

# Distinctions

news from

Seaford Hearing Centre &  
Sevenoaks Hearing Care Centre

## Recommendations reap the reward

Seaford and Sevenoaks Hearing Care Centres have introduced a new reward incentive for their existing patients. Quite simply, for every person you recommend to us who purchases a hearing system, you will receive a Marks and Spencer voucher worth £50. Furthermore, there's no limit to the number of vouchers you can claim.



Seaford and Sevenoaks Hearing Care Centres have other schemes which repay customer loyalty. For instance the Battery Club where patients receive a free pack of batteries once their card is filled, as well as a free advisory service, free cleans and checks, and invitations to open days.

Announcing the reward scheme, Managing Director Robert Davies said: "We appreciate the choice our patients have made by using our services. We want them to continue enjoying those services and benefit from the relationship by encouraging others to do likewise."

If you know of a friend or family member showing similar symptoms to those you experienced in the past - or perhaps someone who's less than enamoured with their current hearing aid - tell them about us and reap the rewards!

### We're Widex now!

Seaford and Sevenoaks Hearing Care Centres are now approved and certified Widex centres. Robert Davies commented: "We are very pleased to be given the seal of approval by this respected manufacturer. I recently attended a Widex training programme and was impressed by their product range. I'm sure we'll be very good for each other!" In particular Robert was interested in their tiny Widex Passion instrument - see story headlined 'Heard but not seen' on page 2.

### SPRING SPECIAL 10% OFF

Spruce up your hearing performance this spring with our special offer on batteries, Audispray ear hygiene spray, filters and cleaning products - throughout April and May.



Robert Davies was the proud and honoured recipient of an Achievement Award from the Rotary Club of Nairobi recently. The award, presented by the Rotary District Governor, was in recognition of his work for the Reverend Muhoro School for the Deaf. The school is in a remote part of Kenya and Robert has visited it on many occasions during the past four years - taking with him hearing aids, diagnostic equipment, teaching aids, batteries and other equipment to the value of over £100,000.

For when you want to know more...

[www.s-hc.co.uk](http://www.s-hc.co.uk)



Can hearing aids get any smaller?

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New clarity for Mary

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Great expectations for Charlotte USA

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# Robert bones up at the BAA Conference

For Robert Davies of Seaford and Sevenoaks Hearing Care Centres, the quest for knowledge never ceases! No surprises then that he took himself off to the British Academy of Audiology conference held in Telford last December. Among the many topics covered was an update on audiology developments in the NHS. This included a lecture on bone anchored hearing aids (BAHA) given by Newcastle-based Tom Davison, an expert on conductive hearing loss.



BAHAs are for people who cannot receive normal amplification through hearing aids – for example because of discharge in the ear or because they have very narrow ear canals.

Without going too deeply into the technicalities, a BAHA is implanted into the temporal bone behind the ear, at the

base of the skull. The aid receives vibrations created by sound - and sends these vibrations through the mastoid to the inner ear where it can be 'heard' as normal sound. It is an ingenious and effective solution for the quite small percentage of people with hearing problems who are unable to use conventional hearing aids.

However, for the majority of us with a hearing problem, it's down to sensory-neural hearing loss. This is usually caused by the loss of the tiny hair cells in that snail shaped tube in the ear we call the cochlea. It happens through natural aging, or – more increasingly these days – by damage caused by prolonged exposure to loud noise like machinery or music.

Sensory-neural hearing loss is permanent, but happily the problem can usually be overcome with a hearing aid.

Whatever's causing your hearing loss, call into one of our hearing centres for professional advice and guidance. You'll find us fully clued up on the best hearing remedy for your problem!

## Heard but not seen

There's no doubting that size - or the lack of it - is everything in hearing aids. Now there are three new products on the market from ReSound, Widex and Phonak which are the next best thing to totally invisible.

The publicity blurb for ReSound dot describes it as the most attractive hearing instrument you'll never see!



Using a newly developed miniature speaker design which delivers sound directly into the ear, dot wraps up tried and tested components into a tiny hearing instrument that combines near invisibility with lightweight comfort – and incomparable audio quality across the broad spectrum of listening environments.

Next in our line-up of miniaturised marvels is the exotically branded Passion from Widex which claims to be the world's smallest receiver-in-canal



hearing instrument. We wouldn't argue with their claim that Passion provides the ultimate in discretion, comfort and style.

Our tiny trio is completed by Exelia, the new top of the range aid from Phonak. Not only is it the soul of miniaturised discretion, it is packed with cutting-edge features. They include a brand new and intuitive directional remote control plus wireless functions which means one hearing aid can control both - and both can exchange data between them to optimise the listening experience in all conditions.



Small, but perfectly formed – and available at Seaford and Sevenoaks Hearing Centres! But of course, no two hearing aids are exactly the same. We will be pleased to explain in detail the different features and guide you to the one best suited to your circumstances.

## Now hear this – cotton buds are bad for your ears!

The common or garden cotton bud has a variety of uses - but one of them is definitely not poking them in your ears!

It's surprising how many people end up with injuries as a result of 'cleaning' their ears in this way. Usually it's an attempt to get rid of wax, but the fact is cotton buds may push the wax deeper into the canal, causing blockage, which could give you pain or trigger off tinnitus and vertigo.

Cotton buds can cause trauma to the skin of the canal wall resulting in inflammation of the outer ear. Worse still, prolonged use of CBs to relieve itchiness or irritation can make things only worse - and be very difficult to treat.

The rule is – wash your external ear only with a cloth over your finger and if you produce excessive amounts of ear wax, you will need to see your GP from time to time to get it removed.

# Now I can party with the best!

Mary Hood is a retired nurse who lives in the Kent village of Eynsford. Mary admits that her first 'basic' hearing aid was something of disappointment. She told us: "At the time I questioned whether I really needed one. I found it most uncomfortable to wear as my ear felt hot and itchy. Fortunately it was only a short time later that I met Matt Cannon at Sevenoaks Hearing Care Centre."

After Mary's ear test Matt talked her through the possible options. In the end they settled for the Phonak Audéo, a recently developed digital instrument (featured in the last issue of *Distinctions*) for patients with mild to moderate high-frequency hearing loss, who must communicate in a wide variety of settings. This is a market for which listening clarity and enhanced understanding against background noise is vitally important for the life they lead.



*Just three colours from the Audéo range.*

Audéo features a unique, ergonomic shape that is comfortable and discreet - dispelling the misconception of what a hearing instrument looks like.

Matt also explained to Mary why she would get even better performance from wearing two aids.

"Matt struck a responsive chord when he asked me what colour I would prefer. Feminine vanity came to the fore as I pondered how I would look in indigo, grey, silver, skin colour (to name but a few) – it was like choosing a piece of jewellery!"

"A few days later I arrived at Matt's office for my fitting and after a some minor

*Mary re-discovering the joys of hearing birds sing.*



*Mary's mother-in-law Babs Hood – also a patient at Sevenoaks Hearing Centre – recently celebrated her 100th birthday. Here they are setting out on a special birthday trip to France with a friend.*

adjustments I set forth into the world of good hearing – and have never looked back!

"Some very positive things became apparent – I am no longer tired from concentrating during conversations, or when listening to other people speaking. My 'ears' are with me throughout every waking hour, they are light and comfortable and I can feel the air circulating in my ears."

Mary also enthused about the slim design and how they fitted behind her ears with no discomfort. "Often I am not aware of wearing my aids – and I don't think my friends notice either. I am able to enjoy conversations and now I can party with the best!"

## First ever 'Oscars' at the AIHHP Conference

The prestigious professional body, the Association of Independent Hearing Healthcare Professionals (AIHHP) recently held its first ever awards at their annual conference near Kenilworth. Membership of the Association is much coveted by the profession and represents the ultimate benchmark for quality standards and ethics in the independent sector. As proud members of the AIHHP, Robert Davies and Matt Cannon were in attendance and both enthused about the conference and the new 'Oscars' initiative. Here is the roll of honour:

Best accessory supplier	Puretone
Best customer service	Oticon
Best programming software	Phonak IPFG
Best CPD/training provider	GN ReSound
Best budget aid	Phonak Extra
Best mid-range aid	Widex Aikea
Best premium aid	Oticon Epoq
Best power BTE	Oticon Sumo DM
Best OTE	Delta 8000
Best manufacturer	PC Werth Ltd (Widex)



Remember- only choose ear care services where you see the AIHHP logo!

### Guest lecturer

Robert Davies recently addressed a seminar about audiology overseas held at the Addenbrooke's hospital in Cambridge. His topic centred on his work for Reverend Muhoro School for Deaf Children, against a background of limited support and state care for people with ear health problems in this remote part of Kenya.

Robert was delighted to donate his speaker fee to projects at the school.

## ROBERT'S COLUMN

I guess that market forces are at work as much with hearing aid manufacturers as with any other manufacturing activity. It is a fact that most of the research and product development is spent in developing new products for people with mild to moderate hearing loss. Conversely, there's a relatively low investment in the significantly smaller segment of the market – those sufferers of severe to profound hearing loss.

It is also true that most severely impaired patients have been wearing hearing aids for years – the benefits an aid brings to the quality of life are fully understood. Patients are also discerning but have realistic expectations – and in my experience are always eager to try new technology.

So, I'd like to doff my cap to the product development team at Phonak for introducing their exciting new Naida model.



This is what we call a power product and in my view it's going to be real mover and shaker in this market segment. Naida is a water-resistant aid with wireless capabilities and a unique frequency transposition feature. This means that frequencies in areas where the hearing impaired person would not normally hear, are compressed and transposed down the scale to an area where they can be heard.

Personally I can't wait to tell my patients with severe hearing issues all about it!

**Finally a note for your diaries – we'll be holding our Open Events at Seaford and Sevenoaks to coincide with Deaf Awareness Week from 5 to 11 May. No pressure or hard sell – just a relaxed opportunity to catch up on the latest developments in hearing aid technology. You'll be receiving full details soon.**



## State of the art in the States



For anyone in the hearing care profession who wants to be in the right place when the latest developments in hearing aid technology are revealed to the world, the American Academy of Audiology is an absolute must!

The 'right place' to be this year is the city of Charlotte in North Carolina – and Robert Davies, together with his colleague Matt Cannon, are looking forward to learning about exciting new products, comparing notes with colleagues and bringing back news of the latest products that can enrich their patients' hearing quality.

Last year the talk was all about the new generation of open ear hearing aids – but with the ever accelerating march of progress, what are likely to be the topics to set the pulses racing in 2008? Scrutinising his crystal ball, Matt predicts: "I am sure that we will be seeing even more advanced open ear aids. But I also expect to see some exciting developments in wireless models, enabling interaction with Bluetooth, MP3 Players, mobile phones and computers."

But whatever it is that Robert and Matt bring back from their trip to the Deep South, you'll be the first to know!

*Matt Cannon will be joining Robert for this year's AAA conference at Charlotte.*



## Kenya update

Robert Davies, accompanied by his nephew Justin, made another visit to Kenya last October, to the Reverend Muhoro School for the Deaf in Kenya. Once again his suitcase was packed with hearing aids, diagnostic equipment, teaching aids, batteries – and 43 hearing aid moulds made from impressions he had taken on his visit in July.

Robert returned to the UK but Justin stayed on to continue teaching, taking sport and helping with the building of the new girls' dormitory at the school. But then, following the Kenyan elections and the subsequent civil unrest, Robert decided it was time to call Justin back – even although the region was unaffected by the troubles.

Justin was not best pleased – he had already mastered the art of showering from a bucket, learnt sign language and designed cricket nets with materials funded by Robert's Horsham Rotary Club.

But on 22nd February, Justin returned to the school to continue his unfinished business. Another pleasant task was to hand over an audiometer generously donated by Ian Arnold of Arnold Hearing Care. The audiometer had been previously used in one of their practices – it was refurbished and calibrated at no charge by PC Werth Ltd.

Robert also hopes to return to the school soon. High on his priorities will be training a replacement for the resident audiometrician who is retiring.



**Seaford Hearing Centre** 4 Dane Road, Seaford, East Sussex BN25 1LL Tel. 01323 899655  
**Sevenoaks Hearing Care Centre** 73 London Road, Sevenoaks TN13 1AX Tel. 01732 741486

Services also available at

**East Grinstead** McIndoe Surgical Centre, Holtye Road Tel: 01342 315111

**Goring-by-Sea** Bateman's Opticians, 48 Goring Road Tel: 01903 247042

**Hailsham** Mark Soper Opticians, 72 High Street Tel: 01323 841699

**Farnborough Common** Princess Royal University Hospital Tel. 01732 741486

**Tunbridge Wells** McIndoe Surgical Centre, 6 Mount Ephraim Tel: 01892 616100

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