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Link

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Association for Spina Bifida and Hydrocephalus (ASBAH)

Link No. 35

Association for Spina Bifida & Hydrocephalus (ASBAH)

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Contents

Editorial

Christmas cards

Christmas is coming. And it is at this time that in addition to enjoying ourselves our thoughts turn to those less fortunate.

ASBAH's Christmas cards offer an opportunity not only to send Season's greetings to family and friends, but also actively to help those suffering from spina bifida and hydrocephalus. The money raised through the sale of Christmas cards gives an invaluable boost to ASBAH's work.

No doubt members of Local Associations will rally to the cause as always, but this year, why not try to interest a few more friends and neighbours in the cards.

Order forms are available from Mrs. Kate White at National Office.

Wider horizons

This issue of *Link* carries two articles *W. Germany offers chance for exchange visits* (page 11) and *Handicapped share in international voluntary service* (page 7) which show that the world is beginning to open up for the handicapped.

Both the exchange visit idea and the IVS venture represent first steps down a road which will lead to great adventure for our members.

Those who might think it is all just a bit too adventurous and that the problems will be too great should think of some of the other 'impossible' tasks which have been achieved by handicapped people, and give the ideas serious thought.

National Office will be pleased to advise on any problems, so please let us hear from you.

We hope that these two items, and indeed, others in this issue will be of particular interest to teenagers. *Link* is very much aware that more and more spina bifida youngsters are growing out of the nappy, playgroup and primary school age. We hope to carry more articles of interest to these maturing readers. If you are in this age group why don't you send *Link* some of your ideas and views and share with us some of your interests?

Our *Link* stretches overseas

More than 400 copies of *Link* are despatched abroad to the following countries: Australia, Brazil, Canada, Ethiopia, France, Germany, Greece, Holland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Malta, New Zealand, Norway, Rhodesia, Singapore, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, USA, West Indies.

ASBAH Spring Conference

This will be held at the University of Manchester, April 11-13 on the general theme of *'Leisure'*. Further details will be available later.

Local Association News

Philip proves his artistic talent

A lot has been said in this issue of *Link* about taking up a craft. Here is one spina bifida boy who has done just that and is proving how well he can do it.

Philip Brown, aged 11 of Hull, is a talented and enthusiastic painter. He has been attending art classes for about a year, and recently two of his paintings were selected for an exhibition of children's art at Central Library, Hull, and later at libraries in surrounding towns.

This summer one of his paintings won a first prize in the North Hull Community Show. Some of his work has also been given as raffle prizes for fund raising events put on by the Hull and District Association of which his mother is Honorary Secretary. The photograph shows Philip with some of his oil paintings.

The confusion of Christmas

The atmosphere and confusion of a Christmas party captured here by Mrs. Francis Bancroft after the party held by Hull and District Association. It may bring back memories of your own Association's party.

The room rang with laughter
and after, the food the children
had consumed, the noise, the screams
the paper tearing was all
too over bearing.
Inside the large hall, the windows
ran with condensation, and
what about the presentation,
by Father Christmas himself.
One little boy roamed endlessly
round the room, poor
child couldn't stand the noise,
given off by the older fitter
children.
Names were shouted
loud and clear
and a little body, either
in a wheelchair or on foot
would appear. A hand went up
right at the rear, of the hall
four boys were playing
with a ball.
Confusion, chaos, balloon
smashing, small children
sat on trolleys with their
small hands working
either side of the wheels
pushing another ball
towards another trolley.
Bigger children ran, not
thinking; and crashed into
another child on wheels.
Chaos rained; but what fun.

'Give and take'' on holiday

SCOTTISH SPINA BIFIDA ASSOCIATION. For the first time this year a holiday was held for spina bifida and able bodied children together. The children went to the Pyatshaw Holiday Centre at Lauder in Berwickshire, and the holiday proved tremendously successful. The spina bifida children seemed to gain in confidence as time went on, and the able-bodied children were able to learn a great deal about the problems of the handicapped. The General Secretary of the Scottish Spina Bifida Association, Mrs. G. B. McIntyre reports that two of the volunteers have decided to take up social work following on their experiences on this holiday.

Our work in Jersey

The Jersey Spina Bifida Association was formed in May 1968, and we now help 16 children with spina bifida and/or hydrocephalus, and a further seven children with other handicaps.

Our problems are somewhat different to those of UK Associations, because we don't come under the National Health Service and have to pay for all calipers and other appliances provided locally. Therefore most of our funds are spent on walking aids and other equipment, and giving financial aid to families where the child and mother have to travel to England for

Local Association News

specialist treatment or clinics.

This summer we have held a very successful barbecue which was attended by nearly 70 people, and during the holidays we ran an Activity Group for the handicapped children and friends—about seven handicapped and seven able-bodied children attended on three afternoons a week, supervised by an NNEB trained friend and helpers. This venture was much enjoyed by the children and appreciated by their mothers.

Mrs. Ursula Emmanuel, Hon Secretary Jersey ASBAH.

Telling the professionals

The Association in Northern Ireland has been having some success recently in getting information across to health visitors and social workers on the wider problems of spina bifida and hydrocephalic children, and their families.

Mr. James Egar, Honorary Secretary and Treasurer of the Northern Ireland Association writes: "We approached the Northern Ireland Department of Health and Social Services, and after discussion the Department agreed to arrange local meetings to which health visitors and social workers would be invited".

So far seven meetings have been held, and have been well attended. The meetings have usually included the showing of a film about spina bifida, a short talk by a mother on day-to-day problems, and a speaker on the Family Fund.

"The general opinion was that this arrangement was an excellent idea as there were so many different problems arising from spina bifida and hydrocephalus" said Mr. Egar.

Office opens up

In Warwickshire—a small office has recently been acquired at a peppercorn rent in a Church centre in Moseley. A working party of parents descended on the office one Sunday to clean and decorate it, and it is now in use. A typist has also been engaged for a few hours each week to help to cope with the clerical work of this rapidly growing Local Association.

Sitting comfortably

In the July/August edition of Link there was an omission from the 'Sitting Comfortably' article. Physiotherapists at Booth Hall Children's Hospital, Manchester, have also made foam chairs for spina bifida children especially those with severe hydrocephalus, They obtain their foam from British Vita Co. Ltd, Middleton, Manchester M24 2DB, and Field Sales Manager, Mr. J. Law, has been most helpful.

Dad's friends help Tracy along

Four-year-old Tracy Dunne of St. Helens, Lancashire, who has spina bifida, proudly demonstrates her parallel bars which are helping her to gain self-confidence and practise in learning to walk.

Tracy has her father's workmates to thank for the bars.

Mr. Eddie Dunne, a despatch worker at the Triplex factory in Eccleston had been anxious to get Tracy a set of bars but found he could only get portable ones.

Word got around at the factory and works engineer, Mr. Bernard Lee offered to have a set fabricated and welded in the fitting shop.

The bars have proved a great success with Tracy. At the same time they have made the workers at Eccleston aware of the problems of the handicapped. So much so that a committee has been formed at the factory to look into ways of providing more special equipment for other handicapped children in the area.

Maybe other parents could get their colleagues interested in giving some kind of help.

Health matters

GROWING UP

. . . and the problem of finding the right words

Do you know that getting very keen on seizing every opportunity to have a lovely chat with somebody is one of the signs of growing up? Sometimes it is hard for you to be sure what you would like to chat about. Often the other person, particularly if it is a grown up in your family, does not seem to understand that you want to chat, and shows you that they are too busy just now. Sometimes it is hard to get to the point of what you would really like to say, particularly if it is to your mum or dad.

by Mrs. Pauline Elyan AIMSW

Did it ever occur to you that sometimes mum and dad find these chats with you very difficult, and that is one of the reasons they get very busy when they feel one coming?

The reason that they are worried about chatting is that they see that you are taking a step forward into adult life, and they have a feeling that you are moving a bit further away from them towards a more independent life. This is a new, and sometimes rather lonely feeling for them.

Your school teacher too, knows you as a child, and some of the questions you would like to ask stick in your throat because you feel she (or he) will be cross if you show that you are more grown up than they thought. So perhaps it would be easier to start chatting to a grown up friend or your social worker, or your youth club leader, so that you can get an idea of what you really want to say, without really feeling too close to the person.

You see, you have had no practice yet in behaving as a grown up, that is being an independent person with ideas of your own, and you are rather shy and frightened of your new self. Your new self seems to have different feelings from the self you have always known. In fact, you are suddenly much more aware of the feelings that you have, and you probably find them frightening or depressing. This is the way all people feel when they are growing up.

But you have an extra problem in talking to the grown ups who have always looked after you, and that is that you have always been a spina bifida person. There are bits of your body which all these close people have been taking special care of all your life. These special bits of you have caused many of the upsetting happenings you have had, and now you are wondering what effect they will have on your grown up life. You need to chat to a grown up who can help you to find the right words to use, so that you can talk to your own doctor, who will be able to help you find some of the answers that you are looking for. These questions will be different for each one of you and will need a special answer, and then later on, when you have thought about the answers, you will need to ask more questions.

You will be surprised by now about several things. How much easier your chatting is becoming, particularly to those closest to you. How much better you are at understanding your own feelings. How the parts of your body which bother you and others, suddenly seem less worrying. And how the other parts of you, which have never caused any bother to speak of, seem now to be much more useful. You will be able to think about growing up, and what you are going to be, and share these thoughts with other people.

Now your grown up people will smile at you with a new twinkle in their eye, the twinkle means "Ah, growing up".

Mrs. Elyan is a Principal Social Worker.

Handicapped share in international voluntary service

International Voluntary Service has been very pleased to welcome the few people with some form of physical disability who have applied to join one of our teams of international volunteers on a workcamp. Our projects are aimed at bringing together for two or three weeks, groups of people from different backgrounds who work together on play-grounds, in hospitals or on manual projects. In the past, many of our volunteers' attitudes to the physically handicapped have been changed when they live with them, and work together with them for a time.

This year we decided to run a handicamp, specifically designed to integrate physically handicapped and able-bodied volunteers in one team, working together to aid the conversion of an old barn.

Ferriers Barn has already been partly converted into a very attractive day centre for handicapped people living around Colchester, and the IVS team were working in the garden,laying cement ramps, repairing walls and cleaning out one wing to become a craft room. You may think all this work sounds rather heavy, but the handicapped volunteers were as involved as everyone else.

Nigel, our work leader, had allocated the very heavy jobs to the able-bodied volunteers, and found jobs which the handicapped could usefully undertake, in spite of their disabilities.

When I arrived to visit the team, Peter, a spastic, was methodically cleaning bricks to line a lawn, and Ron, who has a wheelchair, but very seldom seems to be in it, was scraping cracked cement off an attractive stone wall. In spite of a severe speech impediment, Ron did as much, if not more, talking as the other volunteers I met!

In their leisure time, the team visited Colchester and the surrounding countryside, went to a party organised by a member of the local IVS group, and attended a disco at the centre. Being paralysed down one side didn't stop Mike from dancing!

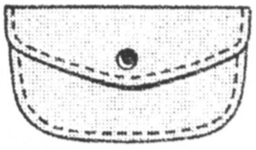
There was quite a large group of people on this project from all over Europe and America. Maja from Denmark was blind and managed to come all the way over to England by herself!

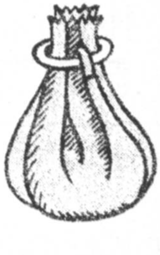
Our only disappointment on this project was that we only had four applications from handicapped volunteers, in spite of our attempts to publicise the opportunity internationally. We hope that next year more physically handicapped people will apply to us, and we shall try to place them on one of our projects which take place all over Great Britain, over Christmas and Easter and the summer months.

We hope to run another handicamp specifically for those who are more than a little disabled, next summer, so, if you know anyone who is interested in joining an International Voluntary Service project, do let us know!

Alison Piggott, Projects Officer, IVS, 91 High Street, Harlesden, NW10.
Tel. 01-965 1446.

Quaker Work Camps are also involved in running Handicamps, and *Link* hopes to carry more details in the next issue.





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Making things is a rewarding and worthwhile way of occupying yourself out of school hours, and I'm sure that when the weather is bad and you can't go out you often say "Oh dear, what shall I do!" Well, here are a few suggestions which are interesting and will be useful to you and those around you. You might even make your own Christmas presents!

CANDLE MAKING

I would not recommend candle making for anyone under 12 years, and even then I think you need a bit of help from an adult. The problem is that you have to melt the wax; this should only be done in a double saucepan or a bowl in a saucepan of water, and be very careful to make sure that you do not spill any wax because it can catch fire very easily (just like the chip pan). The melted wax is poured into a candle mould and left to set for about two hours. Then the mould is peeled off and Hey Presto, there is your candle!

Many firms make Candle Craft Kits, and these contain all the necessary equipment and complete instructions. *Westby Products* do a Candle Craft Kit de luxe for £2.25. *Supercast Ltd,* Blanket Row, Hull do three different kits.

A new product by *Peter Pan Playthings* makes candle-making a safer occupation for younger children. This is "Mako cool candles". This type of wax softens in your hands and can be moulded into all sorts of exciting candle shapes without any need to heat it. The kit costs £2.95.

JEWELLERY

The making of jewellery from gemstones is becoming very popular. You can buy these stones already polished in all colours, shapes and sizes to make beautiful rings, pendants, earrings, bracelets and cuff-links. Besides the gemstones you need the settings onto which the stones are mounted, with an epoxy resin; when this hardens your stone is stuck for good. You can buy the gemstones and settings by post from such firms as *R. H. Hill* of 23 Church Street, Welwyn, Herts, who will send you catalogues, price lists and instructions.

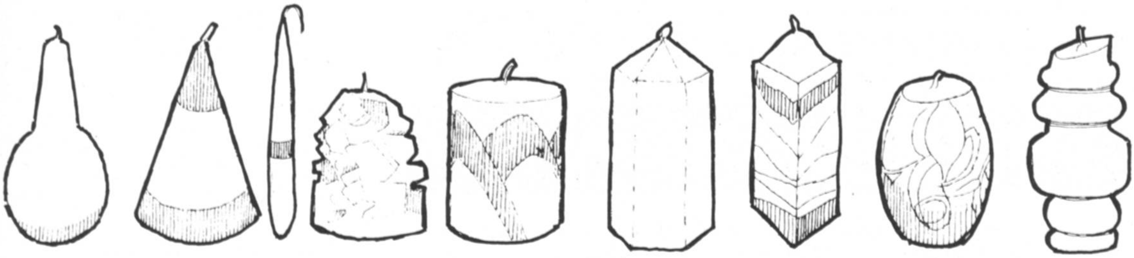
Westby Products have a complete lapidary outfit for £9 which includes a mains operated tumbler and polishing materials so that you can polish your own stones, plus a selection of stones, jewellery fittings, and a strong adhesive. With the tumble polisher you can polish pebbles gathered from the beach; however, it takes a long time to get a shine—several weeks of patient polishing.

Another way of making attractive jewellery is embedding objects in crystal clear plastics. You mix liquid plastic, a hardener and colour together and pour it into a mould and drop in the sea shell, flower or whatever you wish. When this has hardened you stick it onto the cuff-link, pendant or key-ring fitment. *Nottingham Handicraft Company* of Melton Road, West Bridgford, Nottingham NG2 6HD produce a mini Jewellery Kit for £1, and *Westbys* have a larger kit for £2.75;

There are large Plasticraft kits for making ash-trays, table-lamp bases and paper-weights. These cost from £3 to £4.

LEATHERCRAFT

If you are good with a needle and thread, how about making a purse or comb-case from leather? In fact you don't have to be all that clever with a needle, because you can buy the leather already cut to the right shape and with the holes punched ready for



RAFTY

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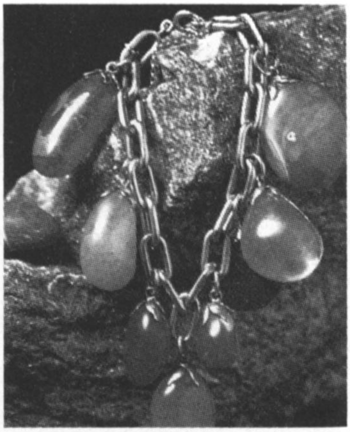
thonging. These are the *Harmige Leather Kits*—a purse costs 35p, and a gift-box containing two purses, comb-case, serviette-ring, name and address tag and a note-case cost £1.30. There are cheaper kits which have similar designs in lethereen (a simulated leather)—a purse in lethereen would cost about 20p. These are available from



Harris & Midgley Ltd,
Shaftesbury Avenue,
Leicester LE4 5DR.

SOAP MAKING

Here is something for younger children to try. For £1.95 you can make 20 bars of soap. It is very simple. You just mix together all the ingredients (which are supplied) and scoop the mixture into the separate moulds and leave to set (sounds like cooking!). This is a *Thomas Salter* production.

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These are just some of the more unusual crafts which are now popular. Of course, there is still a lot to be said for knitting, embroidery, raffia-work, rug-making and basket-making. There are a hundred and one different craft hobbies to choose from.

If you want to know more about them have a look in your local art or craft shop, or large toy shop. Look at the kits available, and the many different booklets and books on various crafts. I particularly recommend the *Leisure Craft* hobby booklets on subjects ranging from Bead Necklaces, Coconut Craft, to Painting on Wood and Rag Dolls. Price 40p each from a local shop or from: *Search Press Ltd,* 2/10 Jerdan Place, London SW6 5PT. Please include 6p postage.

Three more expensive books are: *Popular Crafts,* £1.50, *Making Things is Fun,* £1.75, and *Toys and Gifts for you to Make,* £1.60.

Don't forget that many good craft books can be borrowed from your local public library.

For those of you living near London it might be worth a visit to *Hamleys* toy shop, Regent Street. There is a new floor especially for crafts and hobbies.

So all of you, get weaving—or whatever—in time for Christmas.

Felicity Birkett

Westby Products supply a whole range of hobbies and crafts by mail order. They have an advertisement on page 14 of this *Link,* and are offering a special 10% discount on the price of their products to all *Link* readers.

Appeals and publicity

Short Term Care Appeal

I am using all my space this time to tell you about our plans for the Short Term Care Appeal mentioned in the last issue, as this is our most ambitious project so far.

There are so many doubting Thomases about, who shake their heads and who 'purse' their lips and say "You'll never get £100,000 in these hard times". We're going to show them that WE CAN and WE WILL!

Here is the prescription for the Home from Home: a charming house, admirably suited for our purpose, in a lovely setting in Yorkshire. It is—thanks to motorways—easily accessible from all parts of the country, but will fill a gap particularly in the Midlands and North East where there is less alternative provision than in the South. The house is in a holiday area, which gives good amenities for recreation and is within easy reach of hospitals with experience of spina bifida should emergency treatment be needed.

THE COST

To purchase, adapt, furnish and equip, and to provide a small contingency fund we estimate we need £100,000. BUT the longer we take to raise the money the more the project will cost with money melting like it does nowadays.

IN THE KITTY

We already have £26,250 subscribed by good friends and supporters. But as you can see there's still quite a way to go before we reach our target of £100,000!

Beds will be named after *HMS Bacchante,* District 13 Inner Wheel, The Walford School, The Chief Ranger, Independent Order of Foresters, Mr. B. C. Hallum and Mrs. Hallum. Each of these has subscribed over £1,000, and the Foresters' High Court of Central England, and Court Scarlet Cedar are well on the way to collecting their first £1,000 each.

The Court of London and Southern England has given £2,000 to name a room, and the Ashby Round Table's gift of £3,669 raised at the Medieval Pageant last Whitsun will also go to this Appeal.

Our thanks also go to the North Bedfordshire and Staffordshire Associations who have given £500 each.

You might like to know about events in the pipeline. Firstly there's a Grand Charity Concert organised by the Independent Order of Foresters Court Leofric, at the City Hall, Sheffield, Saturday, November 30 from 7.30 pm to 10 pm. Cliff Morgan will compere a programme by the Treorchy Male Voice Choir and the Brighouse and Rastrick Band. Tickets at £1.75, £1.50, £1.25, £1.05, 85p and 70p from Members and friends of ASBAH are most welcome. Come by the coachload! Your support is needed.

Another forthcoming event is a Mid-Winter Ball at The Dorchester Hotel, London, Wednesday, January 22. Tickets are £7.50 each plus VAT. Can you persuade your firm's director to send us a prize for the tombola, or perhaps to buy tickets to entertain important customers? Brochures are available from me.

NATIONAL APPEAL

We are 'selling bricks' at £1 for 20, £5 for 100, £10 for 200, £20 for 500.

All donations of £500 will be recorded in a Golden Book, and donations of over £500 inscribed on a Roll of Honour, permanently displayed in the vestibule.

The Independent Order of Foresters as a whole has pledged to raise £20,000 in total over four years. Let us as an Association pledge at least an equal amount for this short-term care centre which will prove so invaluable to hard-pressed families, and to spina bifida youngsters.

Please tell your friends and your mates at work, the members of your church or chapel about this exciting challenge, and see if you can persuade them to help.

And finally, very many good wishes to you all for a very Happy Christmas and a wonderful New Year.

Kate White

W. Germany offers chance for exchange visits

The group in West Germany concerned with spina bifida and hydrocephalus has sent us the letter which we reproduce here.

Whilst an exchange scheme has much to commend it, it will only succeed if some individual families want to invite a young German teenager to stay with them, and to arrange for their own child to pay a return visit.

The national Association will gladly work with Arbeitsgemeinschaft Spina Bifida und Hydrocephalus over the arrangements if there are any young people and families interested.

Please may we have your views.

Dear Sirs,

I have been asked by the Chairman of the West German 'Arbeitsgemeinschaft Spina Bifida und Hydrocephalus' to get in contact with you about an exchange of British and German children.

We have an eleven-year-old girl who attends a West German grammar school at Bamberg, Bavaria, where English is the first language.

Many more children with hydrocephalus and spina bifida are growing up and will soon be old enough to be prepared for a private exchange between our two countries. Thus we would be very much obliged to learn whether your Association has planned an exchange from family to family for those children who would enjoy vacations in a foreign country with a British or German family who are familiar with these conditions.

The West German 'Arbeitsgemeinschaft. . .' is greatly interested to provide families here in Germany who will be prepared and to take a child from your coutry in their community and to take care of him or her, above all if that child has the same problem as their own child.

It may be possible that the demand for such an exchange is not very big right now, but in two or three years it will be. Therefore, we should take that plan into consideration, and we should be muched obliged to learn what you think about it.

Karl-Heinz Franke, Studiendirektor

Aids to independence

Electric and gas domestic appliances can play a large part in helping the disabled to be as independent as possible at home. There are two free leaflets giving information on the range of suitable electrical and gas equipment available:

Electric Aids for Disabled People. Free from the Marketing Dept, the Electricity Council, Trafalgar Buildings, 1 Charing Cross, London SW1A 2DS.

Gas Aids—the Disabled. Free from the Home Service Dept., British Gas, National Westminster House, 326 High Holborn, London WC1V 7PT, or from your local gas showroom, or the Home Service Advisor of your regional gas headquarters (see telephone book).

Preparing for work

St. Loye's College for Training the Disabled for Commerce and Industry is situated on the outskirts of Exeter, near enough to the city centre to benefit from the life of the city but with views of the countryside that give it a feeling of space.

St. Loye's is a voluntary organisation with residential places for about 150 men and women who are sponsored by the Department of Employment. There is a choice of about 15 courses which range from audio-typing to watch and clock repairing, from cookery to storekeeping. The length of the courses varies from about 12 weeks to a full year but there is a degree of flexibility which is characteristic of an institution which is interested in individuals rather than uniformity.

In addition to the training courses there is a Further Education and Vocational Assessment department for about 50 people aged between 16 and 18. These boys and girls are sponsored by their local education authorities. At the present time a new instructional block is being planned for them.

Close by is the *St. Loye's School of Occupational Therapy* which has close associations with the College. Occupational Therapy students benefit from practical experience in the rehabilitation and training of the disabled.


St. Loye's College has a thriving Riding Group.

There are from time to time spina bifida students in the further education department or in training at the College. The authorities are fully aware of their needs.

School leavers who go into St. Loye's Further Education Department gain confidence and independence before moving on to one of the vocational courses. The only criterion for acceptance is the ability to benefit from the training but this is very widely interpreted.

Typical of the philosophy at St. Loye's is that the new dining room will make self service possible though, obviously, the most severely disabled will not benefit at first from such a change, though it is something they must get used to in the world of open employment.

The College believes in training for independence in life as well as in employment.

NEW OFFICER

ASBAH is pleased to welcome Mr. Peter Johnston-Smith, who was recently appointed Education, Training and Employment Officer.

Mr. Johnston-Smith is admirably suited to the position having had many years experience as a teacher. He gained a knowledge of physical handicaps in his capacity as Headmaster of Lord Mayor Treloar College for boys, Hants.

He will be concerned with looking at the present opportunities in schooling, training and employment for spina bifida and hydrocephalic young people, and in particular, at the ways in which the Association can help to improve these and to provide a useful information service for its members.

Family page

Judging a pigeon at 'The Show of the Year'

Homing truths: Pigeons capture interest

by Major L. Lewis MBE

The sport of pigeon racing and showing is a family sport. Amongst the ranks of successful pigeon fanciers are many disabled people, including blind persons. It is a sport where dedication on the part of the fancier plays the most important part for to be successful, there must be an affinity between the pigeon and the owner. Perhaps it is because of this that the disabled person is so successful.

The use of pigeons as message carriers is almost as old as history itself. However, it was not until the development of our railway system that an easy method of conveyance became available and the sport of pigeon racing, as a general hobby or pastime, become within easy reach of the majority. The 'National Homing Union' (now the Royal Pigeon Racing Association) was born in 1896. Its objects are to further the sport of pigeon racing and showing and from its small beginning there now stands an organisation consisting of some 2,600 clubs and well over 100,000 membership subscriptions per year.

A pigeon race has one starting post but there can be, and often are many hundreds of finishing posts, because each separate competing loft, is in itself a finishing post. Thus the exact distance flown and the precise time taken to fly that distance is of paramount importance.

When a few days old each racing pigeon has placed on its left leg a plastic covered metal, registration ring, and in the case of the Royal Pigeon Racing Association the registration ring might read, for example, NU.74.A.12345, where NU means 'National Union', 74 the year of birth of the pigeon, and A.12345 its registration number. The pigeon thereafter, is known by its full and complete ring details, and on being basketed for a race has affixed to its other leg a rubber or plastic 'race entry ticket' which is coded and numbered.

On arrival home from a race the owner must catch his pigeon, remove from its leg the rubber race entry ticket and place same into a timing clock which records the day, hour, minute and second of timing in. The exact time of liberation will be known, and it is the job of the club secretary to determine the exact time of flight.

Racing takes place during the summer and early autumn, but during the winter months shows are held. These are, in effect, beauty contests (confirmation, feather texture, looks, etc) backed by performance. Many shows are held for charitable purposes and one such is "The Show of the Year", Doncaster, held in January of each year, and is sponsored by the *British Homing World* a weekly journal which is owned by the Royal Pigeon Racing Association.

The first two shows have yielded a total of £6,600 profit all of which has been donated to ASBAH to which charity the show is dedicated. We sincerely hope that our 1975 Show to be held on January 17/18, 1975, at The New Betting Hall, Doncaster Race Course, will be an even bigger success.

For further information on how to become a pigeon fancier, write to Major L. Lewis, The Royal Pigeon Racing Association, The Reddings, Nr. Cheltenham.

Working together

The Annual General Meeting was held for the second time in the Royal Society of Medicine, London, presided over by Lord Maybray-King with his inimitable blend of competence and warmth. As Professor Bowden said in moving his re-election as President, small wonder that he is held in such affectionate regard by so many both in the Palace of Westminster and in the country.

A message of good wishes from Her Royal Highness the Duchess of Gloucester was conveyed to the Meeting. The Chairman, Mr. Zachary, presented the Report on what he described as a year of considerable progress, combining welfare help for individuals with development work for the good of all in the fields of training, appliances and research. In moving the adoption of the Report, Vice-President Sir George Haynes paid tribute to the solid work which lay behind the Report. He had watched the Association's progress since its inception and was happy to see it so dynamic. He counselled "Keep together and work together—Local bodies with no steering tend to lose their way, while over-dominance tends to make them go hard and dry. I believe you have the balance right"

The Hon. Treasurer, Mr. E. S. Gower, presenting the accounts said he considered the general picture satisfactory. The money given to us is being largely spent, and the Association should have faith that money will come in to enable important work to be undertaken.

In his address Mr. Robin Huws Jones, Associate Director of the Joseph Rowntree Memorial Trust, spoke appreciatively of the work of the Association and the influence it had been in making the general public and local and national government aware of the needs of the disabled, as well as offering mutual support within the movement.

He spoke of the work being done by the Joseph Rowntree Memorial Trust in administering the £3 million given by the Government in 1973 and known as the Family Fund. He explained that the Trust undertook this as a full responsibility, for a limited period in the first instance, shouldering some of the administrative costs, so that it had no vested interest, and coupling with the work research so that the effects of this experiment in social administration may be assessed.

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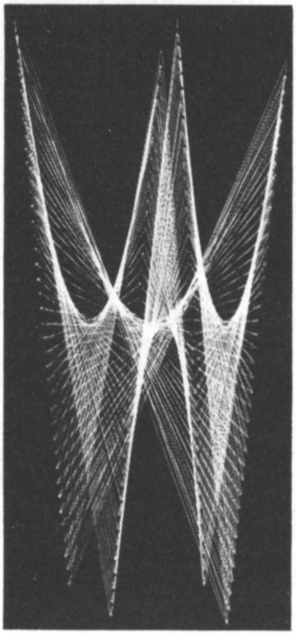

ASBAH publications and publicity

Your Child with Spina Bifida, 3rd Ed., by Dr. J. Lorber, MD, FRCP	20p
Your Child with Hydrocephalus by Dr. J. Lorber, MD, FRCP	15p
Equipment & Aids to Mobility by O. R. Nettles, MCSP, ONC. A folder of four booklets	complete set 25p
Clothing for the Spina Bifida Child by Barbara Webster, SRN, RSCN.	15p
The Nursery Years, by Simon Haskell, M.A., Ph.D., and Margaret Paull, Dip. Ph.H.	
General information leaflets	100 for £1
Leaflet for young people	100 for £1

Scottish Spina Bifida Association booklets

The Spina Bifida Baby by O. R. Nettles, MCSP, ONC	10p
Growing Up with Spina Bifida by O. R. Nettles, MCSP, ONC.	20p

All available from: ASBAH, 30 Devonshire Street, London W1N 2EB. (Special rates available to Local Associations.) Bulk orders of Scottish Association booklets to: The Scottish Spina Bifida Association, 190 Queensferry Road, Edinburgh, EH4 2BW (at special rates).

Posters. Double Crown, 5p each, "Future Bright", 10 for 20p.
Flag Day emblems. 1,000 for 50p.
Cards for notice boards. 10 for 10p.
Car stickers. 5p each. Postage extra.
Fund-raising items. Price list/details on request.

Local Association offers

Badges. Silver and green enamel with pin fastening. Replica of the Spina Bifida emblem. Bulk orders welcomed particularly. Price: 22p per badge. Postage extra. (For a single badge please enclose s.a.e.) Apply to: Mr. K. McKenzie, Badges Secretary, Salisbury & District ASBAH, 111 East Gomeldon Road, Gomeldon, Salisbury SB4 6LZ.

Badges for children. Good quality 1¼in diam. SB symbol and the words, "Spina Bifida Children" in black on green background. Price: 25 badges for 75p; 50 for £1.40; 100 for £2.65, including postage. Cheques and postal orders crossed and payable to "SASBAH". Send with order to: Mrs. I. Olditch, High Lea, Turners Green Lane, Wadhurst, Sx.

Ties. Heavy weave washable terylene with SB symbol on dark blue *or* dark green. Sold by N. Hants, S. Berks and W. Surrey ASBAH. Price £1.10p plus postage, while stocks last. Reductions for bulk orders. Cash with order to Mr. B. High, 10 Woodruff Ave., Burpham, Guildford, Surrey. Please state colour.

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Annual General Meeting

Mr. Huws Jones referred to the guide lines to which the Fund works. It is to relieve stress in families with a severely congenitally disabled child under the age of 16, without a "means test" but taking social and economic circumstances into account. It is to complement but not take the place of statutory or voluntary services who have duties laid down by Parliament or their constitutions.

He said that the work was often difficult and painful; but in spite of the problems he was sure the Fund was a good thing. The Fund must be widely and accurately known. If publicity is inaccurate, disillusion and disappointment will follow when applications have to be refused.

Mr. Huws Jones spoke of the roles of the various agencies concerned with helping the handicapped and their families. The way ahead depended on good communication in the profoundest sense leading to a common understanding.

Thanks were expressed by Mr. R. I. Stubbs.

Inter-association holiday opportunities

Camber Sands, nr. Rye, Sussex. New, well-equipped chalet, on pleasant situation near the sea available for families with spina bifida members. Sleeps six. Please apply to Mr. S. Evans, 1 Coniston Gardens, Wembley, Middx. 01-904 7840.

Cleethorpes. Three-bedroom bungalow to accommodate 6-8 persons at Humberston Fitties, nr. Cleethorpes, Lincs. Further information from Mrs. W. Steele, 59 Louth Road, Holton-le-Clay, Grimsby.

Great Yarmouth. Self-contained 6-berth caravan at Caister Beach Caravan Camp, nr Gt. Yarmouth. Details from Mrs. E. N. Barefoot, 23 Marlborough Road, Southall, Middx. Tel. 01-574 5067.

Looe. Bungalow, two bedrooms, spacious accommodation at Millendreath Holiday Village, nr. Looe, Cornwall. Mr Keith Jackson, 202 Exeter Street, Plymouth.

Looe. Holiday bungalow at Millendreath Holiday Village. Sleeps six. Fully furnished. Further details Mrs. Cook, 19 Winslade Road, Harestock, Winchester.

Mablethorpe. Self-contained 6-berth chalet situated at Golden Sands Estates, Mablethorpe, Lincs. Apply to Mr. Ken Hall, 17 Walhouse Street, Cannock, Staffs.

Mablethorpe. 25ft. self-contained 6-berth caravan. Situated at Golden Sands Holiday Estates, Mablethorpe, Lincs. Details from Mr. J. Cannon, 28 Deerpark Crescent, Wingworth, Chesterfield, Derbys. Tel. Chesterfield 78952.

New Forest. Well-equipped chalet, sleeping six people. Within easy reach of Bounemouth, Beaulieu, Etc. Swimming pool, paddling pool, restaurant and playground on site. Details from Mrs. A. Rae, 16 Clifton Road, Lee-on-Solent, Hants. Tel. Lee-on-Solent 550242.

Rhyl. Open plan 6-berth caravan, partitionable into three, situated at the Robin Hood Holiday Camp, Coast Road, Rhyl, N. Wales. Bookings available 1st May-30th September to Liverpool Association, 46 Manchester Street, Liverpool 1.

Selsey. New well-appointed, self-contained 16ft. x 30ft. 6-berth mobile for families with spina bifida members. Sited at Selsey, Sussex. For full details please send s.a.e. to Mr. R. V. Taylor, 20 Orchard Road, Horsham, Sussex.

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