

# HEARtoday

Issue 04 | Summer/Autumn 2011

## Welcome...

Welcome to our 4th edition of HEARtoday. At the time of writing I think many would describe our summer as mixed but definitely not the BBQ summer we were all promised. Nevertheless, I trust you got to enjoy the nice days we did have and returned from any holidays relaxed and refreshed.

As the children/ grandchildren go back to school and lives start to get back to normal we can start to reflect on those things we may not have had time to do in recent months. Is your hearing one of those? Did you find yourself at the family BBQ asking people / children to repeat things. Go to a wedding that you missed all the speeches or just felt you couldn't be part of the occasion because you just couldn't hear? Whatever the situation, maybe its time to consider having your hearing tested?

With this in mind this edition covers the reasons why we put off getting our hearing tested, famous faces that wear hearing aids and their stories, and some useful facts on tinnitus.

Our technology update will be of interest to any of you that have got one ear that has no hearing at all or cannot be aided due to the severity of the loss, or physical contra-indications, we introduce to you ... the wireless "Cros" system.

We also have our usual crossword challenge with the chance for you to win £25 worth of Marks and Spencer gift vouchers.

Don't forget if you are thinking of recommending someone, please ask them to let us know your name as you could be receiving £20 worth of Marks and Spencers gift vouchers\* on your doorstep as our way of saying thank you.

As always I welcome your comments regarding the content of this newsletter so if there are any specific topics you would like me to include in the future or you want further information on the subjects we have covered please feel free to call on 01600 772111 or email [info@monmouthshirehearing.co.uk](mailto:info@monmouthshirehearing.co.uk).

Enjoy the read....

*Helen*

RHAD, FSHAA

*\*based on client going ahead with a trial of hearing aids.*

**MONMOUTHSHIRE  
HEARING CENTRE**

# The Last Word...

What's the last thing you want to hear? Credit crunch, spiralling debt, job cuts..." thanks Mum", "I love you"... Well, what ARE the last words you want to hear? It is said that, in life, the last thing we lose is our hearing. So why is it that we seem to value our sense of hearing the least?

Perhaps it is because we perceive our eye sight, mobility, health and of course our children to be more important that we seek help in these areas as soon as we notice something isn't quite right. So why when we notice a deterioration in our hearing do we wait so long to admit we have a problem? Very likely one of the main reasons we wait so long is due to pride and the misconception that hearing loss only effects the "older" generation.

## Early intervention.

It takes people an average of 6 – 10 years to act on their hearing loss – the longer hearing loss is left, and the worse it becomes, the harder it is to take simple steps to address the loss. But those of us who adopt the use of hearing aids gain far more benefit and satisfaction than those who leave it for years. We all know how fast technology is changing, yet we still visualise hearing solutions as being large cumbersome devices that whistle all the time! WRONG, Today's high-tech hearing instruments are



virtually invisible, intelligent minicomputers. They are tiny in size yet enormous in impact.

## The evidence.

Overwhelming evidence shows that the use of a hearing instrument brings major improvement to the quality of life of its users. These people enjoy better overall

*“The best method for breaking through your loved one's resistance to hearing help is for YOU to stop being their ears.”*

DR. RICHARD CARMEN

health than non-users with hearing loss, gain self-confidence, play a more active role in family, social and business activities and even have greater earning power... That has to be good, doesn't it? Our ears give us access to the wonderful world of sounds. Hearing is crucial and connects people all over the world. Hearing enables us to communicate with other people and enjoy social activities. The ability to hear is

such an integral part of life that most of us take it for granted.

Hearing is a gift to be valued, so lets value it!

If you would like further information or to book a hearing test then please ring **Monmouthshire Hearing Centre** on **01600 772111** to make an appointment.

## DEAFinitely Famous!

Don't let hearing loss prevent you from achieving the things you want... Many deaf and hard of hearing people have made a huge impact on the world. So...what are you waiting for??



### Annette Crosbie

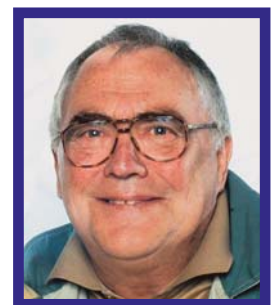
As Victor Meldrew's long-suffering wife, you would think Annette Crosbie has every right to be grumpy. In fact, the actress freely admits that she has irritated her fair share of people by bluntly ignoring their attempts to start up a conversation. Annette, 76, has now revealed however, that she doesn't deliberately snub anyone, she simply

can't hear them! "I have been quite deaf in both ears for a decade now," she says. Annette started to lose her hearing whilst filming One Foot in the Grave 16 years ago. "In conversation around the table in the canteen I realised I was losing track of the conversations. I went to a specialist and was fitted for hearing aids which, of course, helped. I've had them for about a decade and in that time they have become much smaller and less obtrusive. You can't see I'm wearing them now!"

### Bill Tarmey

Former Coronation Street favourite Bill Tarmey who played Jack Duckworth in the soap has admitted he's not heard a single line of the soap for years – because he is DEAF. Bill confessed: "I have 80 per cent deafness in my right ear and 70 per cent in my left. I am

virtually deaf." It has meant that for years Bill has struggled to understand what his soap co-stars have been saying including the relentless nagging of former wife Vera, played by Liz Dawn. Now Bill—who first appeared in Corrie back in 1979 has state-of-the art hearing aids so small that viewers can't see them. The delighted star said: "I can hear again—it's brilliant. They are like little earwigs that fit inside the ear. You can barely see them and I can hear properly again." The TV legend blames his loss of hearing on the years he spent working in noisy clubs and performing as a cabaret singer before Coronation Street.



### Bill Clinton

Bill Clinton— Former president of the USA. Clinton was fitted with 'in the canal' hearing aids, for a mild hearing loss whilst he was President. His hearing loss is thought to have been caused by a mixture of getting older and exposure to loud noise, especially from musical instruments.





# Facts about Tinnitus

## What is tinnitus?

Not an illness or disease, tinnitus is a term that describes the sensation of hearing a noise in the absence of an external sound. The noise can have virtually any quality. Ringing, whistling and buzzing are common but more complex sounds may also be reported.

## What causes tinnitus?

The cause of tinnitus is most commonly linked to frequent and/or prolonged exposure to loud noise, which can damage the auditory system and increase the risk of getting tinnitus or potentially make an existing condition worse. However a host of other factors can increase the possibility of getting tinnitus, including sudden mental or physical changes i.e. retirement, redundancy, depression, health concerns or bereavement. The onset of tinnitus can either be sudden or become more apparent over time.

## Who does it affect?

There is a widely held misconception that tinnitus is confined to the elderly, but it can affect anyone of any age, sex, nationality or profession. Mild tinnitus is common - about 10 per cent of the population have it all the time and, in up to one per cent of adults, this may affect the quality of their life. People who are hard of hearing can also experience tinnitus.

## Does tinnitus cause hearing loss?

No this is a myth. Often people say they cannot hear because of the noise of their tinnitus, however the reason the tinnitus is so loud is due to the fact that they are no longer hearing some sounds around them, allowing the ear to focus on internal noise (tinnitus) rather than being distracted by everyday environmental sounds. The harder the ear has to strain to hear sound, the louder the tinnitus will become.

## Is there a cure for tinnitus?

At present there is no cure for tinnitus, but there are ways to learn to cope with it.

Most people will feel their tinnitus is louder when they are in a quieter environment, especially at night when trying to go to sleep. If this is the case you can leave the radio or tv on quietly or use soundpillows or tinnitus relaxers which play a whole range of sounds, from birdsong to ocean surf. The added sound takes the brain's focus away from the tinnitus.

A similar effect happens if the tinnitus has been brought on by a hearing loss. Once a hearing aid is fitted, the aid makes things more audible, you are more relaxed, less tense and the brain is distracted from the tinnitus by everything it can now hear. Even in a quiet situation the tinnitus becomes less audible, as it is distracted by environmental sounds it can now pick up.

Most people report a worsening of their tinnitus when they are anxious or tired. Learning to relax is probably one of the most useful things you can do to help yourself. Those who practise relaxation say it reduces the loudness of their tinnitus and helps them become indifferent to it.

Activity, both mental and physical is therefore helping to block the tinnitus signal from your conscious mind.

The important message is not to do anything because of your tinnitus, just to avoid silence and the brain will do the rest. Remember, tinnitus is like any sound, it is not the source of the sound that is important, but your interpretation of it (speech, music, alarms, background noise, etc.). Your reaction to these sounds are more dependant on your frame of mind and reaction, than the actual sound it self.

You can find more information about tinnitus from the British Tinnitus Association, **Freephone 0800 0180527** Website [www.tinnitus.org.uk](http://www.tinnitus.org.uk) or for products suggested in this article contact **RNID on 01733 361199** or [www.rnid.org.uk/solutions](http://www.rnid.org.uk/solutions)

# Technology Corner: CROS & BiCROS Systems

## Turning one sided challenges into all round hearing delight.

The new Phonak Cros is the smallest and most stylish wireless cros /bicros solution designed to meet your individual needs and preferences.

Phonak Cros consists of only two parts, a transmitter microphone for the ear that cannot benefit from a hearing aid, and a receiver hearing aid on the better hearing ear. This means that when sound comes from your poorer hearing side it will be wirelessly sent to your better ear. This will enable you to hear sounds regardless of where they come from.

### CROS



When you have normal hearing on one side (Cros). The transmitter placed behind or inside your poorer ear, picks up sound and transmits it wirelessly to the normal hearing ear. The hearing in your good ear will remain natural and completely unaffected.

### BiCROS



When you also have a hearing loss in your better ear (BiCROS). The transmitter placed behind or inside your poorer ear, picks up sound and transmits it wirelessly to the better hearing ear. At the same time,

the receiving hearing aid also serves as an amplifier improving hearing in that ear.

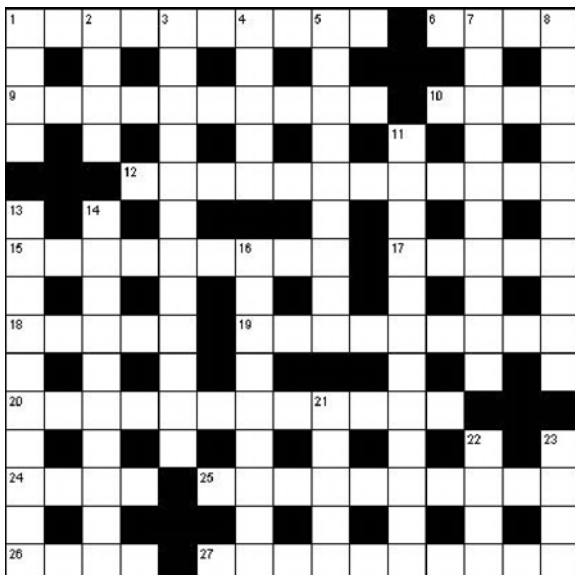
Phonak cros is the smallest wireless cros system. It is available in award winning behind the ear style or as a discreet custom in the ear.



For more information about these aids please call 01600 772 111

## Crossword - Win a Prize!

Congratulations to Mr Ray Morris, who was the lucky winner of our crossword puzzle in our last newsletter. If you would like to be a winner of £25 worth of M&S Vouchers, all you need to do is complete the crossword below, with your name, address and telephone number and return it to our shop via post or hand by 30th XXXXXX 2011. The winner will be chosen at random. Good Luck!



### ACROSS

- 1 Came across a record concerning journalist (10)
- 6 Language of old city belonging to the French (4)
- 9 They'll get wrongly blamed for heading off escape by animals (10)
- 10 There's potato in Mum's pudding (4)
- 12 Style of cooking providing contrasts (5-3-4)
- 15 Country-loving Irishman in charge of containing disturbance (9)
- 17 Giving note to terrorists makes one angry (5)
- 18 One who latches on to another is a sucker (5)
- 19 Sailor's intent perhaps is to be self-restrained (9)
- 20 A comment sure upset in due proportion (12)
- 24 Man told to get on his knees? (4)
- 25 Boundary rope may produce such a decision (10)
- 26 E.g. dogs returning from walk (4)
- 27 Not quite one's best friend on the ship (6,4)

### DOWN

- 1 Pretty girl gets some food (4)
- 2 Animal found in sea location (4)
- 3 Fat little Edward is biased (12)
- 4 The First Lady touring Oklahoma will awaken memories (5)
- 5 The thresholds of delights (9)
- 7 Heartless robbers go off with a pet. The villains! (10)
- 8 Below, below, below (10)
- 11 Managed to get clergyman in dead awkward situation (12)
- 13 They are seeking work after demolition of aspic plant (10)
- 14 Steam railway takes on head of Railtrack to improve efficiency (10)
- 16 To perform in a different key, one's parts must be arranged (9)
- 21 Went on horseback round cowboy show (5)
- 22 Junk mail from the capital (4)
- 23 Nothing but a lake (4)