



LINK-UP

SUMMER 2002 ISSUE

CONTRIBUTIONS
BY
MEMBERS OF
NWASBAH

SUCCESS ON A SHOESTRING

ROCK stars Status Quo have agreed to be patrons of a theatre group for disadvantaged and special needs children.

The Shoestring Children's Theatre Company was founded by Sally-Anne Roberts in Colwyn Bay last year for her 11-year old daughter Emma, who has hydrocephalus and twin brother Daryl who also has special needs, as they were not able to join other theatre companies. Sally-Anne met Status Quo in 1996, when Emma sang on a television programme hosted by Michael Barrymore and the band was there too. Emma so impressed them, that they were sure she would be a star herself one day.

"When we thought about getting a patron for the company, I sent their manager an e-mail and got a reply saying they'd be happy to support us," said Sally-Anne. A Performing Arts graduate, Sally-Anne has been writing songs and music since she was 15 and can play a variety of instruments. She is able to call upon three fellow ex-students, Livvy, Glyn and Kim, to help with different aspects of the shows. The Company currently has 16 members aged 8 to 13 and has already performed six shows, including their own version of 'Cats'. They are currently rehearsing a new show for the autumn.

Shoestring has become so popular that a new branch, The Tom Thumb Theatre, has recently been established to enable more children to take part. This is a theatre club for children with special needs and their siblings aged 7-14 and run by Sally-Anne and local artist Ceri Anne Williams. The Club covers workshops in drama, dance, music singing, art, crafts, face painting and some basic technical theatre and takes place on Thursdays during term time in the Youth & Community Centre, Trinity Avenue, Llandudno from 6-8pm.

The Tom Thumb Mini Theatre is also available for workshops with children and adults with special needs and recently went to Ysgol Gogarth and

Canolfan yr Orsedd in Llandudno. If YOU are interested in joining either group, taking part in or hosting a workshop OR being a workshop audience contact: Sally-Anne Roberts on 01492-860384 or www.tads.org.uk/shoestring



Cool Cats - Daryl and Emma as Siamese kittens Felix & Tixilix

LLYN BRENIG SAILING CLUB

contributed by Colin Freeman

THE CLUB is situated at Llyn Brenig on the Denbigh moors and has 500 acres of water available for sailing

Founded in 1977, the Club has a spacious clubhouse and provides for both casual and competitive sailing. Facilities for the disabled include wheelchair access to the groundfloor toilets and changing facilities, a lift and reserved car parking.

A variety of boats are hosted - both dinghies and catamarans - and there is also a fleet of training boats. These include Challenger trimarans specially designed for use by disabled sailors. No experience is necessary, as the Club is a registered RYA Training School and the Challenger gives a safe and stable means of enjoying sailing. There is also special equipment to help the disabled to board the Challengers. The Welsh Area Challenger championships are held here annually.

Organised sailing takes place every Sunday, between April and November and visitors are always welcome to try their hand, under the close supervision of experienced sailors. The Club places great emphasis on safety and has a Safety Boat on duty throughout the day.

Here is an opportunity to learn a new skill. Just turn up on a Sunday after 11am, or ring the Commodore Richard Lewis on 0151 625 2425 to arrange a try-out session



Welsh Champion Judy Figures closes the Finish Line

WHEELCHAIR PUSH

JASON Roberts from Prestatyn is planning to push himself from Barkby Beech to Pensarn to raise money for North Wales ASBAH. He would like sponsors and companions for the event, which will take place sometime in September. The route is along the Promenade, which is flat. Contact the Office.

ADVISER REDUNDANCIES

FOLLOWING our report in the Spring issue, ASBAH has announced three full-time equivalent Adviser redundancies nationwide. However, Nwasbah's pledge of £2,000 per annum for three years to ASBAH has enabled the posts of our own Advisers, Peter and Jill, to be protected.

We now need to increase our fundraising accordingly. Our appeal for '100 Club' members has generated five new subscriptions. We need lots more, so do try to persuade people to join. You do not have to be a member of the Association and prizes are posted out monthly.

NORTH WALES ASBAH

Canolfan yr Orsedd

Ffordd yr Orsedd

Llandudno

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FREE TRANSPORT

SINCE April, some disabled people and people of pensionable age can travel free on local buses in Wales. Information regarding who is classed as disabled is on the application form available from your local library or the Council's transport section. To apply, you will need a passport sized photograph and proof of age.

OUT & ABOUT

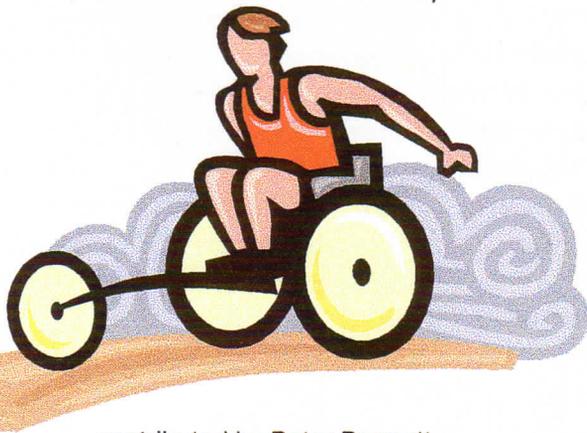
THE CITY of London has a one-day parking certificate that can be used with Orange/Blue badges, to enable parking within easy reach of some of the City's main attractions. It can be obtained by phoning 020 7332 3553/4.

CONGRATS!

ANDREW

ANDREW Hickey took part in the London Wheelchair Marathon for the first time in April and achieved a very creditable 26th place out of fifty-five starters.

Twenty-six year old Andrew, from Mancot in Flintshire, raised over £400 for charity.



contributed by Peter Bennett

GUIDE TO CLAIMING DLA

contributed by Elin Ifan

A NEW, free, downloadable guide to claiming DLA on physical grounds is available from the Barton Hill Advice Service website at www.bhas.org.uk If you do not have access to the web, Area Advisers have a printed copy.

The user-friendly, step-by-step guide is intended for claimants, carers and support workers. It covers in detail how to fill in each page in the claim pack, how to anticipate many decisions makers' objections to your claim before they are even made, how to get supporting evidence and how to prepare for a medical visit. There is also a useful 2 minute test to help readers decide if they may be eligible for DLA.

The site also includes a guide to DLA appeals and will soon feature guides to claiming attendance allowance on physical health grounds and claiming DLA for children with mental and physical health conditions.



... & KELLIE

KELLIE McCardle has now been at the Scope shop in Llandudno for ten years and was presented with a 10 Year Service Award by the Mayor of Llandudno, Cllr Mike Pierce, last month.

Kellie first went to work in the Scope shop after being very ill. It was a way to rehabilitate her. At first, it was very difficult for her, but she now does the job very well. She is always smiling, very good with the customers and well thought of by all the people in the shop.

contributed by Elaine Chadwick

DISABILITY SPORTS

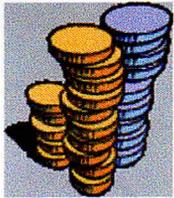
GERWYN Owen has been appointed Disability Sports Wales Development Officer to Gwynedd Council Council. He is currently making an audit to see what is available for people with disabilities and what they want as sporting and recreational activities. For further info contact: Gerwyn Owen 01286-679289 or e-mail

NWASBAH MEMBERS RALLY TO FUNDRAISING CRY

MEMBERS have rallied round to help secure the future of their Advisers by organising a fundraising event and helping with the existing summer schedule.

Eight new volunteers in North West Wales, from as far apart as Blaenau Ffestiniog and Gwalchmai, came forward to help David Hallows with a collection at Tesco's store in Bangor on 8th June. The collection raised £422.81 - despite the disruption to shoppers caused by a public demonstration outside. Our thanks go to Audrey Peters and her friend; David Broadhurst, his mum and sister; Ceren and Rhian Hughes and Sheila Cunnington. They were joined by 'old hands' Mike Mason and Jenny and Paul Hayes.

Gareth Pritchard, from Brynsiencyn, Anglesey wanted to help too, but as he was working on the day the collection took place, he decided to organise a charity Bingo Evening in his 'local', The Groeslon. We were delighted to receive the donated proceeds of £105.50. Well done Gareth!



Sainsbury's in Wrexham is always a good spot for us. The collection organised by Marie Edwards on 6th July also attracted new volunteers. Alex and Dee Platts from Buckley,

Sarah, Rebecca & Jennifer Mogridge from Penley, Kath Morrilly from Overton-on-Dee, Julie & Jon Barclay from Wrexham joined the 'old timers' Paul Hayes, Marie & Trefor Edwards, Gareth Jones and Eleri Edwards-Freeman to raise £764.80.

Everyone agreed it was fun as well as being very worthwhile. We MUST raise more money during the next three years, to fulfil our pledge of financial support for our Area Advisers. There will be collections at Tesco's in Llandudno Junction and Bangor on 10th August and 14th September. There have been no new volunteers in the Llandudno area this year and we really need some. If you can spare **JUST 1 HOUR** it will make all the difference to the Association's future. Contact Carol in the Office 01492 860140 or Email nwasbah@zoom.co.uk

100 CLUB WINNERS - April to June

- 1st: I. Fearnley, D. McHugh, P. Hayes
2nd: Mrs E. Davies, C. Wood, J. Mogridge
3rd: D. McHugh, J. Bartlett, Mr & Mrs Roberts

LINK' ARTICLES Mar/Apr 2002

SPINA BIFIDA GENE DISCOVERED

A gene that appears to be responsible for spina bifida in mice has recently been reported by scientists at University College, London. Whilst it's too early to say whether humans have this same gene in their DNA, it's possible that they do.

It might allow affected fetuses to be identified within the first few weeks of pregnancy, which would provide parents with information earlier. Full article p6

NEW SCHOOL CODE FOR STATEMENTING

ASBAH has been part of a coalition of charities that has helped to bring about crucial changes in a Government Code of Practice that local education authorities follow when issuing Statements for children with special educational needs (SEN)

All early years education providers, including childminders, day nurseries and schools, must now have regard to the code and produce a written SEN policy. The revised code has a significant impact on the ways in which schools and professionals work in meeting the needs. Full article p7

FEEDING PROBLEMS IN CHILDREN WITH SPINA BIFIDA AND HYDROCEPHALUS

Report of a study carried out at the Royal Belfast Hospital for Sick Children Pages 14-15

If you do not have a copy of 'Link', ask your Area Adviser. A subscription to 'Link' costs £4.80 per year (6 issues) and is available from:

Link, ASBAH National Centre, 42 Park Road, Peterborough PE1 2UQ

NEW SHUNT 'ALERT' CARD

PEOPLE with programmable shunts will soon be able to obtain a special insert for their Alert Card from ASBAH. This insert can be used at airports as proof that they should not go through scanning equipment, in case their shunt is accidentally reset.

Rosemary Batchelor, ASBAH's Senior Adviser (health and policy issues) said "As a rule of thumb, people with programmable shunts should follow the advice issued at airports and ports to people with pacemakers. Although the manufacturers of programmable shunts say they can't be reset accidentally, we, and neurosurgeons, have heard instances where they have been."

Link-Up is edited by Carol Buxton. Articles and/or photographs are welcome and should be sent to NWASBAH, Canolfan yr Orsedd, Ffordd yr Orsedd, Llandudno LL33 0RL. Opinions are not necessarily those of North Wales ASBAH and no liability can be accepted for any error or omission.