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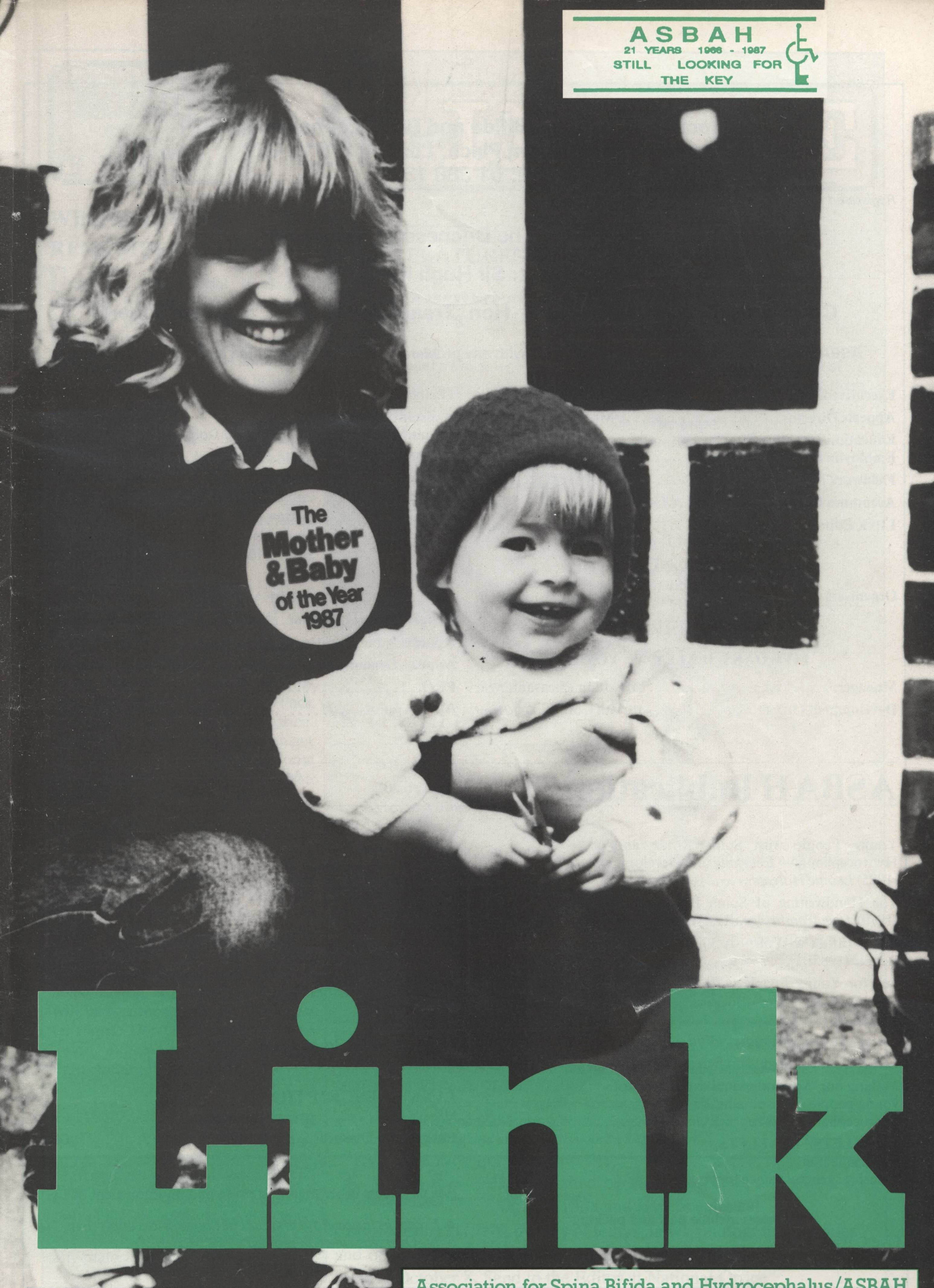

Link

Association for Spina Bifida and Hydrocephalus/ASBAH

September/October 1987 Issue Number 112 30p

Association for Spina Bifida and Hydrocephalus(ASBAH)

22 Upper Woburn Place, London WC1H 0EP
Tel: 01-388 1382

Registered Charity No. 249338

Patron: HRH The Duchess of Gloucester

President: Sir Hugh Rossi, MP

Chairman: Mr R. R. Mackenzie **Hon. Treasurer:** Mr A. K. Stewart Roberts

ASBAH has an experienced staff ready to help with any problems relating to spina bifida and/or hydrocephalus:

Executive Director	Miss Moyna Gilbertson, *MCSP, FBIM*
Appeals Director	Mr Douglas Jack *MA*
Education, Training & Employment Co-ordinator	Mrs Denise Dunning
Fieldwork Manager	Mrs Teresa Cole, *MICA*
Accommodation Officer	Miss Carolyn Smith, *BA (Hons)*
LINK Editor	Mrs Sue Gearing

LIFT (YOUNG ASBAH)

Organisers	Miss Ann Monaghan Mr Andrew Neale

FIVE OAKS, ILKLEY, W. YORKS

Manager	Miss Joan Pheasant, *NNC*
Development Officer	Mr Paul Cooper, *BA (Hons)*

Finance Director:	Mr Derek Knightbridge *FCCA*
Assistant Director Administration	Mr Paul Dobson, *BA (Hons), Grad. IPM*
Research Officer	Miss Pat Corns, *SRN*
Disabled Living Advisory Manager	Miss Claire Michelmore, *SRN, HV*
Disabled Living Advisers	Miss Mary Barton, *MCSP* Mrs Leonie Holgate, *MCSP.* Mr Philip Watson, *BA (Hons) RGN*

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Deputy Appeals Director	Mr Stewart Morrison
Appeals Administrator	Mrs Joan Chapman
Appeals Organiser	Mr Richard Poole
PRO	Miss Sarah Pracey, *BA (Hons)*
PRO/Appeals	Miss Samantha Kirby, *BA (Hons)*

ASBAH Publications

**All available from National Office
Cheques payable to "ASBAH"**

Young People with Spina Bifida and/or Hydrocephalus — Learning and Development (1985) *Leonie Holgate*	£1.60
The Handwriting of Spina Bifida Children (1979) *Joan Cambridge, Eliz M. Anderson*	£1.60
Spina Bifida & You - A Guide for Young People (1985)	£3.50
Sex for Young People with Spina Bifida or Cerebral Palsy (1984)	£1.75
The Nursery Years (1983 *Simon Haskell, Margaret Paull*	60p
Life & Death-thoughts on bereavement (1983)	75p
Making our Way-individual experiences of young people with spina bifida and/or hydrocephalus (1984)	£1.20

BOOKLETS/ LEAFLETS

General leaflet	13p
Housing: general advice for young people	Free 60p for professionals

All prices include post and packing

Five Oaks leaflet	Free

FACT SHEETS .... up to 10 copies free
Translations of fact sheets are available into Bengali, Gujarati, Hindu, Punjabi and Urdu, and into Welsh.
Please send at least 30p postage

VISUAL AIDS
Slide sets and notes (12 slides) Living with Spina Bifida .... £8.62 inc. VAT
Video — Training video on Hydrocephalus (May 1987). Contact PR dept for details.

MAGAZINES

LIFT - for members of young ASBAH (LIFT)	Free
Causeway - for contributers to ASBAH's work	Free

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Editor's Note

WEEKENDS TO REMEMBER

There are two special weekends planned for next year, so take note...It's the tenth anniversary of LIFT and there will be special efforts to make the annual Weekend something to remember. The date is March 25-27 at Owens Park, Manchester University.

Then later in the year, in June, there will be a first ever ASBAH Mobility Weekend at the Ludwig Guttman Sports Centre at Stoke Mandeville. Plans are in hand to make it a varied weekend of activity and discussion. When we know more we will let you have details in LINK.

CHRISTMAS CARDS

In addition to the attractive range pf cards in the enclosed Christmas Card leaflet, there's an extra offer in this LINK too - on page 22 - a Bumper Pack of 10 cards at a very special price. They are last year's range and you get a mixture of designs including some of the really top quality cards.Take a look......

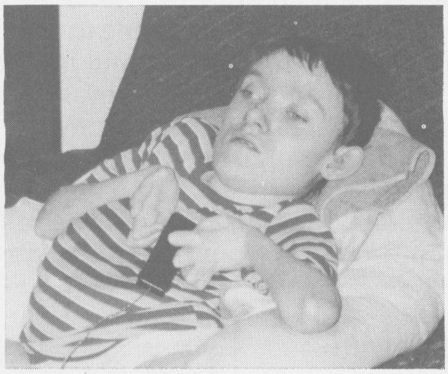
FLORIDA HOLIDAY

It's not long before the first ever LINK readers' holiday to Florida. I look forward to meeting everyone who is going on the first holiday - the Gatwick departure. Clare Michelmore in charge of ASBAH's Disabled Living Advisory Department will be accompanying the Manchester flight. Don't forget your sun tan lotion, sunglasses and comfortable light clothing!

Sue Gearing
Editor

On the INSIDE

MAIN FEATURES



IN THE NEWS

DAILY LIVING

FUND RAISING

GENERAL

FRONT COVER

Photo: Mother & Baby

Jan Tippett and daughter Sophie who won the Mother and Baby magazine MOTHER AND BABY OF THE YEAR Award. The story which Jan, a teacher from Sheffield, submitted to the magazine explained how baby Sophie, born with spina bifida and hydrocephalus was given no chance of life, and how she has now blossomed into a delightful and bright two and a half year old.

Link is published by ASBAH (The Association for Spina Bifida and Hydrocephalus).

Contributions to LINK by way of letters, news, photographs, articles and opinions are warmly welcomed. The closing date for the next issue is October 8. Send to the Editor at National Office

ASBAH's 21st Annual Meeting

ASBAH's Annual Meeting this year was a special one - the 21st. Over 100 members and friends of ASBAH from all parts of the country attended - including some of those who have played an important role in the development of the Association. It was held in the offices of the National Children's Bureau in London.

It was extremely regrettable that ASBAH's new President was prevented at the last minute from being at the meeting. It would have been his first Annual Meeting as President. Later he was able to send his apologies and sincere regrets. ASBAH very much hopes to have the pleasure of meeting him again at a gathering of the Association in the near future.

In the absence of Sir Hugh, ASBAH's Chairman - Mr Robin Mackenzie - welcomed delegates.

This year's meeting will be particularly remembered by those who attended because of the address given by Duncan Forrest who is one of the people responsible for the foundation and growth of ASBAH, and was described by the Chairman as being the "father and mother of the Association". He spoke about the background to the birth of ASBAH and its development over the years. Unfortunately there has not been time to print his address in this LINK, but it will be printed on the centre pages of the next issue in such a form that it can be taken out and kept.

The Annual Meeting was followed in the afternoon by an ASBAH Council Meeting at which many recent developments and future plans were discussed. These pages contain a summary of the Annual Meeting together with some of the information from the afternoon's Council.

ASBAH'S FINANCIAL WELL BEING

The financial well being of ASBAH is at the heart of everything that the association is trying to achieve, and it was, therefore, good news to hear from the Honorary Treasurer, Mr A.K. Stewart-Roberts that the financial picture is reasonably satisfactory - certainly much healthier than in the past.

He warned, however, that there were no grounds for complacency . "A break-even budget has been achieved. The future reserves for research and fieldwork expansion have been increased and there is a small surplus of £6,000 We are aiming for a break-even budget this year" he said, and praised the new discipline that has been brought to ASBAH budgeting by the Finance Director, Mr Derek Knightbridge, and the way in which he has helped to keep ASBAH "on the straight and narrow".

Mr Stewart-Roberts was able to report a healthy increase in donations and income from promotions, and a much greater efficiency in the appeals department. Legacies still make up about 25% of ASBAH's income and although they reflect the current affection felt for ASBAH by many people, one could not be certain that they would continue at such a high level.

The telesales department of ASBAH again showed a healthy rise in income - about 25% of the total. The computer bought to speed up the work has virtually paid for itself by way of improvement in payment of advertising, and direct mailing , he reported.

Mr Stewart-Roberts pointed out that although ASBAH had once again been given a £42,000 grant from the DHSS this would disappear over the next three years. "The philosophy of the DHSS is that grants are provided for *new* ventures, and of course ASBAH is no longer *new.*"

He was happy to report that the efforts to improve co-operation with the local associations were already bearing fruit.

Mr Stewart-Roberts said that the overriding theme is "We need more money. Only in this way can we expand our services".

Six people at the AGM who have had a lot to do with ASBAH over the years - From left to right: Ron Tallamy, Long standing member of Executive; H.D. Macfarlane - "Mac" - Former Liason Officer; Duncan Forrest, Founder member; Mary Oughtred, Former General Secretary; John Pointer, Treasurer in the early days; Frank Armour, Former Finance Director.

ASBAH's 21st Annual Meeting cont.

The continuing growth of ASBAH

In her report to the Annual Meeting and at the Council meeting during the afternoon, Moyna Gilbertson, ASBAH's Executive Director emphasised ASBAH's determination to increase the number of fieldworkers it supports.

"It is satisfactory for me to be able to report that two fieldworkers will start work in Northern Ireland from the end of September. Re-allocation of hours and boundaries means a worker is now based in South Yorkshire and one in Cambridge, and we are currently looking at the possibility of developing in Manchester a community service in co-operation with the Boys and Girls Welfare Society" she said.

Miss Gilbertson explained that ASBAH had been trying to establish a fieldwork service in Manchester for some time but this had been thwarted by the non co-operation of a Union. The opportunity had now arisen to work with the Boys and Girls Welfare Society, a long established Manchester organisation, to establish a service which would include fieldwork cover, LIFT-type activities and general community support for young disabled people.

Miss Gilbertson said ASBAH also hoped to expand its fieldwork service into Devon and Cornwall, an area where at least 150 families were know to the Association. This might be made possible through sponsorship from local industry, something which Douglas Jack, Appeals Director was actively working to achieve. ASBAH hoped also to appoint a fieldworker in Cumbria as soon as possible. "The situation has greatly improved but it still leaves large areas not covered by fieldworkers".

She continued: "In order for the fieldworkers to work at maximum efficiency it is obviously important that they have adequate support from the central office. We are currently interviewing for an additional Disabled Living Advisor to join our team of four.

"Pressures to provide counselling and information services relating to all aspects of independent living continue to grow. We are involved with local associations and housing associations in many more housing scheme in different parts of the country".

SHELTERED PLACEMENT

"We have had a lot more involvement with Sheltered Placement Schemes and remain convinced that this is a very appropriate programme for many young people with spina bifida and/or hydrocephalus. We have useful contacts with the Shaw Trust which supports almost 1,000 people in this scheme". Miss Gilbertson said there was nearly always at least one young person with spina bifida involved in work experience at National ASBAH.

STUDY DAYS

Twenty Study Days have now been held by ASBAH and three since the last AGM. "They are one way in which we can reach people in areas where we have no fieldwork" said Miss Gilbertson, emphasising the importance of these Days in helping parents and professionals to understand more about spina bifida and hydrocephalus.

TEACHING MATERIALS

Miss Gilbertson told delegates about ASBAH's new teaching video, *Hydrocephalus - the Hidden Handicap*, .

Publications were also being revised, " A much needed new edition of *Your Child with Spina Bifida and/or Hydrocephalus at School* is at the printer. We have advised on other publications, notably *I have Spina Bifida* - a book for young children teaching them more about integration and the problems of being disabled, and this is now available. We hope that this improvement in teaching materials will help in our training programmes.

HYDROCEPHALUS

It was becoming apparent said Miss Gilbertson, that some young adults were particularly vulnerable and had been in trouble with the police. ASBAH staff had been called to prison and a psychiatric hospital in order to help young people with hydrocephalus whose problems were not properly understood by the authorities. ASBAH would be pleased to hear from you if you have experienced any such problems

INTERNATIONAL LINKS

Miss Gilbertson reported on her recent overseas travel, representing ASBAH at meetings of Mobility International, the International Congress of the World Confederation of Physical Therapy and the meeting of the International Federation for Hydrocephalus and Spina Bifida.

"Perhaps some of the greatest contrasts were between Greece where groups of people out for walks, some of whom were in wheelchairs, were regarded as somewhat unusual, and Berkeley, California which is generally regarded as being the most accessible and integrated town in the world. Certainly it is lovely to be in a street where every shop can be entered easily, even if one is walking with difficulty or in a wheelchair. However, even there I found some unscaleable steps on the university campus, so perhaps everyone still has something to learn. In Australia I was particularly impressed by the enthusiasm and searching interest shown by the students at Curtin University of Technology in Perth where I had a most interesting day talking with about a hundred third year students on the subject of spina bifida, hydrocephalus and the work of ASBAH. It was good to have the opportunity to meet with staff at the Princess Margaret Hospital for Children and particularly some parents, and very interesting to see Rocky Bay

Continued on page 6

ASBAH's 21st Annual Meeting cont.

Village which is a residential establishment run by Western Australia Crippled Children's Society and where a number of young people with spina bifida live.

Miss Gilbertson also spoke about the meeting of the International Federation for Hydrocephalus and Spina Bifida held alongside the AGM of the Spina Bifida Association of America in Denver. "Eleven countries were represented including England and Wales, Northern and Southern Ireland, and it was an unforgettable experience...I think the overwhelming impression was that it is very difficult to compare countries whose social service support systems vary so dramatically. Certainly it seemed to us that the motivation for many Americans belonging to the Spina Bifida Association of America was the acute financial problems families they encounter and the need to have a considerable amount of legal advice readily to hand. However, having said that, it was most impressive to see so many adults, some of whom were minimally disabled, taking such an active part in the the Association.

FIVE IMPORTANT AREAS OF CONCERN

At the Council Meeting , the Chair man Robin Mackenzie listed five particular areas which he considers to be in need of special concern and action by ASBAH:

- *The changing needs of young people with spina bifida and/or hydrocephalus as they left childhood and entered their late teens and early adult years.*
- *The need to give more support to those with hydrocephalus whose problems are becoming more and more apparent.*
- *Support for increasing facilities for sports and recreation.*
- *The changing use of Five Oaks.*
- *Research. It is vital that ASBAH continues to support and expand this side*

Fruitful co-operation

Douglas Jack, ASBAH's Appeals Director spoke of the increasing co-operation during the year between National ASBAH and the local associations in order to improve the fund-raising potential in individual areas.

"Since I spoke on this subject at our last AGM I have been invited to visit a number of local associations, and these meetings have been friendly and constructive". He said the co-operation had involved give and take on both sides but was bearing fruit, and had led already to the setting up of various charity shops involving local volunteer committees combined with ASBAH's management (see page 22).

He said he hoped that more joint ventures would take place and looked forward to being invited to meet more associations during the year.

ASBAH AND CONDUCTIVE EDUCATION

by Moyna P. Gilbertson, ASBAH's Executive Director

Conductive Education is a system of management which was developed in Budapest by Professor Andreas Peto from 1945. The goal of Conductive Education is to make disabled children 'orthofunctional'. This is described as the ability to function independently in the world without using a wheelchair or needing any building adaptations.

The child uses normal furniture and the normal tools and implements of everyday life and will need no welfare assistant. All aspects of learning are facilitated by a specially trained 'Conductor'. The principles which Professor Peto founded have been studied by British experts and many of his policies have been incorporated into management programmes in this country for the last 20 years or so. Initially the Institute in Budapest (The State Institute for the Motor Disabled and Conductors' College) accepted only children with cerebral palsy and it is only recently that much reference has been paid to the possible usefulness of the system in the management of children with spina bifida. Inevitably there has been considerable interest expressed by the media in this new development particularly as some families have been fundraising to enable them to travel to Budapest seeking what they genuinely believe to be better prospects for the development of their children's potential.

From the moment we first knew that claims were made as to the suitability of Conductive Education in relation to spina bifida we have been actively studying them. We have also surveyed the centres in this country which practic e a form of Conductive Education. In spite of the fact that we have been criticised by some for keeping a low profile we remain convinced that it was only responsible of us to try to become as well informed as possible before we made any recommendations to members.

We are in close touch with the Spastics Society , who have much more experience in this field, and with the DHSS. Conductive Education has been discussed by the Medical Advisory Committee and most importantly we have met and talked with parents who have been to Hungary. We are now considering whether this is an appropriate time for a representative of ASBAH to visit Budapest and a decision will be taken within the next few weeks.

A further report will be included in the next LINK.

The Disabled Graduates

The Disabled Graduates Data Bank is an initiative of the Association of Graduates Careers Advisory Services Working Party on Disabled Graduates. The aim is to collect information on the experience of graduates with a range of physical and mental disabilities who have successfully completed their higher education and entered the world of work.

It is designed for use by disabled students, careers advisers and employers to show how various disabilities have been overcome in the pursuit of a wide range of careers.

The Data Bank contains nearly 400 case histories of disabled graduates and of members of the Association of Disabled Professionals.

It aims to educate employers by showing what disabled workers have achieved, and to encourage and advise disabled students and graduate job seekers by providing relevant comparative information and examples of strategies that have proved useful.

For further information contact:
Disabled Graduates Data Bank ,
Careers Advisory Service ,
University of Nottingham ,
University Park ,
Nottingham ,
NG7 2RD .
Tel: (0202) 506101 Ext 2947

Denise Dunning
Education Training, and Employment

JUST ONE OF THE FAMILIES ASBAH HAS BEEN ABLE TO HELP RECENTLY

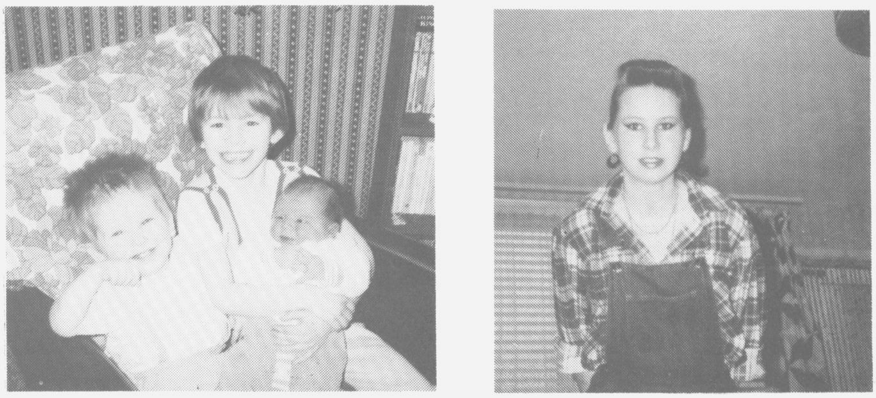
DEAN AND HIS FAMILY

A warm, dry, safe home was something which Dean's young mother found almost impossible to find, but now that has become a reality thanks to her determination and courage and ASBAH's help.

Dean is severely disabled with spina bifida and hydrocephalus, and lives with his single parent mum, 6 year old sister Tammy, and baby Ricky.

Dean's grandmother contacted ASBAH's fieldworker who visited mum and baby in hospital when Dean was only two days old. This is where our involvement began.

ASBAH and another charity were able to help with necessities like a washing machine and nappies and our fieldworker visited regularly togive this young mum support. The fieldworker comments: "I have been involved in helping mum with her request for a housing transfer to a property more suitable for Dean's future needs. This has been a long and tortuous process made more difficult for the family late last year when squatters on the floor above flooded their flat and the young family's too. This caused damage which made the flat uninhabitable and the wiring unsafe. I approached the housing department and the family were rehoused in bed and breakfast accommodation - up three flights of stairs and in a disgusting state. A second bed and breakfast was found - out at Heathrow airport. But what about schooling for sister Tammy, and what of the fact that neither food nor cooking equipment were allowed in rooms? Can a family on Supplementary Benefit eat out at Heathrow prices? Mum decided that the lesser of two - or rather three - evils would be to return to her flat and camp out with lamplight and calor gas heat".



Dean (on the left) with brother and sister , and mum (right).

ASBAH provided financial assistance and put pressure on the council which was answered by way of a temporary place on a nearby estate - not ideal, but at least clean, warm and dry.

An offer of permanent housing has since been made by a housing trust and now the family is in a new purpose-built home in Wembley. ASBAH has been able to assist once again with a fridge, help with moving in, and also to help buy a second-hand double buggy so that mum has

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Local Association Round~up

Bristol

CO-OPERATION between the young people of Bristol Association's Spina Bifida Workshop and a Bristol Comprehensive School has scooped 1st prize in a regional competition sponsored by Nat. West's Project Respond.

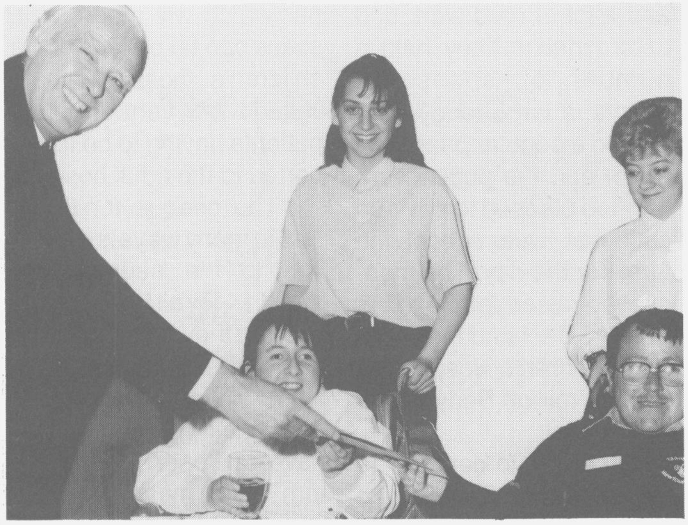
The Workshop and Ashton Park Comprehensive won the prize of £400 through their co-operation in producing screen-printed Christmas Cards. The school provided the facilities and equipment which enabled the young workers to go ahead and design their own cards . These were then reduced to size with the help of Bristol Polytechnic's Faculty of Art and Design, and were ready to be made into cards.

The co-operation has existed on many other levels too and given not only the young people of the Workshop the chance to return to school, but also the pupils the opportunity to make friends with people who are physically handicapped.

"Many of them had never pushed a wheelchair before, and it was quite an experience for them getting to know our group" said Liz Luckwell in charge of the Workshop. "You have to start somewhere in educating the general public" she added.

The Workshop also recently had the opportunity of showing two of its rag rugs at the Chelsea Design Fair in conjunction with a young furniture maker who asked the Workshop to design rugs to co-ordinate with her display.

The Workshop continues to keep busy and is having considerable success in selling individual hand-made Christmas Cards (made by an oil paint and water technique) through a retail outlet in Bristol.



Above: Julie Beese and Peter O' Loughlin who work at the Bristol Association's Spina Bifida Workshop receive the £400 cheque from the Nat West at a special reception in Bristol. Standing with them are Kim Moore and Theresa Cryer, pupils of Ashton Park Comprehensive. (See story on this page).

Five Oaks

Two commanchee canoes can now be used by young people on Activities Courses at Five Oaks - ASBAH's centre in Ilkley - thanks to the Police Training College in Durham. The photo *(above)* shows young people at Five Oaks with WPC Pitts and the two canoes kindly donated by the training college. Paul Cooper, Five Oaks' Development Officer is in the photo (back) and Leonie Holgate, ASBAH's Mobility Adviser (centre back). *Photo: Telegraph & Argus, Bradford*

Lincolnshire South

Above: Katie Beever (16) of Grantham, Lincs, who recently became the first disabled youngster to join Grantham Motors on a YTS training scheme, undertaking a two year course in Business Administration. With her is Graham Hill, Managing Director of Grantham Motors. Katie was photographed receiving a trading award on behalf of the company.

The scheme has proved a real success both for Katie, who has spina bifida, and for the company. Initial doubts which Grantham Motors had about the suitability and safety of a workshop environment were quickly dispelled, and although able to work only on the ground floor, Katie has already been involved in a wide range of activities. Ramps have been installed and access improved for Katie so that she can compete equally with other trainees.

Her present work involves meeting the public, handling the switchboard and working with the company computer - all areas in which Katie is proving successful. Graham Hill commented "Having Katie is a pleasure and has presented us with no special problems. The experiment is one we shall certainly consider again once Katie's two year placement with us ends"

Round-up continued on next page

Local Association Round-up

Chester & District

Below: Anna Powell, a young member of this Association, completes a pretty bridal picture when she was bridesmaid at her cousin's wedding at Bangor.

Sussex

"THE BEGINNING of the heatwave in mid July marked the start of our weekend at Felbury House Never have we had such lovely weather before for the whole weekend, and plenty of cold drinks were essential to get us through.

Everyone arrived safely on the Friday evening. We never plan anything for the first evening as everyone seems happy to play darts, table tennis, pool, and to talk. Next morning, though, we were off out in the bus and cars to Bewbush Leisure Centre, Crawley, for a morning's workout. The centre puts out a selection of things for us, including carpet bowls, badminton, table tennis, and to let us loose in the weightlifting room... Then it was off to Tilgate Park to find a cool spot for a picnic, before visiting the Nature Reserve which has a number of rare breeds..

"It is traditional to have a disco at Felbury on the Saturday. In beween records, everyone hopped in an out to look at the bonfire, have toasted marshmallows and enjoy the lovely evening.

"Sunday morning saw us out on the green doing archery, before Ian Laker together with Clare Michelmore from ASBAH, gave us all a practical talk on incontinence products. Lunch, then up into the woods to follow a trail. We had time to sit quietly and watch ourselves on Tony's video film of the weekend before parents and mini bus arrived to take everyone away.

"The weekends have many benefits. They serve as a first introduction for going away; they help the fieldworkers get to know the children in a different setting; encourage independence, and self-confidence; new activities are tried and enjoyed; and I think the weekends show that disability is no bar to doing anything.

Margaret White,
Secretary, Sussex ASBAH

Worcestershire and Bristol Associations

MEMBERS from both associations met together in the Forest of Dean in July for a special barbecue to celebrate their 21st birthday. The hot dogs, hamburgers and fruit went down well and were followed by a game of rounders.

Bolton & Bury

THE ASSOCIATION has had a busy time during the year. Activities included an interesting Family Day with singers, clowns, wheelchair dancing and a magician for a celebration to mark ASBAH's 21st birthday. The regular monthly meetings have been very well attended, reports the Secretary, Mrs Eve Clyne. "The Summer day trip was to Chester Zoo. Over 40 members donned their raincoats for the day, but we were lucky - the rain waited until 5 pm when we went to the Ladbroke Hotel in Chester for high tea. We would like to recommend this to any other 'wheelchair members' as facilities were excellent and so was the service". (See photo and story below for other news from Bolton & Bury).

Bolton & Bury

Above: Pupils of Plant Hill High School, Manchester proudly display two cheques (totalling over £1,088) which they raised by using their imagination and a lot of hard work and determination.They held a number of sponsored events; a large teddy bear proved a popular prize for a raffle, and the pupils were only too pleased to pay 10p each **not** wear school uniform for the day. The money was raised for Bolton & Bury ASBAH and for Booth Hall Children's Hospital for their £1 million Body Scanner Appeal.

In the photo centre is Mrs Eve Clyne, Secretary of Bolton & Bury ASBAH as well as Head of Religious Education at Plant Hill High. She writes: "The pupils know about my young daughter Joanna who has spina bifida and hydrocephalus, and this I felt was an excellent school effort".

"The money for Booth Hall is for their Body Scanner which will mean brain scans can take place at the children's hospital itself, instead of very ill young patients having to be transported to the adult hospital.

"The cheque for Booth Hall in many ways is a thank you to the neurosurgery Ward 14 for all the help and support they have given me and other patients with spina bifida/hydrocephalus and their parents...They have an 'open ward' system which means you can contact them 24 hours a day if you are at all I worried about anything" added Mrs Clyne.

Please send in news from your local association for the Round-up columns in LINK

Manpower Services Commission

ASSISTANCE WITH FARES TO WORK

The MSC can assist severely disabled people with the cost of fares to and from work. However, the following criteria must be met:

1) The applicant must be registered disabled under the Disabled Persons (Employment) Act 1944;

(2) Be unable to use public transport for all or part of the journey to because of disability.

(3) Incur extra costs in travelling to and from work because of their disability.

If the applicant is receiving the **MOBILITY ALLOWANCE** he or she is entitled to the grant, but only (a) if they are medically advised not to drive; (b) if they are legally barred from driving because of age or disability; (c) when they are awaiting delivery of a personal vehicle; (d) when their personal vehicle is temporarily out of action (e) when their mobility allowance is committed to car purchase (ie through motability)

Amount of Re-imbursement

The grant provided is normally at three-quarters of the total cost of fares to work, up to a maximum amount (£66.30 at April 1987).

Practice Points

The MSC require three quotes from three separate mini-cab companies for the journey involved, before the application will be considered. This will be an expensive time for that person if they have to engage blank taxis or mini-cabs for their journey. It is IMPERATIVE that all receipts are retained during this period so that appropriate recompense is obtained from the MSC. Re-imbursements are made in arrears, usually about seven days after submission of the claim form. However, delays can occur if there is a postal strike, or the claim form is completed wrongly, by the applicant, employer or mini-cab company. **Attention to detail cannot be over emphasised.** The MSC will return any form not filled in correctly.

Although it may be assumed that a regular booking is "bread and butter" to a mini-cab company, some are not reliable and this makes a disabled person feel vulnerable if the cab turns up an hour or so after it is required. If problems with the cab company persists, the only alternative is to change companies. Also, if the cab company increases fares the MSC should be notified, so that they can make the appropriate adjustment in the reimbursement.

How to apply

Applications for assistance for fares to work should be made to the Disablement Resettlement Officer (DRO) at the local job-centre.

Denise Dunning
ASBAH's Education, Training & Employment Coordinator

ON PRESCRIPTION

THE INCARE SELF ADHESIVE SHEATH *is now available on prescription. It is an incontinence sheath which has an adhesive coating on its inner surface, and does not require an adhesive liner or additional tape. The InCare Sheath incorporates a unique anti-reflux flap preventing backwash of urine along the penile shaft. This keeps the penis dry and thus reduces the risk of irritation . The wide bore outlet permits maximum flow-rate and the double convolution on the outlet prevents kinking and twisting. Each sheath is rolled onto its own rigid plastic collar which holds the sheath open and simplifies posiltioning. It is available in three sizes -22mm, 26mm & 3mm; packed in boxes of 15 (a month's supply approx) Information from Claire Michelmore at ASBAH, or from Zoe Woods, IncCare, 43 Castle Street, Reading,, RGl7SN. Tel: 0734 597211.*

THE INCARE HELPLINE

InCare has set up a free telephone advisory service run by an SRN offering help and support to both patients and carers on all aspects of incontinence management. This service gives information on incontinence products, and addresses of disability organisations, and can supply a list of clinical papers and articles on incontinence and allied subjects. It keeps an up to date list of all continence advisors in Britain and will put them in touch with patients when requested to do so. Dial 100 and ask the operator for Freefone Incare Helpline.

FOR 19 YEAR OLD Michael Steele, the computer has been a lifeline. Severely disabled with spina bifida and hydrocephalus, Michael's health has deteriorated significantly over the years. He was unable to continue at school, and then unable to carry on even with home tuition. He spends practically all his time in his room of the family home at Christchurch in Hampshire.

Michael's body may not be all that it should , but his mind is alert and enquiring, so when he was first introduced to a computer it didn't take all that long for him to master it, to add to it extensively and to start to make a new life for himself with its aid.

He has the help of his father - not a computer buff- but just an ordinary dad, who because he was unemployed , had time on his hands,. He decided that if his son was going to take to modern technology he ought to make an effort and learn, too. Now the two of them spend every afternoon 'closeted' in Michael's room.

The results have been amazing. Michael has been able to write letters and communicate with the outside world, write his own computer programmes for use by children with learning problems, and recently he achieved a real life's ambition - his own life story in no less than fifteen chapters.

The computer started off as a fairly basic BBC Home Computer, loaned originally by Bristol SEMERC (Special Education Micro Electronics Resource Centre) attached to Bristol Polytechnic, and eventually purchased for Michael by Hampshire Education Authority . It has been added to, altered and personalised to meet Michael's needs, thanks to his parents and friends, in particular Mrs Gwyneth Evans, the headmistress of Michael's infants school and Mrs Barbara Williams who used to be his home tutor. John Taylor of Bristol SEMERC proved very helpful, visiting Michael and advising on how to overcome problems. Michael found that he could no longer operate the keyboard and for a while was using a spatula gripped in his teeth. John Taylor went down and suggested the Keymaster - a keyboard emulator operated by a single switch resting on Michael's chest. It is a remote control scanning device which enables Michael to call up the letters individually. But it's a laborious process - and one can imagine the dedication and perseverance needed to get through fiteen chapters.

"What I'd really like to do now is to find some kind of home employment using the computer. I am sure I could be useful to someone" said Michael. He is good at design and graphics and has made and printed a series of simple but attractive greetings cards , and this is an area he feels he might be able to develop. "What I'd really like to get in time is a colour printer" he said.

It is not possible to reproduce all of Michael's story, but LINK is very pleased that Michael has allowed us to publish the last two chapters

TWO CHAPTERS FROM MICHAEL STEELE'S STORY - MICHAEL, A YOUNG MAN WITH SPINA BIFIDA

Chapter 13

My lifeline -

what a computer has meant to me

In Chapter 10 I related how I acquired the computer and its associated hardware, firmware and software. Together with the programs written specially for me by Dr Williams and dad and others copied from CEEFAX and computer magazines, the computer initially proved its worth during home tuition sessions.

I soon felt, however, that if dad could learn enough about the computer to write programs for me, then I could do the same. Consequently, as I have mentioned elsewhere, dad taught me all he had learned about the BBC BASIC computer language. With a little bit of help I was then able to write simple programs for myself. We started to do this work on the computer in the afternoons and now the afternoons have been given over to the computer on a regular basis. As a result, I think mum sometimes feels that she is a 'computer widow'!

Once I reached the school leaving age, I knew that if I had been 'normal' I would have been either working or taking some form of further education. However, neither was possible because of my disabilities! Now that I was able to devise computer programs and to use the computer in a variety of ways, I felt that possibly there might be an opening for me in this sphere. Would I be able to find it? I didn't want to 'sit' back doing nothing! I was sure that, somewhere, somehow, I could achieve something with the limited abilities that I had. I didn't want to stagnate! There was more to life than that!

I watched an information programme on television and asked dad to ring the number given to enquire if they could help me in my situation. Finally we were put in touch with a man in Bournemouth who was employed to try and place disabled people in industrial and other work environments. At the time dad contacted him, he was looking into the feasibility of setting up a work scheme for disabled people who had computers but were unable to leave home. This sounded just the thing for me! Unfortunately, however, nothing came of it and so I was still at square one!

Then, one day, my aunt heard of my dilemma and suggested that I tried to devise and write a computer program for her. She teaches children with special

Continued on next page

"I enjoyed - and still do enjoy - using the computer because I was completely in charge. It was the only activity I had where I did not have to rely on other people to help me" - Michael Steele in an earlier chapter of his book

Michael in his bedroom working the computer

Continued from previous page

learning difficulties, and she had not been able to find a really suitable program to help children learn and understand the multiplication tables. This was at last a real challenge! Something to get my teeth into! I had an objective at last!

Having so recently learnt the multiplication tables myself with Mrs Williams (*Michael's home tutor*) in such a way that I could quite honestly say that I knew them, I felt sure that I could devise a suitable program for my aunt. After some thought I soon came up with an idea of what might be suitable. Dad then put my ideas to my aunt to see if I was on the right lines - and I was. Then the work and 'fun' really started! I thought that it would probably only take a couple of weeks to complete the program. I was wrong! By the time of my eighteenth birthday, I had, with dad's help, already been working on it for some two and a half months and there was still more to do to complete it. However it was far enough advanced for my aunt to have a look at it and give her comments.

When my aunt saw the program she was highly delighted with it even though it was not completed. She said she was sure her class would love it and that it would help a lot. Having seen it, my aunt was anxious to have a copy of it as soon as possible. Consequently, as soon as I had 'recovered' from the surprises of my eighteenth birthday, dad and I returned to the program with increased vigour to try to complete it and iron out its few 'bugs' as quickly as we could.

Finally after a total time of three months, working at least two hours every day, we completed the program to my satisfaction. Now came the crunch! Would it prove successful and help my aunt's class to learn and understand the tables? Only time would tell! There was only one thing I could do now and that was to send a copy to my aunt. All I could do then was to await results.

It didn't take long! Within a matter of a week or so, my aunt rang up to tell me that her class loved the program. It was proving to be even more of a success than she thought it would. Not only were the children getting practice at typing their names and learning their way around the computer keyboard - all of which I had intended, as additional exercises - they were loving using the program. The 'help' routine to illustrate the tables, which my aunt had particularly wanted, was a great hit. Not only were the children using it and following it, they were also copying it. They were using coloured bricks and laying them out in the same patterns and same colours as in the program routine. This was something my aunt hadn't expected but was highly delighted about.

After my aunt had had the program for a short while, another teacher at the school asked if she could have a copy for her class. Then a teacher at another school wanted a copy. I was also asked if I would be prepared to provide a copy to go to Vanuatu in the New Hebrides. As a result I think I can quite truthfully say that at long last I have succeeded in achieving something. I hope in the future that I will be able to write more programs that will help similar children. This seems to be a field that has been neglected to a certain extent. I also hope that having spent so long on this book I will be successful in getting it published.

At this point, I would especially like to thank my dad for having spent so much time in my bedroom, helping me to write my story. Also for all the time he still spends with me when I am working on the computer.

Final Chapter
Personal views

In this chapter, I am putting before you some general comments. They are, as I said in the fore-word, entirely my own opinions and may not agree with current official thinking. However, the views expressed are what I have come to fervently believe in, throughout my life. In stating them, I hope that I do not offend anybody - no offence is intended.

There may be many other adults and young people with spina bifida who have managed to achieve more with their lives than I have to date. I am satisfied, however, that I am managing to make something of my life in the best way I can - allowing for the fact that I have the severest form of spina-bifida that it is possible to have. It may come as a surprise to some people that I hold the views that I do, but I am sure there must be many other disabled people who hold similar views.

I found it extremely hard to accept the fact that I was disabled. However, once accepted, I then found that the limitations imposed on me by my disability were

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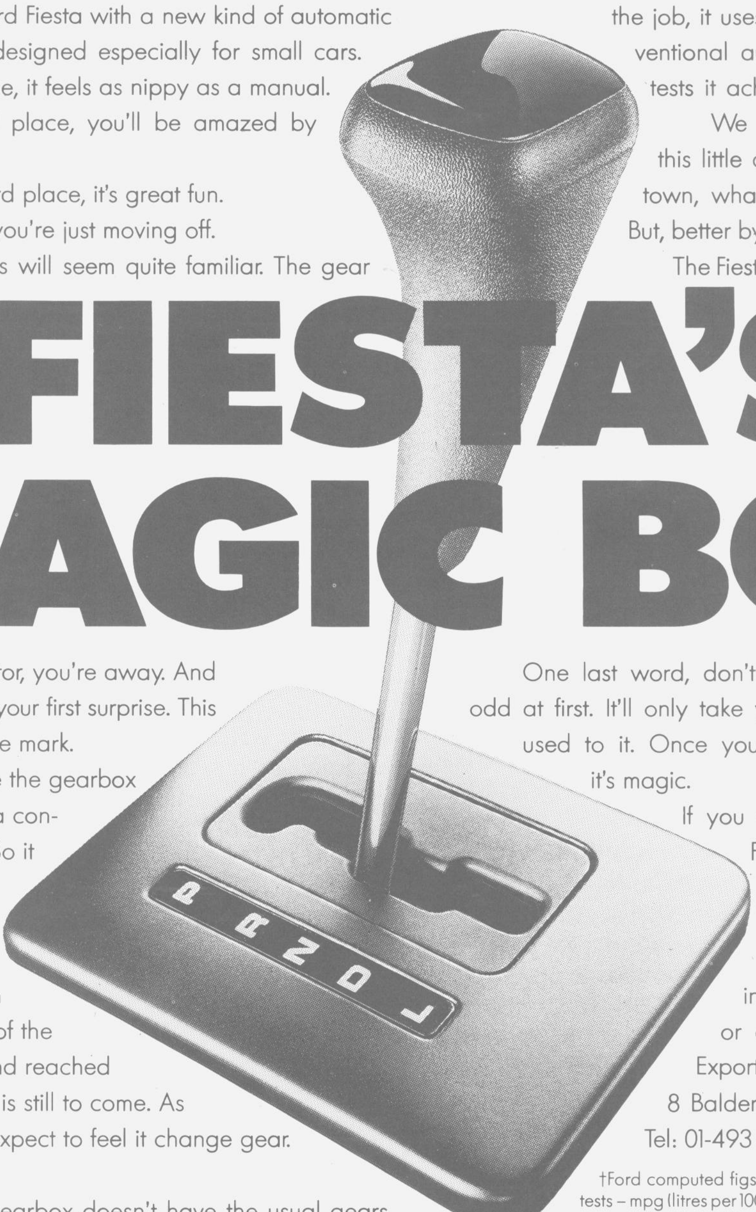



FIESTA

Continued from page 13

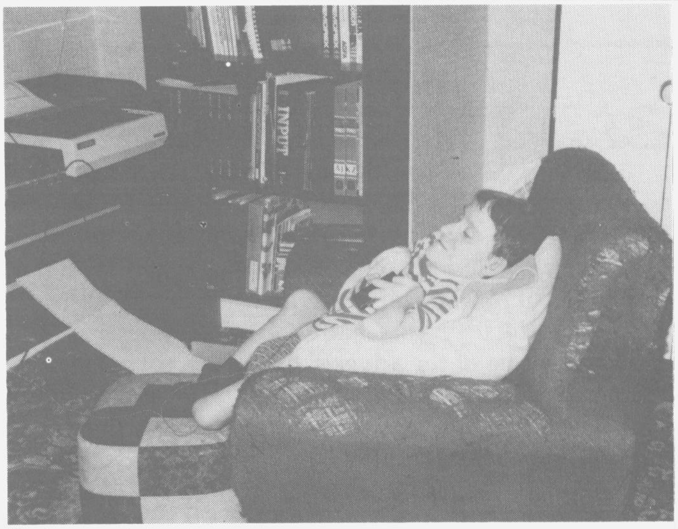
easier to accept. I came to realise at an early age that I must take life as it comes. It is no good getting uptight or showing resentment towards those who can do more than I can. I am not going to say that I never feel resentment towards others, because I must admit that on occasions I do. However, I have learned to keep these feelings to myself - I never let them show.

Even though I have had to learn to take life as it comes, I do, like so many people, daydream. Sometimes when I am doing this I find myself dreaming about what might have been - if only my arms had been stronger! I see myself walking in calipers with the aid of crutches. Sometimes I am popping down to the shops to buy a paper, magazine or the odd item, other times I am going to the 'local' for a quick drink or even a game of snooker! Then I snap out of it and realise that it is not to be!

One thing that I do resent and which makes me blow my top, is if I am called HANDICAPPED! I do not consider myself to be handicapped. It is just that because of my disability I am limited in what I can do. If people like myself with physical disabilities or even those with mental disabilities are called handicapped because of limitations in what they can do, then in my opinion there are many apparently able-bodied people who should be called handicapped and I don't mean golfers! In the same way I do not like to see or hear people being labelled CRIPPLED!

You will have gathered from reading chapter three, in particular, that I was most unhappy when I was attending the special school for the disabled. In my view it is totally wrong to have such establishments. Why should the disabled have to be segregated? I feel money could be better spent trying to integrate disabled pupils into ordinary schools and colleges. In that way, people would come to understand and accept disabilities more than they do at present. It would also act as a stimulus for the disabled. To segregate the disabled from the rest of the community and to give them very little encouragement to achieve or to make the most of what they have, is a form of discrimination! To have separate schools and establishments for the able-bodied and the disabled is, in my opinion, as bad as having separate areas for 'blacks' and 'whites' as happens with Apartheid in South Africa!

Following on from the above, I once heard of a blind lad expressing a view that there should be hospices for children. I cannot agree with that view. I am not saying that hospices are wrong. I, in fact, feel that there is a definite place for them in society if used in the right way. By that I mean that they provide a very valuable service to patients that are terminally ill and to their relatives. However I feel that having hospices for disabled children is totally wrong! I reckon that they would just become human dumping grounds! I am sure that the founders of the hospice movements did not intend for them to be used in that way. To shut disabled children or adults away in a hospice or any other form of institution is again a form of discrimination!



Doing a print out

Similarly, I feel that there is yet another form of discrimination against the disabled and that is abortion! I do not belong to any particular church so it is not on religious grounds that I speak. This is purely my own personal view. I agree that on occasions there may be sound medical reasons for a woman having an abortion. Why though should a disabled child be considered grounds for an abortion? The money that is spent on scans, amnio-centesis and other tests to find whether a woman is going to have a disabled child could, I am sure, be put to far better use. In my opinion, by carrying out these tests and advising abortion when it is discovered that there is a disability, Society is trying to rid itself of people who are an embarrassment. In a way it is like Hitler's Germany trying to rid itself of the Jews! My view is that every child, whether disabled or not, should be given every chance to lead as full a life as possible. I certainly value my own life with its limitations and I hope that in some small way I have been able to contribute something to my own immediate family as well as possibly to others.

What I am going to say now in conclusion, just about sums it all up. I am glad I was born into my family and to have had the parents and sisters that I have. I love my sisters dearly and am so thankful that through the example set by my mum and dad, they were able to accept me as I was and were only to pleased to do all they could for me. Now that they are married and have families of their own, I am proud to be an uncle to all my nieces and nephews.

I can honestly say I owe everything to my mum and dad. They have treated me as a normal son - if they had not, I reckon I would have gone mad a long time ago. I could not have two better people to look after me and do all that has to be done for me. I know that they love me dearly and I am certain that even if I had won a scholarship to Cambridge or one of the other universities or had become successful in some other sphere, they would not have loved me any more than they do! I mean this from the bottom of my heart.

Therefore to my mum and dad I say:- "Thanks a million for everything. You both deserve the highest awards imaginable. My love to you always. MICHAEL".

NAIDEX '87

Aids for the Disabled and Elderly Exhibition
Alexandra Palace, London. October 13 - 16.

THE NAIDEX exhibitions whether in the North, or in London, give a unique opportunity to see and try out a wide range of new ideas, new equipment and well-tried favourites. You may have read about something in LINK, or looked at one of the adverts. but never got around to finding out more. NAIDEX might be your opportunity. *For full details about the Exhibition contact Naidex Conventions Ltd., 90 Calverley Road, Tunbridge Wells, Kent TNl 2UN. Tel: 0892 44027.*

Here are just some of the exhibitors and their products:

ORTHO-KINETICS DOUBLE PRODUCT RANGE

The versatile 700 series Rollators for children consist of three basic frame sizes with a wide system of accessories. Reha Buggy is a luxury pushchair available with accessories offering comfort and lateral support for the adolescent. It is adjustable and has a high degree of maoeuvrability both indoors and over rough ground.

The Pony, a powered three wheeler designed for chidren has had many improvements - proportional speed control and greater stability and comfort. Also on show will be the combined pushchair and car seat - Travel Chair - which is now fitted with new wheels and castors for a smoother ride together with built- in adjustable front stabilisers.

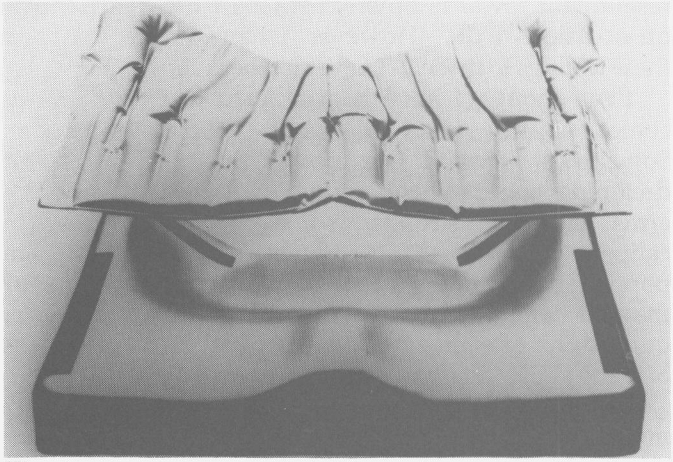
Ortho-Kinetics will be showing products new to the UK - a lift chair, and a powered three wheeler range . Recent acquisition of Quadra Wheelchairs Inc. of California bring Ortho into the activity wheelchair market with a highly regarded range of ultralight adult and children's wheelchairs.

SAMSON PRODUCTS MOBILITY RANGE

As the UK distributor for the Canadian Fortress Scientific powered mobility products, the company will be showing the complete range of power chairs, as well as a self contained 'add on' system to allow any manual wheelchair to be converted to electric power, and the model 1200FS power wheel, an innovative system for powering a manual wheelchair by replacing one of the front castors with a hand-steerable power wheel.

On show for the first time in the UK will be a new lightweight front wheel drive model 2200FS and an all plastic fully adjustable manual wheelchair, model 3000FS.

Also on the stands will be Samson's own Transichair range; several new attachments are now avail able to compliment the mechanical lift walker. The new generation Retro colourful manual wheelchairs for adults and children from Vermeiren of Belgium will be featured, as well as children's BMX style wheelchairs from Denmark.



The Jay cushion, a comfortable seating system for wheelchairs which prevents pressure sores and improves posture. It has a firm contoured base to provide positive positioning of the user in the chair .It holds the hips to the back of the chair and also has a central raised portion at the front to allow easier leg movement. On top of the base is a Flolite pad (containing a high viscosity fluid), which virtually eliminates pressure yet holds the user firmly in place and levels the hips.It's on show at Naidex on the Gerald Simonds stand.

GERALD SIMONDS WHEELCHAIRS

Gerald Simonds is a distributor for the American firm, Jay Medical, and will be exhibiting what is claimed to be "the world's best pressure relief cushion" - the Jay cushion (see photo). Also on show will be the less sculptured and lighter cushion than the original Jay cushion - the new Jay Active cushion - which is designed for an active lifestyle and is ideal for lightweight chairs. A smaller Flolite pad eliminates presure in the critical area providing support and stability.

The new Combi seating system from Jay Medical will be at Naidex, too. Gerald Simonds explain that it is "designed to reduce sitting fatigue and lower back pain, over come slumping and promote correct posture".

The Combi is effectively two cushions working as one. It has a contoured dual density seat cushion and a contoured back support which adjusts to suit individual needs. It promotes a more natural posture and sits the user as comfortably as possible.

EVEREST & JENNINGS

A newcomer to Everest & Jennings' Elite range - the Home & Away - will be making its debut at Naidex. It is a high performance power chair designed for inside or out, and has removable kerb climbers. The motors have been designed in such a way that the chair can easily be folded into a neat package. The other two Elite chairs - the Liberty and the Whisper(E & J's first power chair)- both launched during the year will also be there for anyone to take a closer look.

ANNOUNCING THE

Travel Chair

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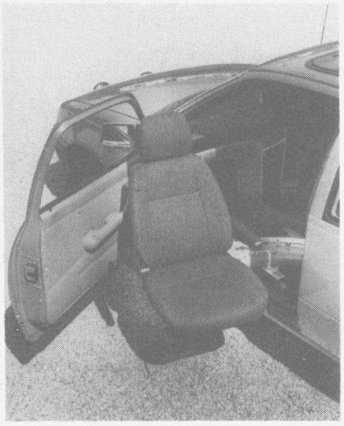

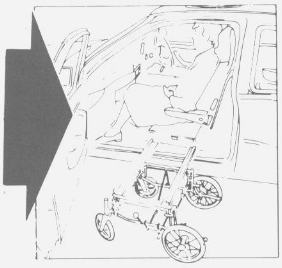

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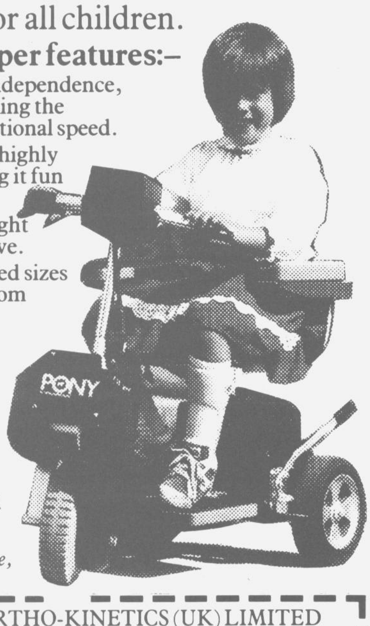

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LINK visits Rosalind Gladstone who has learnt ..

The importance of realistic goals

ROSALIND GLADSTONE is quite an accomplished artist. She has had four posters on sale in London shops. She won a MENCAP national Christmas Card Competition, and she runs a puppetry course for people with mental handicaps.

But it has been far from easy for Rosalind to achieve this. She has had a multitude of problems to overcome associated with her hydrocephalus as well as emotional problems, and more recently the difficulties of becoming less mobile and increasingly confined to a wheelchair. "I was like a square peg in a round hole" she said.

But knowing and understanding about hydrocephalus and lowering her expectations accordingly has been a great help. Rosalind was put in touch with Sussex ASBAH a few years ago and the fieldworker was able to give her information about hydrocephalus, and be a real friend. "She was patient and spent hours talking to me and explaining everything. She taught me how my body works, and how to try different things" Rosalind said. She was also fortunate in having the help of psychologist, John Holland. "He helped me learn how to cope with stress level" said Rosalind.

She now realises the importance of realistic goals. After a chequered history of trying living independently, she went to Banstead Place for assessment and there she was made to realise that she did need more support. After living very happily in the L'Arche community in Sussex, she needed to move on as she became less and less mobile. For the last 10 months she has lived in a sheltered flat in Bognor, which has shown her the kind of support she needs in practice. This month (September) she is moving to Shaftesbury Court in Trowbridge, Wiltshire. "I read about it in LINK recently and decided it might suit me. It is also much nearer my mother who lives in Swindon" she explained. She went to Shaftesbury Court for a trial period of a month this Summer which obviously worked out well.

Rosalind has a lot to offer any community she joins. She completed a puppetry course at the Little Angel Marionette Theatre in London a few years ago. "It was supposed to last a few months. It took me two years. I had to travel to London from Sussex each week and stay overnight" she recalls. But her determination - which didn't come easily - paid off. She has been running a puppetry course for a Gateway Club for the mentally handicapped in Bognor Regis. She has also helped with artwork for publicity for a local retreat, and four of her posters were good sellers in London. It was her own initiative that got her the commission - it wasn't handed to her on a plate. Nothing in her life has been.

Rosalind with two of her puppets

While she was still classed as mentally handicapped she entered and won a Mencap Christmas Card Competition and more recently she also won a local award - the John Robinson Adult Literacy Award - for a 2,000 word essay on puppetry. As she doesn't find writing easy, the satisfaction she derived from gaining the Award can easily be imagined.

Rosalind told LINK: "It is so easy to look at just the problems that your child brings. My mum does the same. I know you feel pain and all sorts of things, but a lot of us make it in all sorts of ways. Parents - please look at your child's achievements, and be proud of him or her whatever. I am not just saying this..... you might say your son or daughter might never get an 'O' level, but until the last few years I was labelled mentally handicapped and I am doing my 'A' level in Art at the moment. I have already got my 'O' level in Art grade A. My hydrocephalus is my handicap.

"I wanted to tell you all this to encourage parents with hydrocephalic children. Each thing they learn to do - even if it is learning to do a shoe up, or a button - that's an achievement. They and you (mum and dad) should feel very proud.

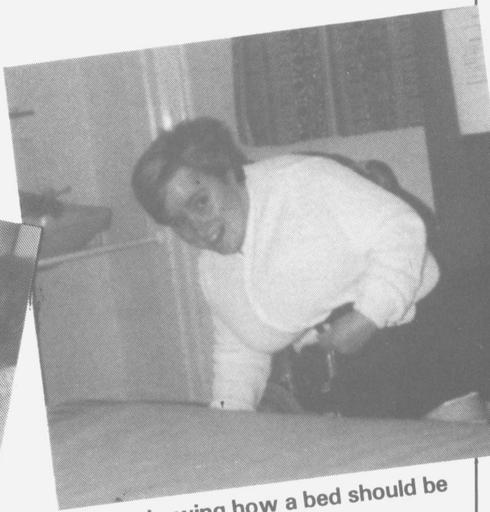
"Just in case you all think I have my life in front of me, so it doesn't matter about labels, I will just say that I am 36 and it has taken a lot to get where I am today!"

Camera on Five Oaks

Lynda Hilson, from Doncaster, was a helper on a number of independence and activity courses at Five Oaks. Here some of her photos show the kind of things that go on!

Mandy enjoying herself as she tries doing wheelies in the garden.

Right: On the fashion course — Faye after being made up expertly by 'beautician' Louise.

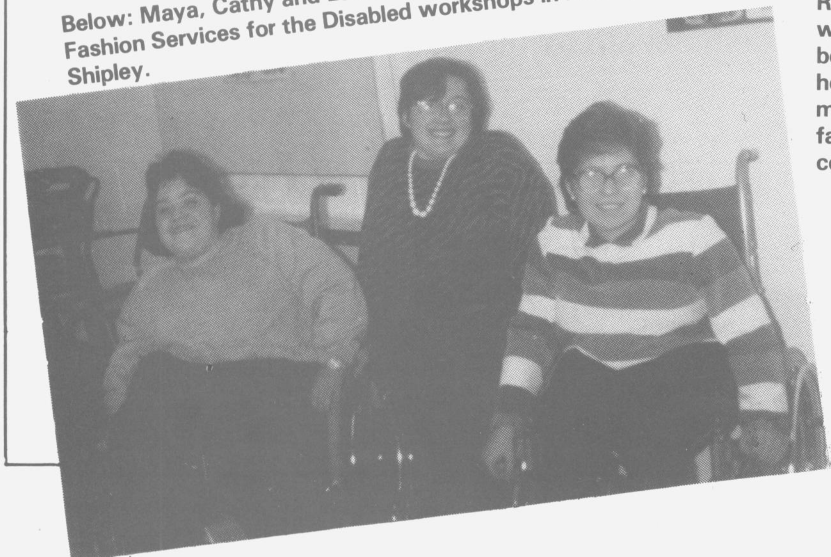


Shona showing how a bed should be made.

Lucy practising her walking on an independence course.

Below: Maya and Frances enjoying a meal out at a local eating house.

Below: Maya, Cathy and Lesley on a fashion course visit Fashion Services for the Disabled workshops in nearby Shipley.



Right: Louise with 'a girl's best friend' — her sewing machine, on a fashion course.

Newslines NEWSLINES Newslines

•NCVO has launched a fund to help disabled people take action to promote employment and training opportunities. Grants from the fund will be limited to £1,000 for each organisation and could be used by disabled people wishing to organise a major local conference relating to employment and training opportunities. Or it could be used to establish a specific project. The main criteria is that proposals should be led and controlled by disabled people and related to training or employment.

Details and application form from Annie Richards, DETAF, Employment Unit, Nat.Council for Voluntary Organisations, 26 Bedford Square ,London WC1B 3HU. Tel: 01 636 4066.

•THE GOVERNMENT has announced a 24% rise in the amount that disabled students can claim for extra expenses in higher education. The limit will rise to £700 for the 1987/88 academic year (formerly £565). This applies to mandatory grants for disabled students. The change reflects the Government's awareness of some of the extra costs involved in increasing access to higher education for disabled students. However, costs still outrun funds made available.

•CENTRAL TV's programme for disabled people - LINK - will be screened weekly starting on September 6. The 15 minute programme will be broadcast in every ITV region, including Granada, every Sunday 1 - 2pm. Times vary from region to region so check your local press.

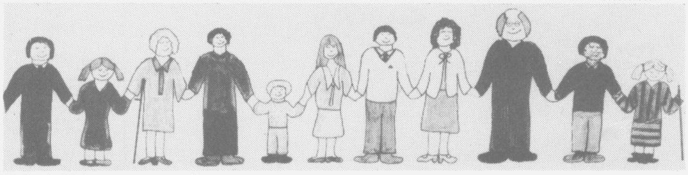
For further information telephone THE LINK PROGRAMME, 01 637 4602.

The growth of self service petrol stations has brought little joy to disabled motorists, so it is good news that one company - Gulf Oil - -has realised their predicament and has introduced attendant service for disabled customers at set times during the day at 60 per cent of Gulf outlets.

It is part of a new investment package for disabled drivers that Gulf is introducing at a number of sites. These include ramped access to shops and specially adapted toilets. These facilities will be introduced at all new or redeveloped sites.

A Gulf spokesman said "We will be monitoring the new attendant service carefully to see if it is having the desired effect of making life on the forecourt easier for our disabled customers".

The photo (above) shows Jack Threadingham, MBE, an executive member of RADAR taking advantage of Gulf's new attendant service at its Lansdown site in Cheltenham.



• A FAMILY FORTNIGHT is planned for June 26 - July 9 1988 to promote discussion and debate about family issues; to bring together different organisations in a national network of activity in support of family welfare; and to stress the positive aspects of family lifeThe Fortnight slogan is *Join Forces for Families and Communities.* and a network of local co-ordinators and contacts has been set up by the organisers - Family Forum. They will liaise with local voluntary and statutory groups.

Names and addresses can be obtained from Jane Wilson, Family Fortnight Co-ordinator, Cambridge House, 131 Camberwell Rd, London SE5 0HF. Tel: 01 703 8706.

•The Leonard Cheshire Foundation has moved into the holiday business this year with the opening of Park House, a new 26 bed countryhouse hotel for physically disabled people. It was the birthplace and childhood home of the Princess of Wales and was presented to the Foundation by the Queen in 1983. It has been extensively restored, modernised and adapted. Relatives and friends are very welcome, and full 24 hour care is available if needed.

Park House overlooks the village cricket ground and woods of Sandringham Park and has a heated outdoor swimming pool and extensive grounds. A spacious leisure hall provides opportunity for bowls, snooker, table tennis and other pastimes.

During the winter special weeks on painting, photography, music and handicrafts are planned.

Prices range from £245 to £275 per week for a single room at full board. Half board and bed and breakfast are also available. Special rates for a family of three or more where at least one member is physically disabled.

Details from Tony Kendall, Director, Park House, Sandringham, King's Lynn, Norfolk PE35 6EH. Tel: 0485 43000.

•*GETTING AROUND* is a new national independent magazine "for the less mobile and their families"launched on September 4 this year. It will be on sale monthly at all leading newsagents. Price £1.

Editor Joyce Finch comments: " Bright, lively, colourful and newsy, the editorial content will appeal to a wide range of people of all ages and disabilities..."

KICKING OFF

ASBAH's 21st BIRTHDAY FOOTBALL MATCH

Apologies for the uncertainty of the date of **ASBAH's 21st Birthday Football Match**, but we can now finally confirm that it will take place on Tuesday October 13, at 7 pm at Leeds United ground at Elland Road.

The former England Team, 21 years after winning the world cup, will play their Scottish counterparts of the time, Scotland being the first team to beat England after their 1966 victory. This will be followed by a friendly between the hosts Leeds United and St. Mirren, winners of the Scottish Cup this year.

We hope as many ASBAH members and friends as possible will be able to come.There is some wheelchair accommodation. Please let Douglas Jack at ASBAH know if you would like tickets.

APPEALS NEWS

IN BUSINESS

A newASBAH shop opened in July, in the Southampton suburb of Swaythling. This is near to the University and we hope that good class second hand clothes will prove an attraction for students.

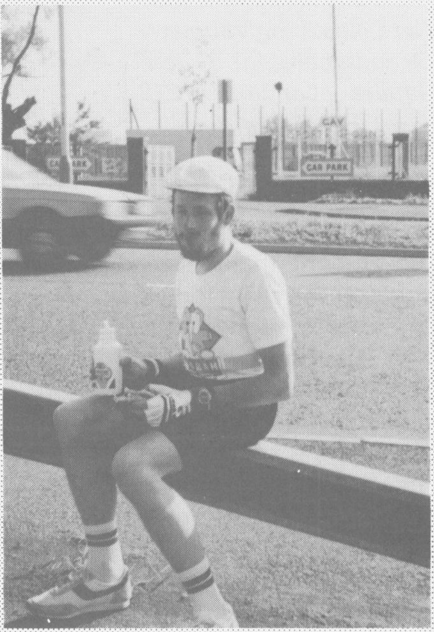
We have agreed to take the tenancy of a shop in the town centre of Maidstone and this will be a joint venture shared between Kent and National ASBAH. We believe that the combination of national resources and local involvement is a formula which can be repeated elsewhere in the future to the considerable benefit of all concerned.

A LOT OF BOTTLE

The Beaujolais Challenge will take place on November 18 and 19, finishing as before at the Winter Gardens, Margate. Don't forget to get sponsors and let us have back the green sponsor forms (in the last LINK) in good time for the Rally. Your help is urgently needed to make this a really successful Challenge.

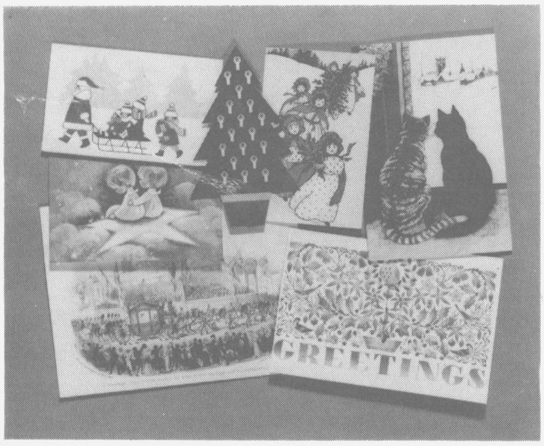
AIRING THEIR VIEWS

Taylor's Port have ended their sponsorship of the Chatathon. In 1988 the sponsors will be the London Broadcasting Company (LBC). In future the event will be known as the 'Conversationalist of the Year Contest', though no doubt out of habit we will continue to use 'Chatathon' as a domestic pet name.



Above: John Saxelby resting after an 85 mile cycle ride from ASBAH National Office to his home town of Banbury one Sunday in August.
He reached his destination mid afternoon - eight and a half hours later - and as a result of his stamina and the generous sponsors he managed to find, ASBAH will be better off to the tune of more than £500.
A young friend of ASBAH joined John for the first 20 miles and her sponsorship money will be added to his. John wants the money to be used for research.
Congratulations and thanks to John
Thanks go also to the County Hotel near ASBAH's office which gave John free accommodation the night before he set off.

CHRISTMAS CARDS.



SPECIAL OFFER: A bumper pack of 10 Christmas Cards for the special price of £1.35 per pack to include P & P. Each pack contains selection of cards from ASBAH's 1986 range Hurry while stocks last.Send money with order to: Appeals Department, ASBAH,22 Upper Woburn Place, London ..WCIH OEP. cheques payable to 'ASBAH'

Advertising

FOR THE USE OF LOCAL ASSOCIATIONS AND OTHER READERS

Rates: £3 for 30 words max; £4.25 for 30-45 words; £5.50 for 45-60 words.

Cheque or postal order payable to 'ASBAH'

Adverts for the next LINK (Nov/Dec) should be in by October 12. Send to: **The Editor, Mrs Sue Gearing, The Gables, Long Lane, Wrington, Avon, BS18 7NE. Tel: 0934 862279**

HOLIDAY ACCOMMODATION

BORTH, Nr Aberystwyth. 6-berth de luxe holiday home. Licensed site. Suitable for wheelchair users who live independently. Details: Mrs J. Carter, 1 Meadow Road, Craven Arms, Shropshire.

EXMOUTH, Devon. Fully equipped, self-catering 2 -bedroom bungalow. Sleeps 7. Full central heating. Details: Herts & S.Beds Association. J. Harper, 70 Grove Road, Harpenden, Herts. Tel: 05827 69213

ISLE OF WIGHT. Very well equipped chalet with easy wheelchair access at **Brambles Chine, Freshwater.** Sleeps 6. Indoor heated pool, club, shop.Details: Ring or write: Mrs S. Gully, Old Princelett, Apse Heath, Sandown, Isle of Wight. Tel: 0983 863354

RYE HARBOUR, Sussex. Fully equipped mobile home, adapted for wheelchair users. Sleeps 4. Clubhouse on site. Details: Mr P Borthwick, 170 Hollington Old Lane, St Leonards, E.Sussex. Tel: 0424 51145.

SELSEY, Sussex. Six berth purpose built fully equipped mobile home. Ramp access. Site near sea. Pool, club, etc. Details: Mrs C. Bugden, 27 The Grove, Sholing, Southampton SO2 9LT. Tel: 0703 444921.

WESTWARD HO, North Devon. Holiday Bungalow. Sleeps 6. Excellent beach. S.a.e. to : Mr G.L.Oakley, 12 Farleigh Road, Perton, Wolverhampton. Tel: Wolv. 751484.

WINTERTON ON SEA, Nr Great Yarmouth. Chalet bungalow. Sleeps 6. Fully equipped. Bathroom, toilet. Accessible for wheelchairs. TV. Shop. Take -away. Club room (live music). Children's play areas. Heated indoor pool. Details: Mr R. H. Morris. Tel:0494 32184.

SPAIN

Beautiful Spanish villa sleeps 8 - 11. Comprises 4 double bedrooms, 3 bathrooms with toilets. All except one bedroom and one bathroom are easily accessible for wheelchairs. Ramps where needed. Car a necessity. Details: Mrs Piner, Leyden House, North Chailey, Lewes, Sussex. Tel: Scaynes Hill 360.

WHY DON'T YOU
ADVERTISE IN
THE NEXT LINK?

HOLIDAY BRIEFS

THE THREE H'S HOLIDAY FUND provides holidays for people with severe disabilities and those who are overweight. They may be able to help if you have had no joy with any other holiday organisation!
Details The Three H's, 147a Camden Road, Tunbridge Wells, TN1 2RA.

ASHWELLTHORPE HALL HOTEL run by the Disabled Drivers' Association in Norfolk is able to provide the right setting and facilities for a lazy or an active weekend or longer holiday for people with physical disabilities. Come on your own if you are fairly self-sufficient or with a carer. More special bedrooms are being provided fitted with every conceivable aid to help with the care of the most seriously disabled holidaymaker. Special attractions are lined up for the Autumn - bridge, fishing, historical and scrabble weekends. Cost £39.50 per person.

The hotel has a good range of facilities and extensive grounds.

Details from The Manager, Ashwellthorpe Hall Hotel, Ashwellthorpe, Nr Norwich,NR16 1EX. Tel: 050 841

EXCHANGE AND MART

FOR SALE

Meyra battery chair. Three years old. Little used. New solid tyres, new battery, regularly maintained. No reasonable offer refused. Tel: 0942 716565.

Avon Batricar. Approx two years old (but only one year use). (It can go 34 miles before recharge. Cost new £2,000; will accept £750 o.n.o. Tel: 058 087 521.

BEC Ranger Mark I battery car. Reasonable condition. Six years old. £300 o.n.o. Contact: Mr R. Thatcher. Tel: 01 688 8992.

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