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01283 245000

editorial@burtonmail.co.uk

Mail says ...

Screening programme is so vital

As journalists, it is not unusual to wonder whether articles are having a real impact in the world outside the Mail offices.

So, to hear Elfyn Parry's tale of survival off the back of picking up a copy of the newspaper has left us all thrilled. The article told of the collaboration between Burton Albion and Burton's Queen's Hospital in an effort to save lives – something both deserve immense credit for.

Awareness of prostate cancer is growing on a daily basis – many readers will have seen an advertising campaign pushed hard on our television screens lately.

Elfyn Parry is now free of the disease following surgery.

Despite this, it still remains one of the least talked about cancers. This is particularly alarming when you hear nine of just 100 men in Burton were found to be suffering from prostate cancer after just one weekend of examinations.

Thrilled to be cancer free, it is a credit to Mr Parry that he still wanted to share his story in the hope it will save other lives.

He is an incredibly lucky man – but he deserves that bit of luck after taking heed of the important message in the Burton Mail that day.

We all hope his success story influences other men to receive examinations so that in the worst case scenario, their illness is also diagnosed early. The symptoms of this kind of cancer are often completely unnoticeable – Mr Parry explained he nearly did not bother as he 'felt fine'.

Long may his good health continue – and make sure his message does not go unheard.

Cake scheme brings smiles to Burton

We all know the happiness a slice of cake brings. Whether it be chocolate, jam or even lemon drizzle, cake puts smiles on people's faces.

But sadly, not every child gets to wake up to the promise of a cake on their birthday, and despite children going through gruelling illnesses or difficult times, not every parent can afford to splash out on cake as a token of thought.

So Free Cakes for Kids, a charity which is branching out to help people in Burton, is on a mission to make sure that children who are worthy of a cake, for whatever reason, do not miss out. The scheme, which sees people referred to the charity if in need of a free cake, appeals to the human nature of the public and asks volunteers to bake the sweet treat and put a smile on a stranger's face. Get baking!

OBITUARY



Sir Ivan's tribute to 'perfect wife of a politician'

By Elizabeth Fry
elizabeth.fry@burtonmail.co.uk
@Lizzy Fry
01283 245027

Former Burton MP Sir Ivan Lawrence has paid tribute to his "most incredible" wife Gloria after she lost her battle with cancer.

Gloria Lawrence, 76, who lived in Shepperton, Surrey, died at midnight last Tuesday after an 18-month battle with lung cancer that had spread to her brain.

As well as supporting her husband as a barrister and MP, Gloria had been a well-loved Blue Badge tour guide based in Burton and specialised in tours of British stately homes for rich American tourists.

Sir Ivan, now 79, who held the parliamentary seat for Burton from 1974 to 1997, lost his 45-year-old daughter, Rachel, to lung failure because of cystic fibrosis three years ago and he said that he now has two holes in his life.

He said: "Gloria was the most incredible lady. I was totally devoted to her because she was so lovely. We were a little team and we did everything we could together.

"Losing Rachel was a great hole in my life. Now there are two holes blown in my life, and this is the second one."

Gloria was born in Whickham, near Newcastle, and went on to study

occupational therapy at Oxford.

It was at the Oxford University Progressive Jewish Society that she met Sir Ivan in 1960 when he was president of the society and studying law at the university.

He said: "I thought she was gorgeous and I couldn't take my eyes off her."

Sir Ivan explained that he was not ready for marriage and so Gloria left to work in Venice, Italy.

He said: "She said 'if you want me, come and get me', and so I did.

"I drove with my parents to go and get her. I proposed to her in a big car park outside Venice at 3am."

The pair were married at the West London Synagogue in April 1966 and celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary earlier this year.

Gloria became a literary agent, but then gave up work in 1968 when she had their daughter Rachel and cared for her for the next 10 years.

When Sir Lawrence was voted MP for Burton in 1974, the family moved to Grove Farm, Drakelow. Gloria became a Blue Badge tour guide and continued to work until three years ago. In her spare time she was heavily involved in Burton Conservatives.

Sir Ivan said that his wife's support throughout his time as a barrister and an MP was invaluable.



He said: "She was the perfect parliamentary wife. Her whole life was dedicated to me. She ran a wonderful home which was open to lots of people.

"To come home to a loving home from the pressures of the courts and parliament is such a wonderful thing to be able to do.

"She made me happy to be both a barrister and a member of parliament."

In 1992, they moved to Newton Road in Burton, and only recently sold the house. In their golden years the pair often spent Christmas in Cape Town and enjoyed

Sir Ivan Lawrence with his wife Gloria, main picture, at the launch of his book My Life in Crime; after his election defeat in the 1997 General Election, top left, and at the polling station in Rolleston with his family, above.

holidays to the Caribbean when Sir Ivan was invited to speak on cruise ships.

Gloria successfully fought throat cancer 25 years ago and also beat breast cancer in her lifetime.

However, 18 months ago she was diagnosed with terminal lung cancer which metastasised to her brain.

A funeral for Gloria will be held at 2pm on Thursday, October 13, at Putney Vale Crematorium, followed by a wake at Cannizaro House Hotel, in Wimbledon. Anyone from Burton who knew Gloria is welcome to attend the funeral.

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'The Mail helped to save my life'

Ellyn Parry, 73, says going along to the prostate screening event at Burton Albion's Pirelli Stadium was the best decision he's ever made after reading about it in the Mail.



■ 'I want to spread the message about how important prostate cancer screening is', says man who saw story in the Mail about a screening day at the Pirelli Stadium, decided to go along and was then diagnosed. He is now cancer free.

See Page 5

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PROSTATE CANCER

The Mail led Elfyn to get a lifesaving screening

By Rob Helliwell

robert.helliwell@burtonmail.co.uk
@BMrobhelliwell
01283 245031

A cancer survivor has heaped praise on his doctors, a football club and the Burton Mail after an article helped potentially save his life.

There was nothing unusual about the day Elfyn Parry walked into Measham petrol station and picked up a copy of the Burton Mail – he felt well and had no health concerns.

It just happened that on this day the Mail had run a page three article on a prostate screening session due to take place at the Pirelli Stadium in a jointly supported event with Burton Albion and Queen's Hospital.

Reading the article, Mr Parry, 73, decided he would like to take the opportunity to be screened. It was arguably the best decision he has ever made.

Mr Parry lives in Oakthorpe with his wife of 19 years, Fiona. He said: "I thought it was a good article when I read it and even though there was no indication there was anything wrong, I thought I would go along."

"They did a rectal examination and a blood test. I went home and was glad it was out of the way and didn't really think about it again."

"That was until a letter arrived the following week asking me to go into hospital. They said my PSA (prostate specific antigen) level was high and I had a biopsy."

"Another week later and

the test results came back. They weren't good."

Mr Parry was diagnosed with prostate cancer and then underwent full body MRI scans and faced a nervous wait to find out if it had spread to other parts of his body.

Thankfully the early detection of the disease meant these scans came back clear – meaning surgery was an option rather than chemotherapy. On May 25 of this year, just two months after he read the Burton Mail article, the retired geologist had his prostate removed by Mr Alan Doherty and his team at Queen Elizabeth Hospital, Birmingham.

The operation was a success and as he recovered from the surgery Mr Parry waited for news on the cancer.

On July 7 he heard the magical words he had been waiting for – 'you are cancer free'.

Mr Parry said: "I just felt very fortunate that on that morning I picked up the newspaper and read what was happening at Burton Albion."

"I am grateful to the newspaper, to the football club and to Jyoti Shah and her team at Burton, and Mr Doherty and his colleagues in Birmingham."

Doctors had described Mr Parry's cancer as aggressive, and the early detection almost certainly significantly increased his chances of winning his battle.

Mr and Mrs Parry, who have four children and seven grandchildren between them, are now looking to the future.

Mr Parry said: "It has been



Elfyn Parry says reading an article in the Burton Mail saved his life after he decided to take up an opportunity to be tested for prostate cancer. He is pictured with his wife, Fiona, below.



a hard few months but I've nearly fully got my strength back now.

"We had to cancel a holiday we had booked for Croatia when I had my surgery so re-booking is quite high on the agenda."

"I want the message to get out there of how important

prostate cancer screening is. "The Burton Albion screening was well organised and there should be more like that."

"Of the 100 men screened I understand nine of them were found to have cancer."

"There will be others in the Burton area who have pro-

state cancer but don't know it. We need more of these screenings and when they do take place people need to take advantage of it."

Watch a video interview with Elfyn Parry
Visit us at burtonmail.co.uk

HOPES THAT PROSTATE SCREENING WILL RETURN TO THE PIRELLI

Burton Albion Football Club's link-up with Queen's Hospital in offering cancer screening over a weekend in March saw more than 100 men have their prostate examined.

Demand was high and doctors even had to turn some away as it proved impossible

to screen everyone that came along.

The hope now is that screening will return to the stadium, and that on a national scale this is made more available to men.

Jyoti Shah is the consultant urological surgeon at Queen's Hospital and was

instrumental in the treatment of Mr Parry. She said following the Burton Albion event: "There is certainly a real willingness in the community to come forward for the checks. We had to turn away 87 men who called the hospital and a further 50 who contacted Burton Albion as

we were oversubscribed.

"We'll be appealing for the commissioners to provide the funding required to make this happen again. If anyone has any concerns about their prostate in the meantime they should go and have a discussion with their GP."

John Widdowson, from Burton Albion Community Trust, said: "We're looking at the next steps of how we support this again."

"It was a massive team effort to make this happen and the trust is behind any efforts to do this again and, if possible, expand it."

SPORT

Racing and a pint at the racecourse

Race-goers are being invited to enjoy a tippie while making the most of the racing action in East Staffordshire.

Uttoxeter Racecourse will be hosting its Marston's Beer Festival Raceday on Saturday, November 12 with organisers promising it will be another highlight of the already successful year at the course.

A spokesman for the racecourse said: "As autumn events go, the promise of some top-class National Hunt horse racing combined with a great selection of real ales in the specially erected beer festival marquee is likely to draw another large and vociferous crowd."

"Traditionally one of the famous racecourse's most popular meets of the year, it's guaranteed to offer a fantastic atmosphere, with seven races on the card – from the first at 12.30pm to the last at 4pm. Plus, there's plenty of time between races to try the numerous real ales on offer."

Tickets for the day are available at www.utttoxeter-racecourse.co.uk or by phoning the racecourse office on 01889 562561.

CRIME

Cash stolen from cars

Mobile phones and cash were stolen from two cars in Burton over the weekend after thieves smashed the windows of the vehicles.

Police are appealing for witnesses after incidents took place in Upton Drive and Leicester Street in the town.

Both incidents involved offenders who smashed windows in order to reach in and take items from the cars including a mobile phone and cash.

Anyone with any information is asked to call 101 quoting incident numbers 212 of October 8 and 493 of October 9.

DISPLAY

Artist to host exhibition

An artist from Stapenhill will be hosting an exhibition detailing Burton's history for the next two weeks.

David Clay, 78, will be showcasing his exhibition at Burton Library until October 24.

Mr Clay said: "There is a variety of paintings in different mediums which showcase Burton town and its past. I do hope that people go along and take a look."

Any proceeds from paintings that are sold will go to the British Heart Foundation and Prostate Cancer UK.