

Grahame Howard's Name Newsletter

Incorporating STOMACARE

Welcome

Jan 2010 – Issue # 1

This is my first official Newsletter through Author's Den and I am thrilled about it.

Such a lot has happened this year that it is difficult to know where to start. Firstly back in February **ALL BAGGED UP** was published by Pneuma Springs. This addresses my 10 year struggle with ulcerative colitis before having a permanent ileostomy. The book not only gives my account but offers many tips, advice, suggestions and encouragement to people in the same position. It is underpinned with my Christian faith.

Secondly, two of my children's fantasy books – **THE WISHING BOOK** and **THE WISHING BOOK 2 – RETURN TO MARS** have also been published. These are exciting adventures about a group of children who find a magical book that has the ability to grant wishes. The children soon begin to try this out through various escapades before finding themselves on Planet Mars with Martians and monsters chasing them intent on getting hold of the book so they can take over the universe. The three books have all received excellent reviews and are very popular.

I receive many emails concerning UC, Crohn's and other bowel disorders together with requests for support regarding stoma surgery and living with a stoma. Recently, I received an email from a television company who are researching the idea of televising embarrassing illnesses and conditions. They plan to address living with a stoma at some stage. This is a great breakthrough.

In This Issue:

- In this month's Newsletter, I would like to feature an article that I wrote for Author's Den entitled Coping with Embarrassment. It addresses bowel disorders.
- I would also like to give a background to why I write, how it all began and the struggles encountered.
- I will also offer advice for writer's to help them get published.
- Finally I would like to encourage people with a bowel disorder or with a stoma pre-op or post op.

1. Feature Article: Coping with Embarrassment

Coping with Embarrassment

It is not easy to live with a bowel disorder. The embarrassment can be so overwhelming. Many people in our world today, live with many illnesses on a day to day basis and they take a lot of resilience to be able to cope with them.

For many, a bowel disorder - irritable Bowel Syndrome or the more debilitating ulcerative colitis or Crohn's disease, can be extremely painful and embarrassing. UC and Crohn's disease can be very frightening, demanding and in some cases if not treated, life threatening. And yet, when symptoms are discovered, many people tend to ignore them for a time because of feeling embarrassed to mention it.

With ulcerative colitis, the colon (the large bowel) becomes inflamed and ulcers form causing terrible pain and discomfort. The whole colon can become affected which leads to frequent

trips to the toilet that can become totally out of control throughout the day. It is embarrassing! It is also a time when panic can take over because it is natural to feel that it may be bowel cancer.

I remember the time when I first discovered that something was not quite right. I'd been having severe abdominal pains for quite a while. The pains were so intense, they made me gasp. Shortly afterwards followed the 'dashing' to the toilet with such a strong urgency. The passing of blood almost devastated me and I did not know what to do or say.

No one knows how 'urgent' urgent is, unless they have a bowel disorder. The need to go to the toilet comes so quickly that many times it is impossible to get to the little room in time. 'Accidents' can and do happen and this causes extreme anxiety to the sufferer. In fact, when the 'attacks' are prevalent, one can be marooned in the house because of fear to go out in case an accident occurs.

There comes a time when a trip to the doctor is inevitable. Medication can help immensely, usually steroids. However, the medication can also promote side effects that are equally not easy to live with. However, many people cope quite well with UC or Crohn's without having to have surgery.

Sadly though for some, UC can be so unforgiving and stoma surgery may have to take place to give the sufferer a better quality of life and avoid the danger of bowel cancer.

Maybe you are a sufferer. Maybe you are frightened or suffering in silence because of the embarrassment of it all. Please let me encourage you, speak with someone you trust. Also visit your doctor and have a series of tests. People live very well with the disease once it is diagnosed and a course of medication is prescribed.

Don't suffer alone. There are many support groups around who will help you to come to terms with what is happening. Also visit websites to gain further information. My website www.stomacare.org.uk receives many visitors each day and I receive many emails asking questions.

Also it may help you if you read my book **ALL BAGGED UP**. I wrote this for the bowel sufferer and ostomist alike because I could not find such a book when I needed it. The book has helped many people and is available from many online bookstores. However, Amazon.com and Barnes & Noble tend to state that it is out of print. That is not the case. I think it is because I'm in the UK and for some reason they cannot get the supplies.

It is available from Amazon.co.uk

http://www.amazon.co.uk/All-Bagged-Up-Grahame-Howard/dp/1905809476/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&s=books&qid=1260125665&sr=1-1

Please contact me if you need to. I'd love to be able to help support you.

2. How I began writing + Advice for Non-Published Authors

I began writing in the early 90's. At first I thought that I would have no difficulty in getting published. 'Just write the manuscript, send it off and that will be all,' I thought. How wrong and naive I was in those days. Eighteen years later and many manuscripts sweated over, I was still getting nowhere, except of course receiving very nice comments on the rejection letters.

I felt like giving up. In fact, I did this for several months. But every budding author knows that if they have a book inside of them, it will not go away. The bug remains. I therefore started tapping away again, much encouraged by the purchase of a new laptop. This time however, I began to focus on what I had to offer a potential reader. It came to me straightaway. I was an ostomist; I had had surgery for a permanent ileostomy after suffering for ten years with ulcerative colitis. Why not dust off my old notes I had put together on the subject and get pen to paper?

You see, when I was first diagnosed with UC, I had no knowledge of the disease except for the leaflets the hospital had given me. When I could no longer avoid stoma surgery, I yet again lacked the information that I desperately needed to help me know what I would be facing.

Right at the beginning of my suffering, I had begun taking notes and it was these that helped me to write **ALL BAGGED UP**. Within a short time, I was frantically writing with a fresh enthusiasm.

From there, I began to explore the many possibilities of getting my book published. I looked at self publishing but decided that it was too costly and very risky in recuperating the cost I would have to lay out.

After searching the web for possibilities, I came across Pneuma Springs Publishing; sent some chapters off to them and within a short time, they requested the full manuscript. They accepted my work for publication and it was released in February 2009. I have since then, had two children's fantasy novels published and look forward to many more of the same. However, if I had given up when I felt so discouraged I would never have realized the thrill of seeing my work in print.

Maybe you have a book within you and yet have met similar rejections from publishing houses. Don't give up, it's normal. It has happened to many of the world's leading authors. The secret is to keep on going and try to give the reader what they are looking for. It may help to enroll on a Creative Writing Course. That is one very sensible option. Another is to look around for a very good book on the subject of writing and getting published. These can be viewed in comfort on Amazon.co.uk.

Other writers bite the bullet and try alone. If you feel that you can put together a manuscript and make it attractive enough to get the eye of a publisher, then why not attempt this. If you do not attempt these things, you'll never know if you will be successful or not.

A very good resource is The Writer's and Artist's Year Book. This is packed with tips of how to prepare manuscripts and publisher's details and addresses. This gives important information of what each publisher is looking for.

Also consider joining a writer's organization such as Authors Den www.authorsden.com This organization offers web pages and book promotion together with a host of writing tips to help the budding author. You may also consider promoting your work through your own website.

Whatever you decide, don't give up. You may be just a step away from having your work accepted and you'll never know if you pack it all in.

3. Support & Advice for Bowel Disorders and Stoma Matters

I receive many emails from people all over the place asking advice and support. My website www.stomacare.org.uk is designed for this purpose. If I cannot answer your question I will always suggest contacting someone who can. The main thing is not to suffer alone. If I can help or signpost you in the right direction, that is my intention.

4. Contact the Author

If you would like to contact me about any stoma care issues, bowel disorder problems or to discuss any of my books, please email me at g.howard455@btinternet.com

Or visit my websites www.stomacare.org.uk
www.authorgrahamehoward.co.uk

Visit us online at:
<http://www.AuthorsDen.com/>

If you would like a free PDF download of one of my short stories about the fox entitled

BORN TO SURVIVE.

Email me and I will send you it attached to an email totally safe and free!

I'll be in touch again in March. Until then take care

Email me or visit www.stomacare.org.uk and/or
www.authorgrahamehoward.co.uk

Grahame Howard



