal experience, an insight into your life with a pouch or a

lively letter, please don't hesitate to send it in.

But then if writing articles isn't exactly your favourite pastime, we are always looking for cartoons, jokes, crosswords and competition ideas too.

That way we can keep your magazine bursting with life and information and make reading about pouch issues fun and stimulating. Please send your articles, letters and ideas to:

Christopher Browne, Editor
cbrowne@brownemedia.co.uk

■ Browse every copy of *Roar!* that has ever been published (including Issue 1 from 1994) at pouchsupport.org/resources/roar-archive

■ To visit the RLG and J-Support forums go to pouchsupport.org/forum or scan the QR code to the right



■ For online support, advice and tips on life with a pouch, please visit our Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) page on the website at pouchsupport.org/faqs/

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Quiz answers (page 13)

1 6 June, 1944, in Normandy, France; 2 Operation Overlord; 3 Malmo, Sweden; 4 Switzerland; 5 The Code; 6 1924; 7 MMXXIV; 8 A total solar eclipse; 9 Sweden; 10 650; 11 Wes Streeting; 12 5 November; 13 Tahiti which is part of French Polynesia; 14 Year of the Dragon; 15 Wood; 16 Berlin; 17 71,000; 18 Camelids; 19 366; 20 50. There were 48 in 1924



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