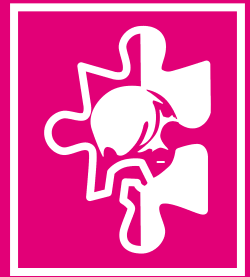


Autism Anglia

Formerly The Essex Autistic Society, NACHA & The Norfolk Autistic Society



newsletter

issue No 17 new year 2009

Autism Anglia Supports Autism Bill



Bernard Jenkin MP

Bernard Jenkin MP for North Essex and Patron of Autism Anglia has pledged to ensure a brighter future for people with autism in the area by backing a draft Private Members' Bill, launched by The National Autistic Society and supported by Autism Anglia.

With 40% of adults with autism living at home with their parents and over 60% relying on them financially, the Autism Bill aims to improve the lives of the half a million people with autism in the UK, many of whom do not receive the support that would help them become more independent and achieve their potential in adulthood.

Bernard said; "Autism is much more common than most people think and it is crucial that there is appropriate support at a local level. This important Bill has the potential to make a real difference to people living with autism in my constituency and provides me with a unique opportunity to take action."

Autism Anglia Chief Executive, Clive Stobbs, said; "We are very pleased that Bernard and Autism Anglia are able to support this Autism Bill. We are actively campaigning with the National Autistic Society to encourage other MPs to follow Bernard's lead. In the UK over two million people's lives are touched by autism every single day and too many people with autism are excluded from appropriate services".



Clive Stobbs

The Autism Bill aims to compel local authorities and NHS bodies to recognise and fulfil their responsibilities towards people with autism. Measures proposed include: improving local information on the number of people with autism, providing effective support during the transition from child to adult services, appropriate staff training, and the promotion of appropriate packages of support to enable independent living for people with the disability.

The Bill has attracted support from across the autism sector and Autism Anglia and the National Autistic Society are urging MPs and local people to pledge their support for the bill at www.autism.org.uk/autismbill.

Merger brings new Patron to Autism Anglia

Autism Anglia has welcomed the merger



with the Norfolk Autistic Society which took place on the 29th August 2008. The merger has brought with it experienced new staff and trustees and we are honoured to report that their Patron, the Bishop of

Norwich has agreed to continue to be a Patron of Autism Anglia.

Bishop Graham was enthroned as the 71st Bishop of Norwich on the 29th January 2000 and is the Chairman of the Central Advisory Committee who advise the BBC and ITV on all matters related to religious broadcasting. We are very much looking forward to the Autism Anglia summer event which will take place in the Bishop's garden on the 7th June 2009.

What's Inside...

New Staff

New Vice President

Community News

Trustee Interview

Updates from all our services

and lots more...

"All Autism Anglia staff wish you a Happy New Year!" Clive Stobbs

New Vice President

We are very pleased to welcome Simon Baron-Cohen as the new Vice President of Autism Anglia.



Simon is Professor of Developmental Psychopathology at the University of Cambridge and Fellow at Trinity College, Cambridge. He is Director of the Autism Research Centre (ARC) in Cambridge. He holds degrees in Human Sciences from New College, Oxford, a PhD in Psychology from UCL, and an M.Phil in Clinical Psychology at the Institute of Psychiatry.

He is also Director of CLASS (Cambridge Lifespan Asperger Syndrome Service), a clinic for adults with suspected AS. He has written many books and won prizes for his work so we are delighted that he has agreed to support us in the work we do across East Anglia.

Meet the Norwich Team

At the Norwich office we are here to help, support and inform. We have a library of books which you are most welcome to borrow from. We can also help by signposting you to other organisations.

Norwich Office 01603 631171
norwich@autism-anglia.org.uk

Bridget Godfrey - Office Manager



"Hello everyone, my name is Bridget Godfrey and I am the Norwich Office Manager. My background is in nursing, advocacy and management. I moved to Norfolk in October 2006 and started work for the Norfolk Autistic Society in January 2007 I now look forward to being part of the future development of Autism Anglia in Norfolk."

Chris Lowe - Administration Assistant

"I'm the Admin Assistant at the Norwich Office. I've worked for the Norfolk Autistic Society for five years, dealing mostly with membership and the library. I enjoy working for an organisation which makes a difference to people's lives."



Jean Howes - Finance



"I joined the Norfolk Autistic Society as the Office Administrator at the newly opened Lambert House in 1993 until 1997. I was also Treasurer for NAS and I continued this after retirement to the present time, mostly on a voluntary basis."

Family Support

*Hello from the Family Support Department,
What have we been up to?*

Expansion of the Family Support Team

We would like to welcome the Norfolk Family Support Workers Ruth Howitt and Lindsey Heard to Autism Anglia, and look forward to working with them.

Lindsey Heard Family Support Worker



'Hello I am Lindsey. I would like to introduce myself as one of the Family Support Team for Autism Anglia. I have been working with families and individuals in Norfolk for the past two years as part of the Norfolk Autistic Society. My previous experience as a special needs Teaching Assistant has enabled me to appreciate some of the difficulties families face in finding appropriate education for their autistic children.

I am very much looking forward to working with the team based in Colchester in supporting families to access services and helping to improve the lives of children and adults'.

lheard@autism-anglia.org.uk or 01603 721460

Ruth Howitt Family Support Worker



'My name is Ruth Howitt and I have been working for the Norfolk Autistic Society for the last 5 years. I am now looking forward to working within a larger team.

My background is in Learning Disabilities and nursing as well as working as a Community Nurse supporting families. During this time I worked with both adults and children on the autistic spectrum.

Following this, I supported a little boy on the autistic spectrum in mainstream education for 4 years and gained a lot more experience of the educational system.

As a Family Support Worker I am able to combine my different skills and work experiences and it is a challenging but very rewarding job.'

rhowitt@autism-anglia.org.uk or 01603 465947

Norfolk Alert Card Launch

We launched the scheme in Norfolk on the 9th October; the Autism Alert Card now covers Essex, Suffolk and Norfolk. The launch was well attended and the cards are going from strength to strength.



Assistant Chief Constable Simon Bailey, Clive Stobbs, Alert Card holder David & John Sparkes

We have now issued over 450 cards to date, with more applications coming in daily.

We have been working with The Children's Legal Centre, S.A.F.E. and the National Autistic Society to form the Essex Consortium for Autism. The consortium has regular meetings to discuss what is happening in schools and to identify and share good practice. We have a meeting planned with Mr. Pocock Head of Special Educational Needs in December, and will be letting him know about the difficulties that families affected by autism experience within the school environment.

We produce an information leaflet for teachers which can be downloaded from our website www.autism-anglia.org.uk

Essex Business Awards

We were absolutely thrilled to win our second award for Best Business in the Community! The awards evening was fantastic and we are very grateful to Essex & Suffolk Water who judged the category for recognising the effort and commitment of the work we do. It means an awful lot to the team!

Finally a big thank you to all those people who have supported us over the last year, to the trusts and foundations who have funded us, also to the clubs, groups, families and individuals who have made donations. Your generosity has meant that families in need of support have had somewhere to turn.



Jo Keys, Clive Stobbs, Helen Leckie & Wendy Bixby

Happy New Year from the Family Support Department!

Jo Keys
Family Support Officer

Community Support

New service users have settled well into Egerton Green Road and all seven houses are looking forward to Christmas and New Year. Berechurch are to be thanked for the fantastic Halloween Party which was a great success and thoroughly enjoyed by both service users and staff.



The New Year is promising to be as exciting as 2008 with Beacon Way extending the community support project and will be home for another 3 service users.

Community News

Kate Bush told us that residents Victoria and Richard from Whitstone House decided it would be nice to visit Longleat Animal Park after Victoria had seen 'Animal Park' on TV. After some discussion with Victoria and Richard it was agreed it would be a great place for a holiday.



After lots of excitement and planning the holiday was arranged, Victoria and Dicky enjoyed visits to Longleat Animal Park, Stonehenge, the New Forest and Weston Super Mare beach. On the final day of their holiday they were taken to Cheddar driving past the caves and through the gorge, it was beautiful and Victoria enjoyed seeing the wild goats that live there.



They enjoyed their holiday so much Kate tells us they are already planning their next visit!

On Route to Special Olympics

'One of Norfolk's inspiring hopefuls' – that is what was quoted in the Eastern Daily Press on November 7th 2008. Who were they talking about? – Simon, a service user who lives in Norwich.

For the last two years Simon has been a regular and enthusiastic member of the Breckland Special Olympics cycling group. Along with fellow cyclists in the group he attends one hour cycling sessions at the Norfolk show ground, Costessey. These occur fortnightly throughout the summer months. Simon is primarily supported by Aly, his key-worker when attending this activity and rides a tricycle when doing so, completing up to ten laps (4000 metres) of the course.



On the 9th November Simon attended the group's Annual General Meeting in the village hall of New Buckenham, where he received the trophy for 'most improved member'.

In April 2009 Simon will be compete in the region's cycling championships and will then go forward to the Special Olympic national games being held in Leicester in June 2009.

Simon has been awarded a grant of £650 by the Norfolk Sports and Cultural Foundation, which will enable him and his key worker Aly to attend.

He will compete over 500m, 1000m and 5000m on his tricycle, supported by Aly.



Good luck Simon!

Speech & Language

In November, Autism Anglia employed another Speech and Language Therapist, Vicky Craig, to join the current Speech and Language Therapist Bethan Franklin. Vicky will be working across school and adult services, and will also carry out staff training in both services. Bethan and Vicky are looking forward to expanding and developing what Speech and Language Therapy can offer to the students and adults within Autism Anglia.



Vicky Craig – Speech & Language Therapist

Clinical Psychology

Fran Davies, our Lead Clinical Psychologist has been joined by three new members of staff in the last couple of months. Welcome to Lee Robinson and Alexis Hargreaves, our Assistant Psychologists who are with us for a year in order to gain experience of the Clinical Psychologist's role, and to Claire Morrish who is our new Trainee Clinical Psychologist who joins us from Essex University.



Lee Robinson and Alexis Hargreaves

Peldon Campus News

Service users Samuel L, Richard B and Wayne K began to redesign a sensory garden within the garden of Peldon Campus. The sensory garden now includes 'stepping stone logs', various wind chimes and mobiles, a solar powered water feature, bench, flowers and a very colourful sand box with multi coloured sand. Well done to all who helped with this project.



Service users from Seymour House have recently returned from a weekend in Blackpool to see the illuminations and a further two service users from Peldon Old Rectory went to Center Parcs for a week in November.

Thanks to Sue Noy for the recently donated strider, Stuart is getting a lot of use from it!



Thanks to all those staff who supported activities such as the 25th Anniversary party and the sponsored walks in 2008! And to all those who sponsored us and donated their time!

Happy New Year to all the service users, staff and supporters of Peldon!

Michelle Smith - Registered Manager

Jigsaw Study Centre

What a busy year! With 53 students now attending Jigsaw, we have only a few spaces left. However those few spaces will be offered to those on the waiting list early in 2009.

We would like to welcome our new students Guy, Steven, Christie and Stephen H who have all settled in well during the last few weeks. And a big thank you to the staff at Jigsaw for their dedication and professionalism during the last year.

Paula Whiting – Manager

Art Report

It has been a busy summer for the Art Department. We welcome our new Art Assistant Lindsay Green.



During September a group of our students were able to use their skills to help other people. We responded to a local appeal for donations of anything from soap to pencils to give to children in Romanian orphanages. We sewed gift bags to be filled for Christmas.

We were also able to respond to a request for donations of artwork for a fundraising event in aid of a local Hospice. We sent three pieces of work to be auctioned at a special event evening.

We have become members of the Dacon Trust Ltd. The Trust provides work and life skills training and has an art café in Colchester. Our Art and Woodwork departments will be exhibiting at the gallery in 2009.

Sue B decided to give my old garden gnome a fresh coat of paint... now we have our very own 'Elf and Safety' officer keeping an eye on us.



Sue has entered a piece of her work into the NAS Creativity Competition, the theme being 'My life with autism or Asperger Syndrome'. Sue's drawing is based on her life living with Asperger Syndrome in 'general needs' flats.



Sue says "All the scenes in each of the flats shown represent all the things I've heard having lived in 'general needs' flats for 13 years. There is a desperate need for flats specifically for those with Asperger Syndrome and high functioning autism."

*Sylvia Senior
Senior Art Instructor*

Doucecroft School

This issue, we are lucky to be able to present some of the children's recent schoolwork.

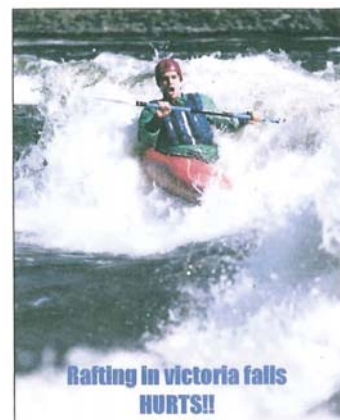
Joe B, 13, has been working on some creative writing as part of his Key Stage 3 English. He has been looking at the media, and produced this newspaper article (in which the central figure is named after his teacher, Kuben Reddy).

THE DAILY JOE

A man realises that rafting in Victoria Falls is painfully stupid and cold to ride in his pyjamas.

Kuben Reddy of Durban South Africa, thought all his dreams had come at once when he won first prize in a raffle, but looking at his face you would think he just had shock of his life.

He broke his ankle and lost the kayak resorting to swim thirty metres to the bank. He found himself surrounded by a tribe who nursed him back to health and showed him there ways of life. Kuben who was renamed the running river. He learned to hunt but was terrible at it so stayed with the women, the men mocked him for the fact that he spent time washing up and cooking but the cooking didn't go down so well.

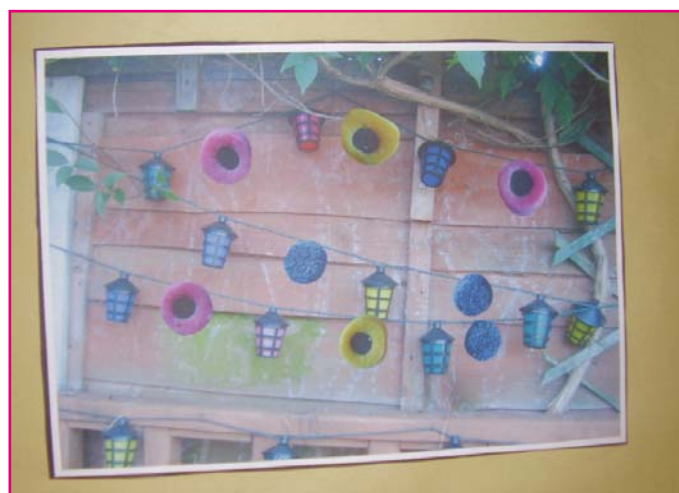


Rafting in victoria falls HURTS!!



Kuben in happier circumstances winning world TITLE by swapping with the stig

Artwork completed by Joshua G, also 13:



FE Department

It has been a busy term at the FE Dept, with five new students starting their 16 to 19 provision with us. There have been difficulties in getting a regular cook/tutor established but we are happily sorted on that front now! Our students have been developing their understanding of the importance of contributing to society, through the organisation of a MacMillan Coffee Morning, which raised £234.11 for the charity.

We will be fundraising for Children in Need too and hope to be able to contribute a good sum there. In developing their gardening skills our students produced a range of harvest vegetables, which enabled them to produce a super "Harvest Bonfire" feast for us. As the name suggests, we combined the seasonal celebrations for this event, burning the scarecrows that protected the vegetable plots and enjoyed the fruits of the students' labour. Sadly, we lose our invaluable secretary Ann Pomeroy at Christmas when she retires. Ann has been with us since the FE Dept opened in October 1999 and has been a loyal and truly hardworking colleague. We wish her well and will really miss her!



Barbara Morrison & Wendy Bixby receiving a cheque from Bernie Ward of HBOS Foundation

Thanks to the PJK Charitable Trust, Essex Youth Trust, HBOS and Augustine Courtauld Trust for their contribution towards the Training Kitchen Project. We still have a way to go but hope to get the project underway next year.

Finally, thanks to Andrew Phillips for his generous donation of the two guitars for our students who have expressed an interest in learning to play.

Barbara Morrison - FE Department Manager

Would you like your newsletter emailed to you?

If so tell us who you are and email us at

fundraising@autism-anglia.org.uk

and put 'Newsletter' in the subject line.

Fundraising

The Fundraising Team have had a busy time over the last few months with the re-branding of the charity to 'Autism Anglia', the launch of the Autism Alert Card in Norfolk, reporting to existing funders on the progress of projects and organising events such as the Christmas Fair and the Norfolk Bridge day.

Wendy is now covering the Fundraising Officer position after we said a temporary 'farewell' to Anna who has now gone onto maternity leave.



We are pleased to welcome Claire Rodie the new Fundraising Assistant to the team. She will be helping to support Wendy with all fundraising activities.

With the recent merger with Norfolk Autistic Society we were very fortunate to welcome Maureen Leveton into the fundraising team. She continues to organise very successful fundraising activities in and around Norwich. Most recently Maureen arranged a Bridge Day which sold out! Autism Anglia is very grateful to Roger Stenson who volunteered on the day and to Lady Warpole for allowing us to use her beautiful home for the event. Thank you!



Maureen Leveton – Fundraiser

'I have worked for the Norfolk Autistic Society since March 2000, initially as Office Administrator. In 2005, I decided to 'retire' from that position, but enjoyed working for the Charity and knowing how desperately they needed funds, I offered to become the fundraiser on a part-time basis. This was accepted, so I have been the fundraiser during the last three years organising about three or four functions per year which bring in a reasonable amount - the highest being £3000 from an Art Exhibition early in 2008'.

Dates for your Diary 09

13th March 09

Murder Mystery Event (Norwich)

2nd April 09

**World Autism Awareness Day
Open Day at Head Office** (Colchester, Essex)

18th & 19th April 09

Colchester Charity Jailbreak (Essex)

12th May 09

Autism Anglia Golf Day
(Channels Golf Club, Chelmsford, Essex)

7th June 09

Bishop of Norwich Garden Party

Registration forms and more information about events can be seen on our website www.autism-anglia.org.uk

Meet Gill Norton, Trustee with an Interest in Fundraising



Gill Norton has been a trustee for Autism Anglia for three years and in order to better understand her role within Autism Anglia, we put a few questions to her.

Gill told us a bit about her background and how she is a nurse and health visitor by profession.

'My whole career has been spent in the health service.'

Gill told us that she has always been interested in how health issues affect the whole family.

Over the years Gill's interest in children and teenagers who were disadvantaged grew and as a result she set up The Pavement Project, a charity where youth workers met young people on the street and addressed their issues. This was a huge success and is now a template for other youth related projects.

Gill advised us that she met families with autistic spectrum children through the varied work she did with families.

'I realised how autism affected the whole family, not just the person with autism. I felt it was a huge privilege to work with families who were struggling to get the best for their children and I learnt a good deal.'

Gill has been a member of Inner Wheel (wives and partners of Rotarians) for 20 years and four years ago became president of Colchester Trinity Inner Wheel and was heavily involved in arranging fundraising activities.

Gill came across Autism Anglia by chance one day in the rain.

'I was driving to see a friend in Colchester and saw the Jigsaw sign! I stopped the car and went in; I met Paula Whiting the manager of Jigsaw, who showed me around. I was so impressed by the work they were doing and had previously been unaware that there were any facilities like this for people with autism. I really feel it was fate that I stopped my car that day and as a result I chose them as my charity for the year.'

Over time Gill really got to know people in the society and the school and residential homes.

'When John Sparkes and Clive Stobbs asked 3 years ago if I'd like to be a trustee, I had no hesitation in saying yes because I was aware that the charity was a centre of excellence and all the people working there were a real team and it was more like one big family. Not only that but the organisation walks alongside the people it helps, and asks what they need instead of telling them, which I feel is the best way of helping people.'

Since becoming a trustee Gill has seen the charity grow from strength to strength, developing to extend the services of the charity across East Anglia.

Gill is one of eight trustees who meet on a regular basis under the chairmanship of John Sparkes. She feels the charity is very fortunate to have the support and dedication of people like John and Clive Stobbs, and believes they have been instrumental in building the charity in the most effective way.

'We discuss, monitor and evaluate the developments within the charity. As well as this, we have a responsibility to ensure the charity meets its legal and organisational regulations. Every trustee brings their own skills and expertise and therefore we have a very broad base of knowledge and interests.'

In the summer of 2008 John and Clive asked Gill if she would be the trustee with an interest in fundraising as they felt she would be able to contribute to the fundraising efforts of the charity.

'It is often underestimated how much work actually has to go into making applications for funding. It is a huge job and very time consuming but very necessary for the future of many charities.'

Gill's whole life has been both professionally and socially linked to networking with people in the community and she loves to tell people about Autism Anglia and all that it encompasses for the children, adults and families it works with.

'It has been a very exciting time for Autism Anglia and now that NACHA and Norfolk Autistic Society have come on board this means the services can be extended and our base of expertise broadened.'

Supermarket Collection Dates 2009

Fri 23rd and Sat 24th Jan
Somerfield, Leigh-on-Sea, Essex

Fri 6th and Sat 7th Feb
Tesco, Tiptree, Essex

Fri 20th and Sat 21st Feb
Somerfield, Leigh-on-Sea, Essex

Fri 13th and Sat 14th Mar
Sainsburys, Braintree, Essex

Sat 28th and Sun 29th Mar
Sainsburys, Canvey Island, Essex

Sat 16th May
Solar, Halstead, Essex

Sat 6th Jun
Solar, Leiston, Suffolk

Fri 12th and Sat 13th Jun
Tesco Extra, Colchester, Essex

Fri 19th and Sat 20th Jun
Sainsburys, Priory Walk, Colchester, Essex

Sat 4th and Sun 5th Jul
Somerfield, Braintree, Essex

Sat 5th and Sun 6th Sep
Somerfield, Braintree, Essex

**Please contact the Fundraising Team
if you can help out on any of these dates!**

Useful Contacts:

The National Autistic Society Information, Advice and Support
0845 070 4004 www.nas.org.uk

Families inFocus (Essex) Supporting families of children and young people with disabilities and special needs
01245 353575 www.familiesinfocusessex.org

Colchester Carers Centre (For Children) Provides a range of services to families, carers of children with disabilities
01206 560997 www.cccfrc@aol.com

The Children's Legal Centre Promoting Children's Rights
0845 120 2948 www.childrenslegalcentre.com

SNAP (Special Needs and Parents)
Essex wide support group for parents and carers
01277 211300 www.snapcharity.org

PARC Play & Resource Centre near Braintree for children with disabilities and their families
01376 528999 www.parc-essex.co.uk

Asperger East Anglia
01603 620500 www.asperger.org.uk

Disability Rights (Norfolk)
01508 491570 www.ncodp.org.uk

A Very BIG Thank You!

The **family & friends of Grace Mills** for their in memory donations.

Paul Winsley for running the marathon.

Les Winsley for the Golf Day.

Essex Community Foundation - Sports Relief Fund.

Crowlands Heath Golf Club & D & T Sporting Trophies.

Colchester Round Table.

Colchester Business & Professional Luncheon Club.

Essex County Football Association.

Marconi employees.

Appleyard Fayre.



To all the individuals, clubs, groups and supporters, thank you!

Head Office

We would like to welcome to head office, new staff members **Jo Jarvis** (Receptionist), **Claudia Aldridge** (TEACCH Assistant) and the new members of the Finance team, **Richard Peake** and **Catherine Dixey**.

Recycling

Since our last newsletter we have received just over £42 for the cartridges and mobile phones we have recycled. Please use the link below to go to our recycling page or call us for more envelopes.

www.recycle4charity.co.uk/intelsignup.aspx?supporterid=C887



Easy Fundraising

A simple way to shop online and raise money for us, just go to the website, www.easyfundraising.org.uk select us as your chosen charity and shop the normal way. This costs no more than your actual shop and raises us money in the process!

Make us your Charity of the Year

When Sandra Griggs became Ladies Captain at Burstead Golf club she very kindly chose Autism Anglia as her 'Charity of the Year'. The Golf Club have raised money through cycle rides, Golf Days and are ending the year with a Ball!



We are very grateful to all those who have helped with organising the events at Burstead Golf Club, and special thanks go to Sandra, Graham and Terri for their outstanding support!

All your efforts make such a difference to the work that we do!

Support from clubs, groups and organisations is essential in helping us raise money towards bigger projects!

Fundraising Targets for 2009

1. To build a Training Kitchen for students at our Further Education Department. This will allow students to develop life skills so that they can learn how to be more independent in adult life.
2. To build the new John Jones House within the grounds of the Peldon Campus and purchase all the equipment for adults with autism and complex needs.
3. Family Support Services will need funding to continue their work with families throughout East Anglia.
4. Further Education Annual Trip for students to experience a holiday environment where they can incorporate what has been learned in the class room.
5. To equip our services right across the board with sensory gardens and equipment.

Society News

Congratulations to Anna and Josh on the birth of their lovely baby boy and congratulations to Margaret Millar for guessing the correct sex and weight of lovely baby Sonny!