

# Freeing the pain

John Howard meets a Suffolk acupuncturist who has helped both a war veteran and a mother come off all their medication

**S**ome people think acupuncture could be mumbo jumbo, but it has changed my life. I now feel as fit as a butcher's dog. Those are the words of Bernard, 85.

A war veteran who saw action in the Far East during World War II, serving with the Royal Fusiliers and Royal East Kent's, Bernard served three years in Malaysia where he was blown up twice, and lost a toe.

Today, retired to Stowmarket in the heart of Suffolk where he lives with his wife Gloria, 79, he is a great grandfather.

But his retirement was being marred by so much pain that he had to take 19 painkillers a day and suffered from continual headaches that would shatter his sleep, leaving him awake at 3am.

Bernard, a retired manager, said:

"Acupuncture has literally given me my life back. I would drag my right foot before treatment, now I can bend, it has made so much difference to me. I used to be on so many painkillers a day, 19, and I would rattle when I walked!

"Now I take none, my GP is happy for me to stop the painkillers, and my pain is virtually non-existent.

"I would never waste money as a pensioner, and this was money very well spent. You can't put a price on health, it's no good being the richest man in the cemetery."

Bernard, a talented amateur wood carver, found it hard to continue his hobby before treatment because of the pain and from his trouble moving. Now he enjoys working in his workshop, creating modern art, totem poles and pretty wooden animals.

Bernard's wife Gloria, 79, admitted Bernard even now chases her around the room again. She said: "It's nice to see him not popping pills all the time. Annya's really helps people and Bernard can even chase me now!"



Inset, **Annya Stoddart** and above, **Sonia Manser** and **85-year-old Bernard**

Being able to move pain free is a feeling Sonia Manser, 42, from Elliott Way in Stowmarket, knows to be really precious too.

Sonia fell while on holiday in Nottingham, aggravating an old back injury. She suffered such pain that she was left unable to drive, was unable to work at the Post Office in the Wolsey Road in Stowmarket, and even had to crawl to the toilet.

Now after a short course of acupuncture the Ipswich born mother of two sons is off all her medications, can drive again, and is back to work.

"I fell while on summer holiday and the only way reduce my pain was to lie flat on my sofa," said Sonia, who is married

to 42-year-old Brian, a chef at a care home in Stowmarket.

"The pain was awful and I would rather give birth to ten babies than endure the pain I was suffering. I was constantly in tears as soon pain killers wore off.

"Then I went to see Annya and was absolutely brilliant. She could see how much pain I was in. After two to three sessions there was a 90% improvement, it was unbelievable, and after five to six acupuncture sessions, I felt brilliant.

"I am now able to drive again, back at work at the Post Office, and feel so much better. I have my life back, it feels like a miracle."

Annya Stoddart, who holds two degrees and who benefited from acupuncture herself for pain, said: "One of the things

I love about acupuncture is seeing and hearing the change in patients, sometimes after just one session, sometimes after a few.

"When you are caught in the grip of pain, it's hard to know what to do. Please contact me and hopefully I will help you feel fitter than you have for years."

■ Acupuncturist Annya Stoddart, who is based at the Pain Relief Clinic, Union Street West in the centre of Stowmarket, offers treatment for a range of painful conditions. To make an appointment please call Annya on 0784 120 3412 or email [annya@annya-stoddart.co.uk](mailto:annya@annya-stoddart.co.uk) More details about Annya's flourishing practice are also available online at [www.annya-stoddart.co.uk](http://www.annya-stoddart.co.uk)

## About acupuncture

The exact origins of acupuncture are not known, although there is speculation that stone-age man used stone tools to press against painful areas of the body and, as the craftsmanship to make metal tools developed, so did the needling techniques.

Written records show that acupuncture developed in the East about 2,000 years ago and the early forms of acupuncture evolved in Asia, where the knowledge was practiced and spread by highly educated monks.

Today anyone practising acupuncture, which uses very fine and slender needles that do not hurt, is registered with their local authority, ensuring very high standards of health and safety.

Acupuncture has its own national professional body too, The British Acupuncture Council, formed almost 20 years ago.



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