31

Link

March/April 1974 5p

Association for Spina Bifida and Hydrocephalus (ASBAH)

a fairy story with a happy ending

Once upon a time there was a little roo called Kanga. He hopped to the edge of the wood  where he saw a big house  He looked into the house and saw there were lots of nurses  with children, the nurses were saying that one of their biggest problems was incontinence Kanga  did not know what this meant so he asked and they told him that it made the children  very sore and caused the nurses lots of work. Kanga had some clever friends who worked in a Hospital laboratory  so he asked them to help. Next week he came back to the house  with some special pants  he had invented. When the nurses tried them on the children they were very pleased  because they were very comfortable and easy to change Kangas friends  are now working on other problems to help children — but if you would like to know more about the pants that Kanga's friends invented please write to Kanga at...

LEWIS WOOLF GRIPTIGHT LTD.
Pershore, Worcs WR10 2HW.

Link No. 31

Association for Spina Bifida & Hydrocephalus (ASBAH)

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Front Cover: Miss Faith Seward, Secretary of York Local Association, with pupils of Deepdale Infants' School, Boston Spa where she is Deputy Head. Miss Seward has gained a BA degree in Education. (See story page 5.)
Photo: Yorkshire Evening Press.

Editorial

With Britain's membership of the EEC more than a year old, it is appropriate and pleasing to see the way in which links are strengthening between young people on both sides of the Channel, and this now includes those with physical handicaps.

Increasing contacts and exchanges should hopefully bring about an "equalising of opportunities" by raising the standards of provision for all to the high level that is now available to the more privileged among European youth, including our own.

The 26-year-old Central Bureau for Educational Visits and Exchanges has recently started developing exchanges for young disabled, and a great step forward was the setting up of a special Committee—DIVE (Disabled Visits and Exchanges).

Early last year Britain acted as host to 16 European countries at a special Conference on Youth Exchange for the Disabled at Folkestone. This proved an overwhelming success and was followed by a European Conference at Caister in October where discussion took place on the development of an international exchange programme. Another Conference is taking place in France this year.

It didn't take long for the Central Bureau, assisted by DIVE and CHIVE (the Committee for Hearing Impaired Visits and Exchanges), to set up an International Clearing House which now has a wealth of information and advice on travel and exchange possibilities in 17 countries.

Impressive record

The list of projects which have already taken place under the auspices of DIVE and CHIVE is impressive. These projects include an experimental winter sports week for the disabled in Norway, a sports meeting for disabled and able-bodied in Belgium, an international work camp in France, a visit to Holland, social and cultural visits with young Italians in Rome, a summer camp for children in Norway, visits to French clubs for the disabled, and a visit this month (March) for young disabled from the Continent to discover London with young disabled British.

As ASBAH groups develop and strengthen it is hoped that they may be able to encourage their young members to take part in schemes like this, which can do so much to broaden their outlook and education and to give them confidence.

As George Wilson—Director of the Central Council for the Disabled and DIVE's Chairman—put it: "Three vital keys to a disabled person's progress in the community are mobility, education and employment. The increasing possibilities for the first are allowing us to provide greater exchange and travel possibilities for the second in the hope that the third will be realised".

News from the groups

£1000 in quick time

Isle of Wight. The magnificent sum of £1,000 was given to this Association by pupils of Carisbrooke High School, who raised the money in only eight weeks. They held sponsored walks, 'knit-ins', fortune telling, a snooker match, and a canoe marathon. £250 has been given to the Research Fellowship, and the remainder is being spent on much needed equipment for the Island families with spina bifida children.

Now for a lift

Salisbury. Having completed a major project—the raising of £3,550 for the swimming pool at Odstock Hospital—the Salisbury Association has now launched a new appeal. This is for £3,000, to be raised in three years, to pay for a lift at Downtown Secondary Modern School. The installation of the lift will mean that handicapped children will be able to attend this school and move freely between classrooms. There is a sad lack of places for handicapped children in normal schools in Salisbury, and the Association felt that this opportunity at Downton School was too good to be missed. Work on the lift is starting now and should be finished in April.

Holidays (1)

South London. This Group has just reaped the reward of a lot of hard, money-raising work, and bought a holiday chalet at Clacton, Essex, which should provide many happy holidays for members and their families.

Off to a good start

The Burnley Association was formed in September last year and already has several fund-raising and social activities to its credit and more planned. Reporting on the first months the Association mentions in particular the co-operation of the local Social Services Department who give their help so willingly to members. The money-raising appeal this year is for a holiday caravan or chalet on the North West coast. Through an appeal in the local press, this Association obtained several tricycles which are now being specially adapted by a local firm. Early this month (March) the Burnley Association arranged a meeting of North West ASBAH groups, to be held in the new centre for the handicapped in Burnley.

Above, members of the Burnley Association at their first coffee evening. (Left to right) Mr. Clive Smith, Chairman; Miss Dorothy Hartley, Committee member; Mr. J. McFarlane, Secretary; Miss Pat Fishwick, member; Miss Mavis Winton, Committee member; and Mr. Alf Fishwick, Treasurer.

Holidays (2)

Leeds. Members of the Association hope to be able to use their brand new holiday caravan for the first time this Summer. It is to be sited on the cliffs near Easington Beach, Withernsea, and has eight berths and a bathroom and will have hot and cold water, electricity and drainage. Members also hope it will have a television set to pass the time on cold, wet evenings!

Getting together

Halifax. A second social evening was held recently as part of a move for closer co-operation between Yorkshire Local Associations. This was a film evening for members and social workers. Unfortunately everything didn't go according to plan, and only one film was shown, but the evening was well attended and proved very enjoyable.

News from the groups

Determined to succeed

Ian Potts (right) whose father is Chairman of Lunesdale Local Association is studying economics at Lancaster University.

It has taken a lot of determination and courage for Ian to get to University and overcome the many obstacles of having spina bifida.

Ian attended an ordinary day school, and then entered Morecambe Grammar School in the "A" stream. He found the building very difficult to move around in a wheelchair, but managed to cope, with the help of staff and pupils. Despite missing some schooling through a major operation on his knees, Ian gained seven "O" level GCE passes and after three years in the sixth form, added four "A" level passes to his record.

He nearly gave up the struggle for a career, however, after being rejected repeatedly by Universities, without even having an interview. Eventually, however, he was offered a place at Lancaster and is happily settled there, driving to and from his home in Caton. Lancaster caters for disabled students.

He has a wide range of outside interests—notably in basketball. He is now a Table Official for basketball at University.

He has recently learned to drive an ordinary car without adaptations, having had an Invacar for three years, and his driving instructor is so pleased with him that he hopes to enter him for the Learner Driver of the Year Competition!

Ian is hoping to Major in Economics and Minor in Financial Control. We wish him much success in his studies.

Photo: Morecambe Guardian.

Degree of courage

York. This Local Association is justly proud of its Secretary, Miss Faith Seward, 33, who recently gained a BA degree in Education after three years study with the Open University. Miss Seward who has spina bifida—her main handicap is a bad deformity of the feet—managed to get the degree despite having to go into hospital four times during the course. She fitted in her study during the evenings, after a day's work as Deputy Headmistress of Deepdale Infants' School, Boston Spa. Before starting the degree course, Miss Seward had been awarded a Diploma in the Education of Backward Children after a year's secondment to Leeds University. The children she teaches now are not backward, but she hopes this qualification will come in useful later on.

Fun and games

Left, a typical Saturday morning for some of the youngsters of the Trafford Association. There is a weekly Saturday morning club run by this Local Association in St. Matthew's Hall, Stretford. Children and adults—all aged from 3 right up to 21—go to the club. Some of them travel several miles to get there, to join in the games, painting, and various other activities.

Health matters

Useful advice which will not only help your child, but will also look after your own health:

When and how to lift spina bifida children

First stop and think! Is it really necessary to lift the child? Why can't he move himself?

Obviously there are times when help is needed, if the child is in plaster, for example, but very often we lift the child who is perfectly capable of doing it himself.

From a very early age a child should be taught to transfer himself from bed to chair, chair to floor and back again, in and out of the bath and of course on and off the toilet. All these movements are possible with patience, understanding and imagination.

But the times when help is required can often lead to disaster, not only for the child, but also for the lifter. How often do we hear of "bad backs" caused through incorrect lifting techniques?

Do's and Dont's

Do always protect the child's head.

Do remember that flail (floppy) legs may be caught or knocked and the child will not be conscious of pain or discomfort.

Do try to get the child to help you by holding round your neck, or by supporting his legs or taking his own weight on his hands.

Don't lift the child who can move himself.

Don't lift with your back bent.

Do always try and bend your knees so that the strain is on your strong leg muscles, not your spine.

There are many ways to lift and as all children are different it would be wrong to state one method. If you have specific problems consult your physiotherapist, nurse or health visitor.

The goal for the spina bifida child must always be "do it yourself and be independent".

Jean Biddle M.C.S.P.
Superintendent Physiotherapist,
London Borough of Hounslow.

A prayer

Lord bless my friends and family
And all who are in need
Direct and guide our government
That Heavenward it may lead.
Bless all the troubled countries
Where wars unceasing wage
And save us from complacency
In this indifferent age
Show us ways of helping
Our fellow-men in need
Help us to be generous
And save us from all greed
Bless all who are through illness
Confined to darkened room
And fill them with assurance
Of life beyond the tomb

Teach them to be patient
And keep them unafraid
Trusting in Thee their Saviour
In Thee, their only aid
For those who mourn their
    loved ones
We ask Thy special cheer
For Thou, Thyself, hast suffered
And wept with others here.
For the hungry and the homeless
We boldly intercede
Since only Thou the Bread of
    Life
Canst meet their craving need.
All these things Lord Jesus
We ask in Thy dear name.
And now so weak and sinful,
We come, Thy help to claim.

Jennifer R. A. Hill

Jennifer is an aspiring poet and writer of 19—although this poem "A Prayer" was written when she was 15.

Jennifer is hydrocephalic and lives in Penylan, Cardiff, where she attends a local college of further education.

Points to note

Museums

Admission charges to national museums and galleries throughout the country began on January 1, and there are special rates for the handicapped.

It is important to note that a handicapped person has to produce evidence of Registration.

The adult charge is 10p except in July and August when it goes up to 20p. Children under 16, pensioners and handicapped people pay 5p at all times. Annual season tickets costing 50p are available to pensioners and the handicapped. This is half the normal charge.

Escorts of handicapped visitors are among those people who are exempt from charges.

At the National Gallery admission is free all day on Wednesday, and at the Tate on Tuesday and Thursday from 6-8 p.m.

But at the National Gallery on Monday and Friday the adult charge is doubled to 20p, and this means that during July and August on Monday and Friday adult visitors will have to pay 40p at the National Gallery.

Heathrow

Who looks after you at Heathrow Airport is an excellent leaflet produced by the British Airports Authority in conjunction with the Joint Committee on Mobility for the Disabled.

With simple diagrams and few words it describes how to get around the airport and who is responsible for you.

The location and widths of the various lavatories which are accessible to disabled people are clearly marked.

The leaflet emphasises the necessity to give prior notification of one's disability and requirements and points out the problems of parking.

It also goes into the question of choosing your airline for the different methods of transport provided to and from the aircraft, and for their charges for special assistance.

The leaflet is free, but please enclose a large stamped addressed envelope. Write to: Central Council for the Disabled, 34 Eccleston Square, London SW1V 1PE.

We should like to acknowledge the help of Tatchbury Mount Hospital, and voluntary work of the members of Southampton and District Spina Bifida and Hydrocephalus Association to make this Trolley.

All enquiries to: Mrs. K. Charrett,
46 Tillbrook Road, Regents Park, Southampton.
Telephone enquiries: Totton 3365
(Mr. Mortimer)

THE SHASBAH TROLLEY FOR HANDICAPPED CHILDREN

Patent applied for in
UK, Commonwealth Countries, USA, Canada

This Trolley was designed by Mr. Ken Charrett of Southampton for his daughter who was born with Spina Bifida. It was soon found that here was a chair that would enable a child paralysed from the waist down, to become mobile.

The Trolley, weighing only 14lb, is strongly constructed, completely manoeuvrable and easily propelled by the child. Due to the low centre of gravity and rear castor action it is virtually impossible to be overturned.

The Trolley is finished with foam upholstered durable vinyl and comes in a wide range of attractive colours, this is to give the child the impression it has a toy. The child soon learns to use the Trolley, which adds much happiness to the child's life.

Standard model for children one to five years old costs £8.25 plus carriage.

Large model for children five to ten years old costs £11.50 plus carriage.

These prices include VAT which has now to be paid on these aids in the UK. Overseas prices on application.

Produced by **Southampton and District Spina Bifida and Hydrocephalus Association**

SPORT FOR THE DISABLED

The British Sports Association for the Disabled (BSAD) held their first National Conference in November at Stoke Mandeville Sports Stadium. There were lectures on the medical and technical aspects of coaching individual disabilities in different sports. These were followed by demonstrations of swimming, archery, table tennis, snooker, fencing, basket ball and wheelchair shinty: all of which can be entered into by spina bifida people.

There are three different aspects of sport:

(1) Therapeutic—for spina bifidas this means strengthening arm and back muscles and any innervated muscles of the legs and generally keeping fit.
(2) Recreational—many people take part in sport for enjoyment, as an energy outlet and the opportunities it presents for social activities and friendship.
(3) Competitive—some people enjoy training hard and competing against others to attain the highest possible degree of efficiency, and perhaps to represent their club or country.

Several disabled athletes who gave talks on their sport said it helped them to overcome any sense of inferiority and increased their confidence. The sports discussed in this session which are of interest to spina bifida, were sailing, horse riding, bowling, weight-lifting and field and tack events. It was emphasised care should be taken in the choice of sport so that the person would benefit physically and be capable of attaining a fair measure of success.

During a discussion on physical education in schools it was noted that many children after leaving school found opportunities for sport and recreation very much restricted. It was felt that this could be overcome by the setting up of more clubs and facilities. It was stressed that all leisure and sports centres should be made accessible to the disabled.

If you require any information on sports, rules, setting up clubs, coaching etc., write to the Administrator of BSAD, Stoke Mandeville Sports Stadium for the Paralysed and Other Disabled, Harvey Road, Aylesbury, Bucks.

F. A. Birkett
Appliance Officer.

After school—nee for more clubs, an facilities

Link visits the National Star Centre at Ullenwood Manor near Cheltenham—a residential centre where a wide range of "further education" courses are run for physically handicapped students.

Independence-that's the main aim

"In the overcoming of obstacles, one feels the full delight of existence" (Schopenhauer). This quotation appears in the Star Centre's prospectus and sums up admirably what the college is all about.

Allen Field, the Principal, told Link that the main job of the Star Centre is helping students towards independence, giving them the chance to discover themselves—to find out what they can achieve, to try new things, and to find their feet socially.

"This is what further education here tries to do. We don't place much stress on the gaining of diplomas although we appreciate that these do have an importance when it comes to finding jobs," said Mr. Field.

Students play a full part in the social, working and academic life of the area.

The Star Centre is set in glorious country four miles from Cheltenham and about eight miles from Gloucester. But it is not remote, the students taking a full part in the social, academic and working life of the area.

The main building is a well-preserved Victorian country mansion, suitably adapted, but the "pièce de resistance" is the three-year-old octagonal court housing the student's individual study/bedrooms. They allow plenty of wheelchair space, and are compact and airy with accessible cupboards, well-designed bathrooms and toilet facilities. As an aid to independence there are even continental quilts on the beds to make bed making much easier.

The extensions and alterations have meant that the number of students has doubled in the past three years to 85.

The centre's facilities are extensive, giving opportunity for all kinds of activities. They range from a horticultural unit, boating lake, golf course to a theatre art and craft room, and students' common room. A new gymnasium is to be finished this April, and a 20 metre swimming pool, and sauna bath later this year. These should provide greater scope for physical and remedial exercise.

But important as facilities are, the vital key to the centre's work is the attitude and motivation of staff, and a relaxed, and yet stimulating atmosphere.

The centre takes young men and women from all parts of the country with any physical handicap and with a wide range of intellectual and academic ability (one student has had no previous schooling at all).

A student will be accepted if it is thought that he will really benefit from the centre's programme. Assessment takes place each Thursday and if accepted an applicant will go on the waiting list, which might mean a few months' wait.

Each student follows an individual programme, and this can range from remedial work to an advanced University course. Regular reappraisal takes place and the programme is very flexible, encouraging the student to try anything he likes. If the centre itself can't lay on the subject, then arrangements are made with a local college.

Cheltenham industry provides work experience for the students.

"The co-operation of colleges and industry in the area is extremely good," said Mr. Field. "There is a remarkable range of industry in Cheltenham which provides work experience for the students."

The centre maintains as close a contact as possible with Careers Officers and Disablement Resettlement Officers in the students' home areas with a view to finding the best placements after leaving the centre, and term reports are sent to parents and the sponsoring authorities.

Many former Star Centre students hold down responsible jobs of all kinds, but the students whom Mr. Field often considers to be the most

Turn to page 14

"He's a different boy"

Boarding school teaches Michael to make a go of life

Two years ago, Michael Underwood who has spina bifida, was a child with problems who would do nothing for himself. He was learning very little at school, and one way and another life was hard for him, and for for his mother Mrs Nora Underwood.

But now he is a changed boy. He is a happy, confident 11-year-old, doing well at school, winning prizes in sport, and independent in so many ways.

According to his mother the change took place after he started going to boarding school where he had to make a go of things for himself.

Mrs. Underwood, who lives in a new council development in Lambeth, South London, talked to Link about the "bad old days" and the decision to let Michael go away to school.

"I found it impossible to carry on. I am handicapped myself with a damaged spine and two steel hips and sockets—in fact, for five years Michael and I were in wheelchairs together—and apart from Michael I have my husband, two daughters, Julie and Karen, to look after, and my 86-year-old mother-in-law.

"Michael was such a problem. He became more and more difficult and would do nothing for himself. He attended a day school, but was doing badly there, and I found it a real strain to get him ready for the school bus in time each morning. If he felt ill, which he does sometimes, that meant the whole day off, even though he soon felt better again. I couldn't get him to school without the bus.

"There was the problem of hospital visits, too, and the usual things like shopping, cooking and housework. My nerves got into a terrible state. I always seemed to be weeping."

In fact things became so bad in the end, that the doctor more-or-less "ordered" Michael to a boarding school, for his own good and for his mothers's.

"I was so upset about the idea of him going away," said Mrs. Underwood. "I had always tried to keep him at home with us, especially as he had been away a lot anyway in hospital. He was my child and I was going to bring him up my way—that's what I thought anyway."

Family feeling

But the Underwood's took the doctor's advice and went and visited Staplefield Place School, near Haywards Heath, Sussex. They liked what they saw and so in September 1972 Michael started there, although he and Mrs. Underwood were still upset and none too sure he'd stay there. But after a period of settling in, Michael began to enjoy himself.

Mrs. Underwood said, "There is a real family atmosphere. Michael has the same house-mother all the time, and the classes are nice and small. He is reading now, and learning to type with an electric typewriter. He always seems happy and cheerful when we go down to see him—about once a fortnight—and talks away about what he has been doing."

Michael has become very good at riding. He had never sat on a horse before he went to Staplefield School, but last year he was proud to be awarded a rosette for his riding. He's getting on well with swimming, too. In fact, in November he won the Jim Heys Trophy for the best progress of the year—and this was at the Optimistic Swimming Club in City Road, London, which he only goes to when he is home in the holidays.

"He really likes being in the country, because he loves animals and anything to do with nature," said his mother. "And there are the school trips—for instance they went camping last Summer.

"Altogether he is a different boy. He is really independent now. He can, and will fit his own calipers, and appliance bag. He will dress himself and do most things for himself."

Turn to page 14

Family page

Music is one art in which physically handicapped people can excel. PROFESSOR MAX MORGAN of London's Guildhall School of Music talks about the enjoyment and achievement of music for the disabled.

Let's make music

"If music be the food of love play on . . . " so said Shakespeare. But, of course, we all know that music is far more than that. It is a wonderful art form which can be food for the mind, the spirit, the intellect, the emotions and the body and, although from the professionals' point of view, it is a surprisingly tough life, it is not necessary to possess a completely healthy body in order to excel or even participate in the art.

History shows that some of the most sublime music was written at a time when the composers were physically at a very low ebb and in mental torment—Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert, Chopin and so on. In the world of letters, Milton, Keats, James Joyce, C. S. Forester and Virginia Woolf all had very serious physical and human problems, as did Vincent Van Gogh and Toulouse-Lautrec and many others in the sphere of pictorial art. No doubt every field of human endeavour has produced great people who have had to overcome enormous odds. Whether the sublimation sprang from their distress is, of course, difficult to assert, but adversity in one direction can certainly help to highlight and sharpen sensitivity in another. It is also true in everyday life that it is possible to rise above one's environment and make light of adversity. It seems to me that for those of us who are forced into a life of reduced activity in a physical sense the arts offer a marvellous opportunity for self-expression.

* * *

My immediate thought is that music might be allowed to play a greater part in the lives of spina bifida children than perhaps it does at the moment. I do speak with a little first hand knowledge of spina bifida and hydrocephalus for in the village where I live there is a six-year-old sufferer. Debbie is a child with a sunny disposition, a great sense of fun and considerable intelligence. Her mother, a keen amateur musician, tells me that she has an exceptional memory for little poems and shows a marked reaction to music, often singing when she hears it and moving her body—she calls it dancing!—in time with the rhythm. She also changes her mood and, indeed, her gestures in sympathy with the mood of the music, thus showing sensitivity. I am quite certain that before very long she will be encouraged to do something musical in a more practical way. She is, in fact, currently clamouring for a flute, the sound of which she easily recognises and reacts to.

Of course, not all children are so lucky as my little friend to enjoy a home life in which music plays so big a part, but if parents realised just what might be the possibilities for enjoyment and achievement more of them would encourage their children to take an active interest.

* * *

Perhaps the most natural and immediate approach to music-making is through the medium of the voice and in this connection the closer contact one has with music and the more one hears the more likelihood is there of response from the listener. I am not thinking about voice training or anything like that, but the normal and natural utterances of which we are all capable to a greater or lesser extent. Much can be done to encourage young people to sing by the judicious choice of lively little songs or attractive and descriptive vocal pieces.

Thinking instrumentally perhaps the recorder might be a good introduction to music-making. Some descant and treble recorder are inexpensive, and relatively easy to learn. This could quite easily lead on to the clarinet or the flute and reasonable progress might be expected from those with average intelligence.

There is no doubt that many spina bifida

Turn to page 12

Appeals and publicity

Kate White writes

Fine feathered friends

Our good friends the British Homing World staged their second International Show at Doncaster on 17 and 18 January and have again promised that all the proceeds will be given to help our work. Last year they raised £3,000 and are hoping for a greater sum this year but entries were affected by the restricted rail services.

We are most grateful for their great kindness to us: valuable birds from all over the United Kingdom and Europe were given to be auctioned and to donors and bidders alike we say a very big thank you.

We are also grateful to Tim and Olga Murphy of the Don & Dearne Association who dived in so enthusiastically to help to man the ASBAH stall at the show. It is good to have such ready cooperation.

A little bird tells me that Tim and Olga celebrate their silver wedding on 26 February. We send them our warmest congratulations.

Postmen deliver £148

The largest sorting office in London, East Central District, just by St. Paul's, houses some postmen with very kind hearts and long-suffering feet! To help spina bifida children they staged a football match with a difference—they persuaded their colleagues to sponsor them for the greatest number of goals. The Foreign Section scored 3 goals and the challengers, the East Central Supervisors, knocked up 9, thereby raising £148.31 for our funds.

Family day

Ashby de la Zouche Round Tablers are planning a great beano at Ashby Castle on 27 May, Spring Bank Holiday, in aid of ASBAH funds. It will be a great day out for all the family, with jousting, knock-out contests (greasy poles, etc., etc.), bingo . . . all the fun of the fair! So if you are in that neighbourhood and feeling at a loose end on the day we shall be delighted to see you. Watch out for local publicity for all details.

Listeners respond

BBC listeners responded most generously to Larry Grayson's appeal and the total has now reached £2,602. We are most grateful to Larry and to all the kind people who gave so willingly.

Cont. from page 11: Let's make music

children could be quite adequately and comfortably seated at the piano where the coordination of brain, eyes and hands would not only constitute a source of pleasure but also an excellent intellectual exercise. Apart from the problems of pedalling there is no reason why an otherwise high standard of performance could not be achieved.

Interest in classical guitar playing is now very high and once certain problems involved in holding the instrument were overcome this could prove to have a considerable potential so far as practical musical issues are concerned. Then there is no reason also why the violin should not be tried. One of the most eminent of the present day violinists plays from a wheelchair! This is perhaps a little more demanding than some other instruments.

If the foregoing seem too ambitious there are some more simple percussion instruments of the dulcimer and chime-bar type which can prove very entertaining for really young ones, though they may not be so attractive from the parents' point of view! But no matter how elemental or rudimentary the instrument it would be something positive, an added interest in which the "doing" would be more important than the achievement.

Apart from the actual performance of music much joy may be derived from listening and taking an intelligent interest in the performances of others even if one is unable to play a note.

The world of music is a wonderland, the door to which can be easily opened by those with vision and imagination.

Editor's note: Professor Morgan has personal experience of a physical handicap. Because of polio he is unable to walk really properly.

Day or Night Attendance Allowance

Anyone who is severely disabled can claim now.

Anyone who is so severely disabled–either physically or mentally–that they need a lot of help from another person by day or at night, can now claim an Attendance Allowance of £4.15 a week tax-free. But if the help is needed day and night the allowance is £6.20 a week tax-free.

You can claim the day or night allowance now even if a previous claim for the higher day and night allowance failed. But neither allowance can be paid for children under two or people who are NHS hospital in-patients or residents of local authority homes.

If you think you might be entitled to an Attendance Allowance, complete and post the coupon below or ask your local Social Security office for leaflet NI.205.

Please send me Attendance Allowance leaflet NI.205 together with a claim form

Mr/Mrs/Miss ______________________ (Block Letters Please)

Address ______________________

____

Post code ____________ Disabled person's year of birth ____________

Please post this coupon to your local Social Security office.
You can get the address or a free stamped addressed envelope at your Post Office.

Attendance Allowance.

Aids and equipment

STAIR CLIMBERS

Stairs often become a major problem when you are a teenager. It is no longer dignified to heave yourself up and down on your bottom or your tummy. Many large public buildings have lifts installed but this is not usually a practical solution in an ordinary house.

There are, however, on the market a number of lifts known as "Stair Climbers". They require very little installation and no structural alterations to the house so, should you have to move, you can take your "Stair Climber" with you and erect it in your new home. There are several different designs available but there are basically two different models—one is a fold-away seat on a platform and the other a platform to take a wheel-chair.

The photograph shows a 13-year-old spina bifida girl using an "Escalift". As you can see it takes up very little space and does not interfere with the normal use of the stairs. This particular design can be plugged into an ordinary power plug; others have a small electric motor which is usually housed in the cupboard under the stairs. The lifts are operated by depressing a button, release of which stops the lift. They stop automatically when they reach the top or bottom of the stairs and carry up to 20-22 stones and all have built-in automatic safety devices.

The majority of these "Stair Climbers" can only be fitted to straight staircases but the "Wecolator" made in America and distributed in this country by Stairlift Engineering Ltd. can cope with curved stairs and landings.

The cost of a "Stair Climber" varies from £500-£800 approximately, this includes installations. Demonstrations can usually be arranged at the firm's showrooms. The "Minivator" has been installed by a few local authorities. Help with installation costs should be possible from some source.

For further details and information please write to me:
Miss F. A. Birkett, ASBAH, 30 Devonshire Street, London W1.

Cont. from page 10. Michael

Life is much easier for Mrs. Underwood, too, and her nerves are better. Freed from the overwhelming strain which faced her every day, she can take a much greater interest in the whole family. She looks forward to visiting Michael and having him home in the holidays. Mrs. Underwood also finds time to be an active member of the South London ASBAH, and of the Greater London Liaison Committee.

She was pleased to have the opportunity of telling Link her story. She hopes that mothers in her situation will think more seriously about "making the break" and letting their child go away from home to become independent and happier.

Cont. from page 9. College

"successful" are not the academically bright ones, but those who have overcome obstacles and now enjoy an independent and rewarding life.

"Students with spina bifida haven't tended to do as well as some of the others," said Mr. Field. "This is largely because they have come here with no real continence training. I can't over-emphasise what an obstacle incontinence is for a young person wanting to get on."

Mr. Field was previously headmaster of Coney Hill School for spina bifida children in Kent.

One of his hopes for the future of the Star Centre is to attract young people from much wider backgrounds.

"We tend to get students whose parents are articulate, alert and informed enough to know about our work, and to press for their children to come here. But there must be many other young people with physical handicaps, living perhaps in the back streets of our large cities, who would also benefit from coming here. I'd like to make our work known to them, too."

ASBAH publications and publicity

Your Child with Spina Bifida by Dr. J. Lorber, MD, FRCP	15p*
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*
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, Devonshire Street House, 30 Devonshire Street, London W1N 2EB. (*Special rates available to Local Associations.) Bulk orders of Scottish Association booklets to: The Scottish Spina Bifida Assn., 7 South East Circus Place, Edinburgh EH3 6TJ (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.

Films

The first four films may be hired from Concord Films Council, Nacton, Ipswich, Suffolk. Enquiries about purchasing these four to ASBAH.

What is Spina Bifida? Black/white, 16 mm, 25 minutes. Shows the early treatment of a baby born with spina bifida and hydrocephalus, and the involvement of parents. **Hire: £2.**

A New Lease of Life. Colour, 8 mm, 25 minutes. This film, made by a parent, shows by a series of animated drawings the nature of the spinal lesions and refers to treatment. **Hire: £2.**

Like Ordinary Children. Colour, 16 mm, 30 minutes. Two teenage girls describe their disability and their feelings about integration into society. The attitude of girls from a local school to those with handicaps is also shown. **Hire: £4.**

Growing Together. Colour, 16 mm, sound, 40 minutes. This film is about education and the choices of day school available to spina bifida children. Discussion topics to accompany this film are being prepared. **Hire: £4.**

What Shall We Do Tomorrow? Colour, 16 mm, 22 minutes. It deals with the problems and achievements of spina bifida youngsters, with comments from parents and teachers. It shows, too, some local money-raising events. The film was made for Mansfield & Worksop Local Association. Enquiries to: The Secretary, Mrs. E. Freeman, 23 Melbourne Street, Mansfield Woodhouse, Notts. Tel.: Mansfield 26860. **Hire: £3 plus carriage and compensation.**

Local Association offers

Badges. Silver and green enamel with pin fastening. Replica of the Spina Bifida emblem. Bulk orders are 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.

Inter-association holiday opportunities

Camber Sands, nr. Rye, Sussex. New, well-equipped chalet, in 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. N. E. Barefoot, 23 Marlborough Road, Southall, Middx. Tel. 01-574 5067.

Lessingham, Norfolk. Well-appointed 6-berth caravan. Sea 100 yds. Vacancies. Apply Mr. P. White, 12 Swallow Gardens, Hatfield, Herts. Tel. Hatfield 63018.

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. Dates still available April, May, Sept., Oct.

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 Bournemouth, 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 home for families with spina bifida members. Sited at Selsey, Sussex. For full details please send s.a.e. to Miss G. M. Clarke, Badgers Copse, Rudgwick, Horsham, Sx.

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Printed in Great Britain by The Whitefriars Press Ltd., London and Tonbridge