



Link

Association for Spina Bifida and Hydrocephalus/ASBAH 20p

July/August 84



**Why
the
RAF
Falcons
dropped
in**

— Pages 5 & 21



ASBAH
celebrates 18 years:

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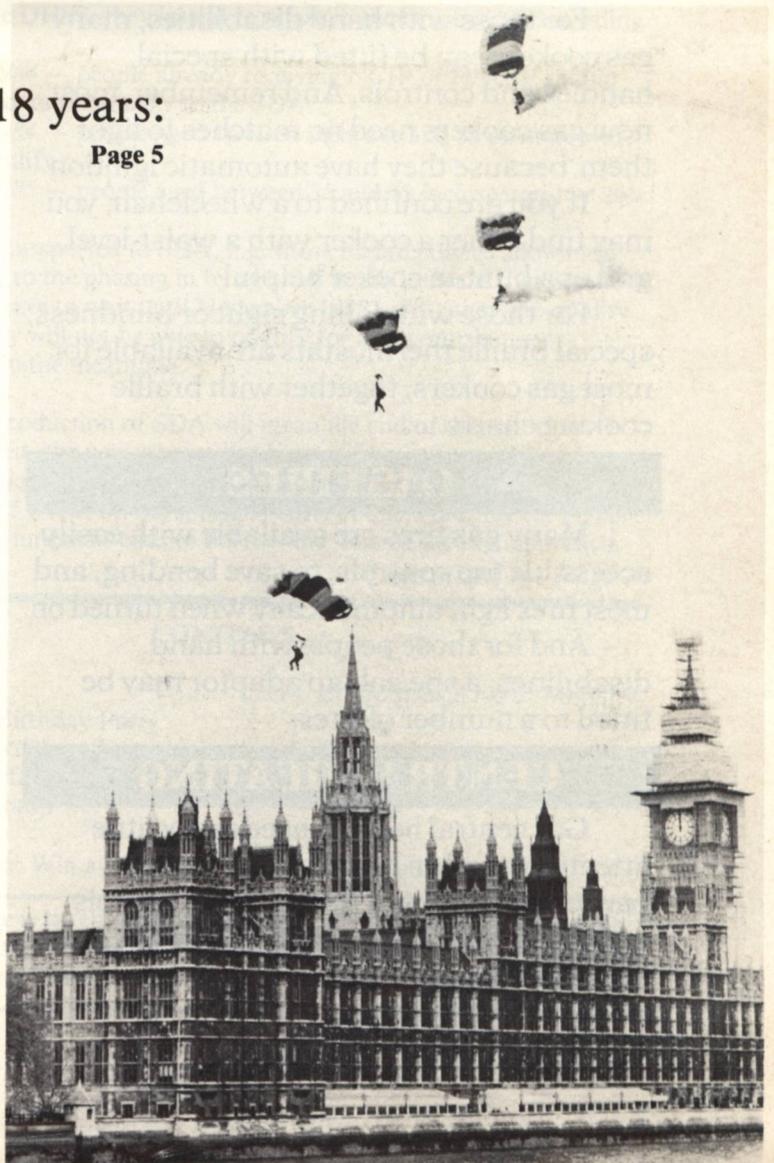
Skin sores — causes and prevention:

LINK Special — mobility aids:

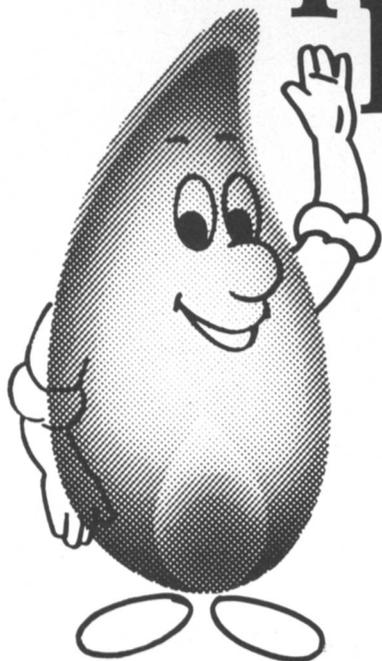
Financial advice:

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“Help yourself to the help you need.”



British Gas offers a wide range of help to those who need it most — elderly and disabled people.

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For those with failing sight or blindness, special braille thermostats are available for most gas cookers, together with braille cooking charts.

GAS FIRES

Many gas fires are available with easily accessible top controls, to save bending, and most fires light automatically when turned on.

And for those people with hand disabilities, a special tap adaptor may be fitted to a number of fires.

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Gas central heating needs very little attention and can be set to your own particular pattern of living. Time controls and room thermostats help to save gas and keep running costs down.

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The Code of Practice for the payment of domestic gas and electricity bills offers advice to customers who are unable to pay their fuel bills because of real hardship. Copies of the Code are available from gas showrooms and local offices, Citizens Advice Bureaux and other advice centres.

If you are blind, severely sick or disabled, you should tell us so that an acceptable method of payment may be agreed with you and so avoid possible disconnection.

Pre-payment gas meters can be re-positioned at a convenient height for disabled people, and special extended handles are available.

HOW TO HELP YOURSELF

Go to your local gas showroom. If you cannot go, contact the Home Service Adviser of your Gas Region, who will be happy to call on you at home and provide advice free of charge. (You'll find the address and telephone number in your local telephone directory under GAS).

MORE HELP

For information about other ways in which we can help — with safety and economy hints, for example, or with a choice of ways in which you can spread the cost of your gas more evenly throughout the year — contact your local Showroom.

BRITISH GAS



Link⁹³

Association for Spina Bifida and Hydrocephalus/ASBAH

Correspondence to ASBAH at the National Office:
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Tel: 01-388 1382/5

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ASBAH has an experienced staff ready to help with any problems relating to those with spina bifida and hydrocephalus.

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Mr Derek Knightbridge, FCCA

Appeals Director:
Miss Judy Kay, MIPR

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The Severe Disablement Allowance

A NEW social security benefit is being introduced this November — the Severe Disablement Allowance (SDA). It will replace the existing non-contributory invalidity pension (NCIP) and the housewives non-contributory invalidity pension (HNCIP).

The SDA will be available to people who are incapable of work, through illness or disability, and do not have enough national insurance contributions to qualify for the full rate invalidity pension. People who are incapable of work by the age of 20 will be able to qualify for the SDA on a single test of incapacity for work. But those who become incapable of work after 20 will also have to meet a second, very harsh test, of 80 per cent or more disablement. Claimants who are already in receipt of NCIP or HNCIP this November will be transferred over to SDA without having to meet the 80 per cent test. (Note that a break of more than eight weeks off SDA will end this transitional protection.)

The proposals for introducing the SDA are in the Health and Social Security Bill, which is currently before Parliament. During the Bill's Committee stage, the Government announced its intention to 'passport' certain groups of people to the SDA without them having to undergo the 80 per cent test — as long as they are incapable of work. These groups are:

- * People in receipt of mobility allowance.
- * People in receipt of attendance allowance — at the higher or lower rate.
- * People who are registered blind or partially sighted with their local authority.
- * People in receipt of war pensioners' mobility supplement.
- * People who are already classified as 80 per cent or more disabled for industrial injuries disablement benefit, or war pension.

PHASING IN

According to the DHSS, they intend to phase in the new benefit according to age:

- * *November 1984* — people already receiving NCIP or HNCIP should be transferred automatically to the SDA.
- * *November 1984* — people aged 16 to 34 inclusive and 50 or more will be able to qualify.
- * *November 1985* — people aged between 35 and 49 inclusive will be able to qualify.

People who are passported to SDA, e.g. those on attendance allowance, will also be subject to the phasing in by age. All in all, it means that people aged 35 to 49 will have to wait until November 1985 before they can qualify for the SDA — they will not be able to qualify for non-contributory invalidity pension in the meantime.

Although the introduction of SDA will mean the end of the notorious household duties test, the new scheme has been unanimously criticised by disability organisations. It will mean discrimination between people who are equally incapable of work, on the spurious basis of age. And, for the 80 per cent test, the Government intends to borrow the 'loss of faculty' approach

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VAT — Some relief at hand

ALTHOUGH the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Nigel Lawson, announced in his March Budget that building alterations would be subject to 15% VAT, he has now agreed that he will grant VAT relief on some work to provide various services for disabled people.

This change of heart has come about after representations by a number of disability organisations.

VAT relief will be granted on work designed to improve access for disabled people. This will include such things as ramps, widening of doorways and passages.

Relief is also granted on the installation of toilet facilities on a ground floor specifically needed by a disabled person. This will apply to first-time installations, not to the alteration of existing toilet facilities, and it applies only to buildings used wholly as private residences.

Although some important alterations for disabled people will be zero-rated, this will not be true of all adaptations many of which will be subject to VAT following the Budget.

COMET offers microcomputers

COMET is a unique bursary scheme which will enable young people with mental or physical handicaps to purchase microcomputers to help them in their studies or training.

Applicants must be aged between 16 and 35 and want the micro-computer for continuing a course of education or training, particularly — but not necessarily — in a computer-related field. They could also need the micro to enable them to explore work opportunities either in a computer-related field or in using micros as an aid to communications.

Applications will also be considered from disabled young people requiring micros for other specific purposes.

COMET has been set up by the joint organisers of the British Micro-computing Awards — the Sunday Times and VNU Business Publications. More details from the administrators of the scheme — the National Bureau for Handicapped Students, 40 Brunswick Square, London WC1N 1AZ. Tel: 01-278 3459.

Transport move

LYNDA Chalker, Minister of State for Transport has announced that an advisory unit is to be set up to help establish and develop special transport facilities for disabled people in London. The Department of Transport will pay all the costs of the unit over a three-year period, and it will be a branch of the National Advisory Unit for Community Transport which is based in Manchester. It was hoped that the London unit would be able to start work this Summer.

Britain saves Olympics

THE NEWS that the Paraplegic Olympics, to have been held in Illinois this June, had been cancelled at the eleventh hour was a shattering blow to the athletes who had trained long and hard for the event.

It wasn't possible to muster sufficient interest in the United States.

However, the British Paraplegic Sports Society has come to the rescue and has agreed to host and organise the games in the Ludwig Guttmann Sports Centre at Stoke Mandeville. The dates: 22 July-1 August.

Please give your games support if you can by going along as a spectator. They are expected to involve around 42 nations and over 1,000 athletes. It should be an exciting and memorable gathering.

For more details contact Mrs Joan Scruton, British Paraplegic Sports Society. Tel: (Aylesbury) 0296 84848.

Opinion — Continued from Page 3

from the industrial injuries scheme. Disability organisations consider that this is quite inappropriate for an income maintenance benefit, such as SDA. Organisations are very worried as to how particular conditions will be assessed, given the pass/fail nature of the 80 per cent test e.g. fluctuating illnesses such as multiple sclerosis, or chronic conditions such as arthritis.

The Government has admitted that the only reason for the second test of 80 per cent disability is to restrict the numbers of people who will qualify, purely on grounds of cost. It would cost an estimated £275 million to have a single test for everyone of incapacity for work — this should be seen against the background of the £2 billion worth of cuts in social security since 1979.

FURTHER DETAILS — Further information on the Severe Disablement Allowance, how it will work, and the implications for people with disabilities, is contained in the *SPRING '84 DISABILITY RIGHTS BULLETIN*, now available from the Disability Alliance E.R.A., 25 Denmark Street, London WC2 8NJ, price £1.25 including postage.

LINDA LENNARD
The Disability Alliance

Hostel's new units soon ready

SIX new mobility units are nearing completion at the Ada Lewis Hostel in Palliser Road, London W14. The Hostel is for single women aged between 18 and 55.

The accommodation consists of furnished bed-sitting rooms with shared kitchens and bathroom. The new units are all on the ground floor close to the communal facilities and are adapted for use by wheelchair users, but would also be suitable for girls who might need ground floor accommodation.

For further information contact Sue Hargreaves, Ada Lewis Women's Hostels, Knights' Court, 6/8 St John's Square, London EC1M 4DE. Tel: 01-251 6091.

New service opens up

A NEW shop, showroom and fitting service for people with physical handicaps has been set up in Temple Fortune, North London by Mrs Margaretta Hammond, an SRN with orthopaedic qualifications.

A range of special equipment and aids is on display. Some things are displayed in room settings to show off equipment as it would appear in the home. There are fitting rooms and toilets for the disabled.

The address of Living with Handicaps is 6 Ashbourne Parade, Finchley Road, London NW11 0AD. Tel: 01-209 0195. Open Monday-Saturday 9 am-5.30 pm.



Stars make ASBAH'S birthday extra special

ASBAH'S 18th birthday was celebrated on April 28 with an informal, but 'star studded' party at the Hotel Forum in London.

Eighteen young people with spina bifida and hydrocephalus who are 18 this year were invited and travelled from all parts of the country to attend. They included Wesley Todd who was actually 18 on the day and who came all the way from Belfast.

Making the party a very special occasion were pop stars Bonnie Tyler, Kate Marsh, Maureen and Bernadette Nolan and members of The Escape. They gave up several hours of their time to celebrate the occasion over lunch and during the early part of the afternoon.

FRONT COVER

ASBAH'S 18th birthday party is also featured on this issue's cover of LINK. Stars and young guests posed for the photographer at the end of a very enjoyable party, and below left, the birthday cake before it is cut by Wesley Todd who was celebrating his own 18th birthday that day.

On an entirely different note, the picture on the right of the cover gives an idea of what it was like on May 14 when members of the RAF Falcons dropped out of the London skies for a spot-on landing in the Thames at the start of another very successful fund-raising and publicity event for ASBAH — 'Pie in the Sky' (see page 21 for more details and a closer view of the parachutists).

LINK insert — Guidelines

INSERTED in this issue of LINK is the first of a series of Guidelines for Local Associations, for you to keep for future reference.

The first Guidelines is on the subject of getting your local association more widely known in your area. It gives useful information on how to make contact with the press, and local radio and television.

The local media are there to reflect the opinions and activities of the community, of which you are part. Don't be afraid of getting into contact with them. They really do want to hear from you.

Party goes with a swing



Stars, Bernadette Nolan, Kate Marsh, Maureen Nolan, and Bonnie Tyler (from left to right) with staff of the Forum Hotel who helped to make the party such an enjoyable occasion.

Mr Dennis Bryant, Chairman of ASBAH'S Executive Committee gave the toast to ASBAH and said: "Parents may not approve of everything that their offspring do, and the founders of this organisation may be a little surprised at some of the things that we are doing now. We have changed and we hope that you feel it is a change for the better".

Wesley Todd had the task of cutting the ASBAH birthday cake (see front cover) to conclude a very enjoyable party which was made particularly pleasant and easy — and relatively inexpensive — due to the friendliness and practical help of the staff of the Forum Hotel.



Zena Watson (left), Caroline Osborne, LIFT secretary, John McGovern, Mark Beattie, volunteer, and Andrea Robinson (front right) one of ASBAH'S Disabled Living Advisers.



Bonnie Tyler, with Ian Mcardle and Tommy Dye.



Members of the Escape with Jane Byrne.

ON THIS 18th birthday of ASBAH, LINK remembers those young people with spina bifida and hydrocephalus who sadly died before they could 'come of age'. One such young man was Jonathan Nation of Orpington in Kent, who was born on April 28, 1966, the same day as ASBAH.

His mother, Mrs Marie Nation, Secretary of Bromley local association writes below.

Jonathan was the youngest of 8 children — 5 brothers and 2 sisters, ages ranging to 21 years.

He was encouraged from the beginning to mix and talk to the many friends of the older children who always seemed to make our house their venue. The family helped him to read, tell the time, and sort out colours with a box of Smarties, so he did all this earlier than many.

His father died when he was 4½, but he was too young to realise this tragedy. He started school at 4 and progressed steadily, and was working for his CSE exams. He had begun computer studies, and was working a half day per week in a Building Society branch for job



Jonathan — a very special son

experience, and was very satisfactory.

He had a very full life — went to Cubs and on to Scouts and went to summer camp with the handicapped group. We went to football matches, discos, animal parks, army displays, and enjoyed many trips in our Association Mini Bus — too many to remember. He visited Lourdes, and attended two

independence weeks at Holmbury St. Mary and at Chipping Norton. He competed in sports days and sponsored swims, and won trophies and certificates for these. He enjoyed playing Scrabble and similar games, and could amuse himself with a pack of cards. He worked his way through 'The Puzzler' each month, and mastered the Rubic Cube.

Jonathan was always cheerful and never complained when he had to stay in hospital (many times). He was lazy about walking and was happier and adept in his wheelchair. He was stubborn and could argue logically (a true Taurean!).

Jonathan died on 26th November 1982 — although a short life a very rewarding one. I am grateful to my family, their friends and his teachers for helping him achieve this.

I thank Jonathan for the love and happiness he gave us, and commend him for his courage. A very special son who would have been proud to share his 18th birthday with ASBAH.

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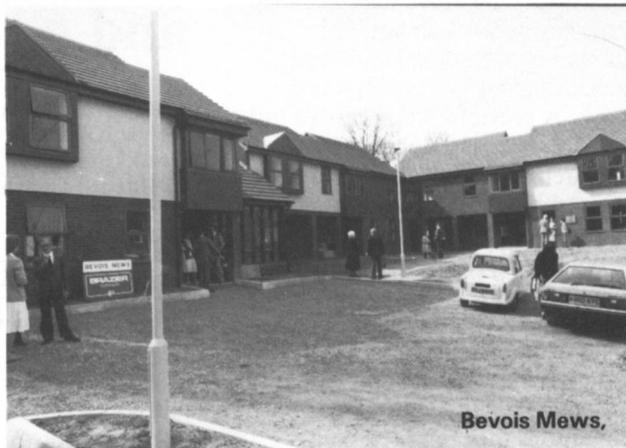
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THE WILLINGNESS of Housing Associations to get together with local ASBAH's to provide accommodation for young people with spina bifida and hydrocephalus was stressed at ASBAH's last Spring Conference and reported in LINK. Now one local association — in

Southampton — has proved it can work. Bevois Mews in Southampton opened officially on June 16, and two young members of the local association moved in — Tina Billett and Stanley Fitzgerald.



Tina Billett and Stanley Fitzgerald



Bevois Mews.

BEVOIS MEWS was built as a result of a partnership between Southampton ASBAH and Swaythling Housing Association. The partnership had very informal origins. A woman with a spina bifida relative approached the Director of the Housing Association in a local pub and asked if he could help with accommodation. Three years later Bevois Mews was completed.

Built on the site of a disused coal yard, it consists of five self contained ground floor flats, consisting of lounge, bedroom, bathroom/toilet and kitchen, and five two bedroom flats on the first floor. The ground floor will include a community lounge and utility room. The flats are fitted with microwave ovens and are fully gas central heated.

One of the downstairs flats is to be used by individuals who wish to try out living on their own on a temporary basis before they have their own place.

The site has been well chosen, being near to the City centre and close to local shops and facilities. If the tenants need assistance with household tasks that they cannot manage, it is intended that the Local Association will be on hand. Also the ground floor flats have an alarm call system to the flats upstairs occupied by residents willing to help if necessary.

The first floor flats will be let by the Housing Society to able-bodied or the ambulant disabled, and Southampton ASBAH will nominate persons known to them, for the accessible ground floor flats.

The majority of the finance for the project which cost £250,000 was provided by the Housing Corporation, the funding body of Housing Associations, which in turn receives it from the Department of the Environment. Additional facilities which the Housing Corporation could not fund were paid for jointly by Swaythling Housing Society, and from fund raising by Southampton ASBAH.

Young Single people usually find it hard to find housing — it is often even more difficult if you are looking for accessible accommodation. The Southampton project illustrates that Housing Associations are often very interested in working with voluntary organisations, if they can show that there is an unmet need in their area.

Thanks to the partnership of the local ASBAH and a Housing Association . . .

New Flats for the disabled open in Southampton



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MANY PEOPLE with spina bifida suffer from sores as a direct result of a lack of protective skin sensation.

At Queen Mary's Hospital for Children, Carshalton, we are seeing teenagers with spina bifida who have sores, some of which are so severe that they necessitate hospital admission and often jeopardise education, further training and work. A previous study carried out at Queen Mary's Hospital for Children, indicated that sores were also a major reason for abandoning walking.

We therefore decided to investigate the problem of sores, looking at their frequency, their main causes, the number and duration of hospital admissions resulting from them, and the limitations they imposed on everyday activities. Parents and teenagers were asked if they had been given sufficient advice about the dangers of skin anaesthesia and the prevention of sores. We also discussed techniques that they regularly used for preventing sores.

We reviewed 100 teenagers with spina bifida between the ages of 14 and 17 years, who lacked some degree of skin sensation and were attending Queen Mary's Hospital for Children.

The study revealed that at the time of the survey, 64 of the 100 teenagers had a sore where the skin was completely broken down, and 96 had experienced a similar full thickness sore at some time in the past. There had been a total of 302 significant sores in these 96 patients and 72 had required treatment in hospital for at least a month. The day-to-day activities of 80 teenagers had been severely restricted at some stage by their sores.

We were able to identify the major causes and found that parents and teenagers although aware of them, did not always fully understand the implications of anaesthetic skin. Sadly both parents and teenagers felt that advice and counselling on the prevention of sores had not been sufficient. It is therefore vital that this is improved and that the parents of very young children, and the children themselves are made more aware of the dangers of skin anaesthesia.

What are the causes of sores?

Damage to anaesthetic skin occurs because there is no conscious

Sores (ulcers) in anaesthetic skin — causes and prevention

Susan J. Watson and J. Elizabeth Hewson, Senior Physiotherapists, from Queen Mary's Hospital for Children, Carshalton, Surrey.

awareness of discomfort; consequently there is no withdrawal from its cause. If we can make everyone more aware of stimuli which cause skin damage, we may be able to prevent the occurrence of skin sores.

Anaesthetic skin is potentially liable to damage from friction, pressure, heat and moisture.

Friction on anaesthetic skin

Friction results from parallel movement between two surfaces in contact. When friction which would normally cause discomfort acts on anaesthetic skin, the lack of withdrawal results in the skin and/or the underlying tissues being damaged (see fig. 1).

Our study revealed that friction from appliances such as boots and calipers, and from wheelchairs, bedsheets, carpets and other surfaces resulted in one in three sores and was the largest single cause. These occurred mainly on the backs and feet of the children, and on average took three months to heal.

Pressure on anaesthetic skin

Pressure is a force applied perpendicular to a surface. When the discomfort of prolonged pressure is neither felt nor appreciated there is no withdrawal. The tissues become distorted, the blood supply is reduced and consequently the tissues (see fig. 2) die. We found that pressure from bed rest gave rise to sores on the buttocks, hips and heels, and that a few children who sat for prolonged periods in wheelchairs developed buttock sores.

Fixed deformities of the spine, legs and feet result in certain parts of the body being more vulnerable to friction and pressure. Anaesthetic skin over bone prominences is susceptible to damage from friction (see fig. 3) while deformity which



Figure 1: Friction sores resulting from walking in ill-fitting boots, and from walking without boots!

causes faulty posture results in uneven weight distribution and therefore areas taking high pressure will develop sores.

Our study showed that sores associated with deformity and anaesthesia comprised the second largest group. They usually occurred on the backs and feet of the children, persisted for an average of four months and they often re-occurred over several years if the deformity was not corrected.

Heat on anaesthetic skin

Burns and scalds occur on anaesthetic skin because there is no deliberate withdrawal from not only sudden intense heat, but even more importantly from prolonged exposure to less intense heat (see fig. 4).

In our study there were 40 significant burns or scalds in 35 children, most of which were caused by prolonged exposure to relatively low heat. Five teenagers who were able to walk, had burned their buttocks by sitting on radiators, and this was because neither the teenagers nor their parents had been made aware of the real dangers of anaesthetic skin.

Moisture on anaesthetic skin

Any increase in moisture on the skin caused, for example by incontinence or excessive sweating, makes the skin more susceptible to damage from friction and pressure, and to infection. Where the skin is anaesthetic the moisture cannot be felt, and consequently sores are more likely to develop.

How can we prevent sores?

Having therefore established the major causes of sores it is easier to understand how to prevent them. It is of prime importance that everyone

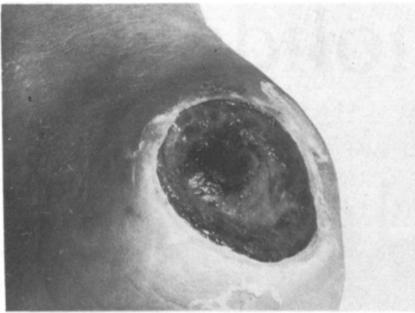


Figure 2: A pressure sore on the heel, from bed rest.

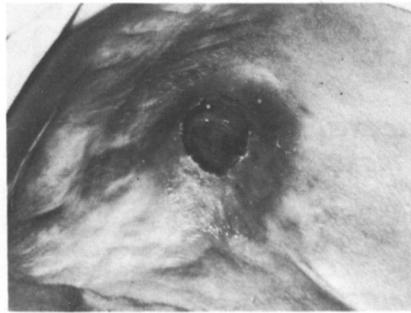


Figure 3: A friction sore over a bony prominence of the spine.



Figure 4: A burn from a hot water pipe.

is fully aware of the areas of skin which are anaesthetic, however small they may be. The doctor, nurse or physiotherapist will be able to give this information, but everyone needs to be constantly reminded, especially in the early years.

Body awareness

Unfortunately the parts of the trunk and lower limbs which lack sensation will be less prominent in the mental image that the child has of its own body. The child must be made aware of his whole body and this can be done by showing the child his limbs and trunk, encouraging him to feel them with his hands so that he is able to build up a mental image of his legs and trunk by using his other senses.

Unless the child is looking at his legs he may not be able to tell in which position they lie, and consequently whether they are in any danger. When the child begins to move around the floor, he must learn to look for his legs and to move them from any dangers, otherwise what cannot be felt or seen is easily forgotten.

Skin care

Clean, dry, supple, well nourished skin is less vulnerable to damage. Therefore, basic skin care, a balanced diet and the maintenance of good circulation are very important in the prevention of sores.

Early detection by skin examination

Examination of the skin by the parents and the child should be a regular part of the daily routine. Looking at anaesthetic skin areas, using a mirror for parts which are not easily seen will reveal suspicious red marks, bruises or abrasions.

Feeling the parts with the fingers will discover areas of increased

temperature and swellings — early warning signs of trouble. These early signs indicate that the skin is being damaged, so the cause must be found and removed immediately.

Minimising the effects of friction

All clothing should fit correctly; if it is too tight or too loose it can rub the skin. Ideally clothing should be soft, warm and absorbent. Natural fibres such as cotton, wool and silk have these properties and minimise friction, absorb moisture and are warm to wear. Man-made fibres are not always suitable; nylon in particular may be abrasive and often does not allow the air to circulate and this prevents the evaporation of sweat. Polyester/cotton mixtures are usually suitable.

Natural sheepskin is very useful for protecting the skin from the effects of friction. It is soft, absorbent and warm and can be used to cover the back and seat cushions of a wheelchair, and to lie on in bed.

The more active child may need to have sheepskin covering a horse or bicycle saddle, and if necessary calipers can have sheepskin cuffs and knee pads. Prominent spinal deformities may require extra protection and a sheepskin pad inside clothing is often helpful.

Urinary appliances must be checked regularly and often for correct fitting. The skin must always be clean and dry before the appliance is put on and stockinette over the straps will absorb sweat from the underlying skin.

Calipers, braces, boots and shoes must also be checked regularly and often for correct fitting. If they are becoming too small, adjustments should not be delayed and boots and shoes should be renewed. It is

unwise to pad out these appliances to make a better fit as it will make them tighter, and increase the risk of skin damage.

Movement over different surfaces without adequate skin protection also causes sores. Crawling out of doors and in and out of swimming pools are obviously dangerous to the unprotected skin, but surprisingly nylon carpets are also abrasive and cause severe sores.

These risks can be minimised by the use of suitable clothing and many children wear socks as protection both indoors and out and also when swimming.

The skin of limbs may be damaged when transferring from wheelchair to bed, chair and bath and everyone needs to be aware of awkward corners and places where legs can be trapped.

Minimising the effects of pressure

Correct posture and frequent changes of position are the most important means of preventing pressure sores, whether lying, sitting or standing. These measures ensure that no particular part of the body takes pressure for a prolonged period.

At night the use of pillows between the knees, and sheepskin under prominent spinal deformities will help to prevent excessive pressure on these parts of the body. It may also be necessary for the child to be turned during the night.

We found from our study that the child who was unable to walk and therefore sat all day, had less problems with pressure areas on his buttocks if he sat on a variety of chairs, only using his wheelchair for mobility. It is wise for a child with

continued on page 19

Win a free dream holiday

UP, UP AND AWAY — Enter our exciting free holiday competition from the makers of Slipad. Exclusive to LINK readers.

PRIZE — A two-week holiday for one at Skylarks Hotel in glorious Nottinghamshire countryside worth £300 and a case of Slipad — an all-in-one incontinence aid — PLUS, for every person who enters, a free sample pack of Slipad.

SUMMER is the time of year when most of us yearn to go away on holiday. Whether it's just for a long weekend or an exciting trip abroad, it is certainly something to look forward to and enjoy.

Peadouce, the makers of Slipad, a new all-in-one disposable incontinence aid are offering a super 2-week holiday in one of the beautiful holiday hotels run by The Winged Fellowship Trust especially for physically disabled people.

The Skylarks Hotel is situated in the heart of the Midlands just outside Nottingham. It has a licensed bar, a heated indoor swimming pool and is very close to the National Water Sports Centre.

Possible outings during the holiday include visits to the local races, cricket and football matches and many other interesting activities. The hotel also has its own nature reserve, where special hides for bird watchers have been built to accommodate wheelchairs.

Skylarks is run by a small permanent staff which includes day and night nurses and volunteers who give up their time to help with the exciting activities during the day. It is a small hotel having accommodation for only 36 guests but a holiday spent here will mean new challenges, new friends and a chance to break away to try something different.

The holiday does not include any spending money or transportation to and from the hotel although advice about this is given by The Winged Fellowship Trust — all meals are however included.

The prize will also include a generous quantity of Slipad which is a new incontinence aid introduced onto the market last year. Slipad is ideal for taking away on holiday as it is discreet, disposable and very comfortable. Slipad is an all-in-one garment with elasticated legs and suits most types of incontinent people but is particularly suitable for the more active type as it fits snugly without showing under clothing, and is very absorbent. Slipad comes in three sizes to suit different hip measurements.

For those that are interested, Peadouce have just written a new leaflet on incontinence and this is available free from:— Dept. SB, Peadouce (UK) Ltd, Rye Road, Hoddesdon, Herts.



Slipad — just the incontinence aid to take on holiday.



Skylarks — Winged Fellowship Holiday Centre.

The competition is open to all spina bifida readers of LINK.

Holiday Quiz

Underline your choice.

- Which of these five cities is the capital of Canada:—
Dallas, Lisbon, Washington, Ottawa, Toronto
- Which of the following resorts is on the Mediterranean:—
New Orleans, Wellington, Nice, Baghdad
- In which of the following six countries would you expect to eat Spaghetti:—
Poland, France, Italy, Spain, Morocco
- In which of the following six countries would you expect to find the Grand Canyon:—
Greece, Monaco, United States of America, Saudi Arabia, India, Czechoslovakia.

Then, in not more than 15 words, tell us why you would like to win this holiday.....

NAME (in full)

ADDRESS

TELEPHONE NUMBER

AGE

HIP MEASUREMENT

Please send your entries to:—

Peadouce/Spina Bifida competition, Peadouce (UK) Ltd, Rye Road, Hoddesdon, Herts.

NB—The holiday at Skylarks for the winner will have to be taken from Saturday, 29 September to Saturday, 13 October 1984.

The competition is open to residents in the UK only.

IN RECENT YEARS there have been tremendous advances in aids and appliances available to the disabled. Most of the mail received by the Disabled Living Advisers at ASBAH is from companies and researchers eager to tell about their new designs and products.

At the recent three-day NAIDEX Exhibition in Brighton products and services from more than 150 companies were on display. Several of the companies came from Europe and America.

In this second LINK Special we concentrate on —

MOBILITY AIDS

If you have any suggestions for areas you would like to see covered in future editions, Mary Small and Andrea Robinson (ASBAH's Disabled Living Advisers) will welcome suggestions.

The Nippi

DESIGNERS have just produced a proto-type of an extremely exciting scooter which could greatly increase a disabled person's outdoor mobility. It is quite unlike anything else that is currently available. This three-wheeled motor-cycle is designed to accommodate a wheelchair and be driven on the open road.

The Nippi, as it is called, could therefore offer the user the same freedom as any other motor-cyclist by introducing him or her to a completely new area of transport.

In order that the wheelchair user can be manoeuvred in and out, the back panel of the Nippi is hinged. When lowered, it becomes a ramp, so that a specially designed wheelchair can simply be propelled into the driving position.

This chair is well secured with an automatic locking system. By use of the lever inside the vehicle, the ramp is raised and locked in position.

The designers feel, quite rightly,

that although an ordinary non-collapsible wheelchair could, in theory, be adapted for use, for safety reasons, their purpose-built Nippi robust wheelchair should be used.

The control panel is similar to other motor-cycles and the Nippi has an electric start. Of course, as it has a fully automatic transmission, there are no gears.

The Nippi has a Honda Lead 80cc Scooter engine and its top speed is just over 40 mph! Travelling at 30 mph, it will cover 70+ miles per gallon of fuel. It therefore is very economical to run. The fuel tank and oil caps are well situated within the user's easy reach.

The designers are aware that some youngsters may not want such a powerful machine, at least initially. If there is sufficient interest they may introduce a 50cc model.

Of course stability and safety have been major considerations in the





The Nippi

design of this vehicle, and the Nippi has a robust safety frame and GRP body panels. As it is designed for road use, it must be taxed, carry a number plate and be insured like other motor-cycles. The user must hold at least a provisional licence.

The Nippi is also designed to accommodate a non-disabled user. Instead of the wheelchair, an ordinary motor-cycle seat can simply be placed into the interior and again securely locked in place. This seat of course offers the same enjoyment and mobility to the rest of the family as to its owner.

The complete Nippi package includes the special wheelchair, lap strap (to comfortably secure the driver to his wheelchair) and windscreen. A rain cover and ordinary cycle seat are additional extras. The designers are currently working on a Nippi trailer so that the motor-cycle can be transported behind a car when going on a longer-distance journey.

Apart from this complete package, the Nippi is also available in kit form. Which of the three kits you would prefer, would of course depend on how much work you would like to do yourself, could get help with or indeed ask someone else to do for you. The Basic Kit costs £695 and the fully complete vehicle costs £1,985. The other Kits range in price between these.

Local Associations and other groups may be very interested in these Kits as they could share their skills and work together with youngsters on a group project to save expense.

Details: Dept. P., **Special Vehicle Designs Ltd.**, Findern, Derby. Tel: Derby 519508, or contact the Disabled Living Advisers at National

Office who would very much like to hear your views about this exciting new venture.

Scoota Plus

BASED on studies of the model BEC Mobility launched in 1981, their new Scoota has increased styling, additional functions and a high class finished trim.

As a result of these studies, the following changes, have been made in producing the Scoota Plus.

- The wooden base has been replaced with glass reinforced plastic, moulded in one section for strength and durability. The front and rear mudguards have been incorporated to reduce the nuisance of "splash" back.
- The steering mechanism and motor are protected by a large protruding front bumper, and additional comfort and ease is provided with the fully upholstered seat.
- A 360° swivel action is still incorporated but there is a new seat locking device that can be used every 90°.
- This lightweight Scoota dismantles into five pieces without the need of tools and is easily stored in the boot of an average car.
- Extra ease of portability is facilitated by the addition of a new split battery pack.

The new Scoota may be most suited to adults and youngsters with spina bifida who can walk short distances but, who find walking longer distances outside tiring, e.g. when going shopping or visiting



Scoota Plus.

friends. Many people might be more keen to go out more often and become involved in new activities if they did not exhaust themselves simply getting from A to B. If this was indeed the case, this scooter or one of the many others on the market, may help them conserve their energies to pursue their leisure or work interests.

The complete Scoota Plus costs £695, but the Budget Scoota which is very basic but facilitates the same function, costs £495.

Special Offer

BEC Mobility are offering a £25 discount to LINK magazine readers who purchase any BEC product, with the exception of the BEC Budget Scoota. This Scoota is so competitively priced, they cannot offer any further discount on this unit. The offer lasts for two months and if any readers wish to purchase products, please place these through National Office. This way BEC will know who the LINK readers are and will then give £25 discount.

To place orders contact: Mary Small, Disabled Living Adviser, National Office.

For further details contact: Mr B. Huxley, Technical Sales Representative, **BEC Mobility Ltd.**, 103 Stourbridge Rd., Halesowen, West Midlands B63 3UB.

Wheelchair Carrier

NOTTINGHAM MEDICAL AIDS have brought out a special wheelchair rack, which leaves the whole car free for passengers and luggage because the wheelchair is strapped securely on the back of the car! Additionally, the wheelchair has only to be lifted a foot or so above the ground which is much easier than straining to lift the chair bodily over the tailgate of the car.

In the past, we have had a large number of enquiries regarding the problems parents in particular have, lifting heavy and so-called, light-weight chairs into their boots, hatchbacks, etc. Perhaps some of them will be interested in this new product.

The wheelchair rack can be folded up when not in use and left on the car. It can also be folded down to occupy a space measuring only 26 inches square by 5 inches deep and then stored flat in the boot of the car.



Wheelchair Carrier from Nottingham Medical Aids.

Fitting takes only a few minutes and the rack can be fitted to any car with conventional bumper plus boot or rear hatch. It also fits most vans.

This wheelchair rack costs £69.52 including carriage. (VAT zero rated if purchased by a disabled person.) Including VAT and carriage it will cost £79.95.

Details: **Nottingham Medical Aids Ltd.**, 17 Ludlow Hill Rd., Melton Rd., West Bridgford, Nottingham NG2 6HD. Tel: (0602) 234251.

Another way of transporting a wheelchair when you are an occupant in a car is, of course, to put it on the roof.

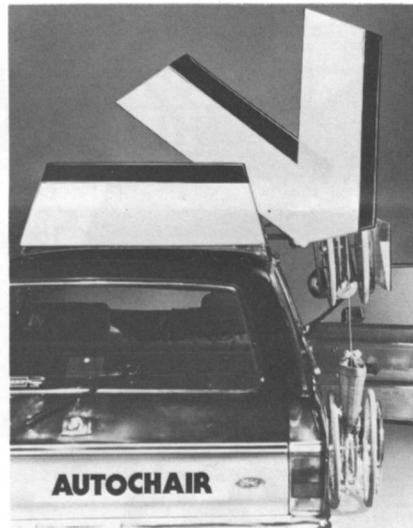
Autochair

MOBILITY TECHNIQUES LTD. have produced an automatic car top wheelchair carrier called **Autochair**. We had several enquiries regarding this new product after it was shown on BBC Television's 'Tomorrow's World'.

The Autochair, designed by a disabled person, has proved in continuous daily use, to be extremely practical and trouble-free.

This wheelchair lifting system may be particularly attractive to disabled people who drive their own cars and who find it difficult or impossible to lift their wheelchair into the car behind them. Once you have attached the Autochair pulley to your chair, using the vehicle's 12 volt battery, at the touch of a button, the autochair will collect your wheelchair from your car side, and hoist it up into the fibreglass box on the roof. The door auto-

matically locks and the wheelchair is kept safely and securely in position until you recall it at the end of the



Autochair car top wheelchair carrier.

The Autochair roof houses all the mechanical and electrical components and is designed to have a low wind resistance. This box can be painted to complement your vehicle. All folding wheelchairs with detachable footplates are suitable for use with the Autochair and it requires no major modification to your car. It costs around £980.

Details: **Mobility Techniques Ltd.**, The Croft, Great Longstone, Bakewell, Derbyshire DE4 1TF. Tel: (062 987) 278.

Carter's (J & A) Ltd. have also produced another model which works similarly and has a "soft-top" wheelchair carrier on the roof. It is less expensive.



Carter's 'Chair-Up'

Details: **Carter's (J & A) Ltd.**, Alfred St., Westbury, Wiltshire BA13 3DZ. Tel: (0373) 822203.

The Vessa Trekka

ONE OF THE Disabled Living Advisers had a "test drive" in the new Trekka. She found it easier to manoeuvre than the Batricar and Lion Car, but of course each individual would have their own preference, according to their needs, and disability.

The Trekka, like the other battery-powered, pavement vehicles, caters very well for people who can walk for short periods but want to travel longer distances quickly and effortlessly.

Many youngsters who are wheelchair-bound, successfully use similar pavement driven vehicles particularly the Batricars, and transfer into these independently. Many of these youngsters, in fact, asked for further details after seeing both the Trekka microcar and Flivva Scooter on BBC Television's 'Blue Peter'.

It is important to note that the Trekka is designed for the more ambulant user. A degree of power in the legs and arms is required to propel the sliding seat for front entry and exit.

The Trekka may suit the needs of those with less severe mobility problems. It is suitable for use on pavements, and rough but stable "off the road" surfaces such as grass and gravel. This micro car has about four to five hours running time (18 miles) at around 4 mph before recharging and costs around £1,900 including deep cycling, longlife batteries and charger (£230).

Vessa have also launched the new Vessa Flivva which is another



pavement-driven 3-wheeled scooter comparable to the BEC scooters mentioned earlier. Its large 8-inch front wheel allows small obstacles (2") to be taken up or down, and again, as with the other scooters, it folds away into easy-to-stow units to fit the average car boot. The Flivva costs around £700 again including batteries and battery charger which retail around £170.

Details: **Vessa Ltd.**, Paper Mill Lane, Alton, Hampshire GU34 2PY. Tel: (0420) 83294.

Sports Wheelchairs

THREE high performance chairs were exhibited this year at Naidex by Gerald Simmonds Wheelchairs.

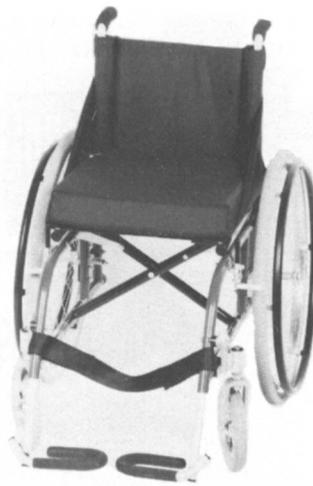


The Quickie (above)

THIS HIGH performance chair has a rigid frame built with aircraft aluminium alloy. It is both strong and lightweight, weighing only 24.5 lbs. Being also fully adjustable, it adapts to suit the individual for both practical, everyday and sporting use.

Features include multiposition rear axle mountings and adjustable front castor plates for finely tuned handling, adjustable backrest height and angle, and adjustable rear wheel camber. There are also many accessories, e.g. various arm rests, different castors, basket ball rollers, etc. A folding backrest and quick-release rear wheels facilitate easy transport.

As well as being a high performance chair, the Quickie is smart, stylish and well finished. The upholstery is attractive, comfortable and durable. Prices start at £1,120.



The Quickie 2 (above)

This sports chair, also from the USA, combines the high performance quality of the Quickie with the extra convenience of a folding chair. Priced from £1,195.

Gerald Simmonds Wheelchairs offer a spare parts and back-up service and besides these chairs they also supply the popular Sweda 24.



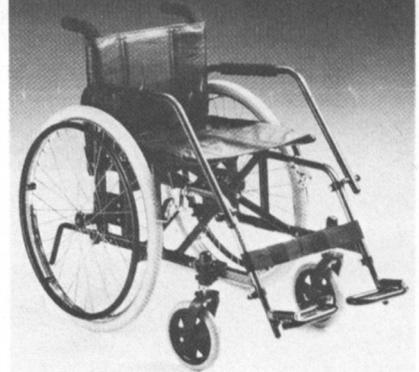
The Swede 24 (above)

Launched in the UK last year, this lightweight high performance chair appeals for every day and sporting use. It is extremely versatile, comfortable, smart and lightweight and competitively priced at £420. Again, this chair is fully adjustable, with quick release wheels.

For further details: **Gerald Simmonds Wheelchairs**, 1 Station Road, Stoke Mandeville, Aylesbury,

Bucks. HP22 5UL. Tel: (0296-61) 3327/Public Relations (0242) 584459.

The Fold



The Quadra Fold

Quadra range

BROMAKIN are another company who have made an impact on the wheelchair sports scene with their racing wheelchairs. Many of these ultra lightweight wheelchairs will be used by British athletes in search of medals at the Disabled Olympics.

The Quadra range of light-weight wheelchairs, from America, are now available here in Britain through Bromakin. Quadra is a major innovator in the design and technology of wheelchairs, concentrating on comfort, strength and good looks.

The Quadra Fold wheelchair offers the comfort and convenience of a folding lightweight chair in a range of sizes and colours to suit everyone from child to extra large adult.

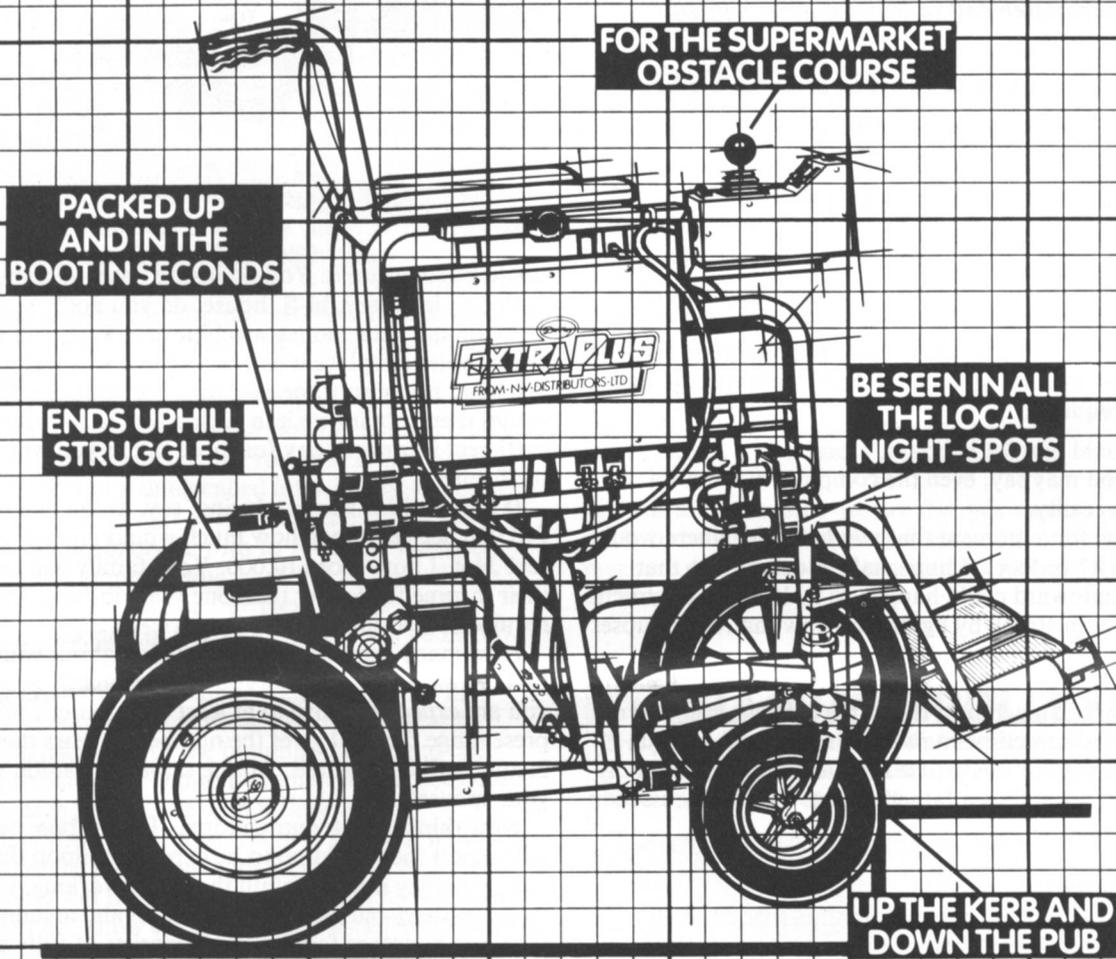
Details: **Bromakin Ltd.**, 6 Seward St., Loughborough LE11 3BU. Tel: (0509) 217569.

ADVANCE NOTICE

THERE will be further footwear demonstrations towards the end of September. If you are interested in attending a display or if a group or local association would like us to visit with the exhibition, please contact: **Mary Small, Disabled Living Adviser.**

The Disabled Living Advisers at National Office, Mary Small and Andrea Robinson, will be very happy to answer any enquiries, and they also have a range of leaflets available concerning the products described.

Look what happens when we draw on your experience.



A lot of people have very positive ideas about their ideal chair. Listening to them has helped us perfect the Extra Plus – a chair for those who spend a good deal of their time out of doors.

The Extra Plus responds to your every need, whether you're gliding up a 1 in 4 hill or getting a cup of tea indoors. This is because it combines power with manoeuvrability. As well as simple fingertip control and a host of features that make it excellent value for money. A heavy duty frame and orthopaedic seating ensure it's tough on the street but not on you.

Another reassuring plus is that it's got all the proven Dudley technology you

expect from NVD, the leaders in mobility products. So if you'd like to know more please contact us. After all, the Extra Plus is the chair you helped us design.



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Industrial Estate, St. Albans, Herts. AL3 6BR.

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EXTRA PLUS

Pay now . . . live later

THIS IS the first of a series of articles covering the future financial needs of your children when various events occur. It has been written by John Taylor who has been involved in financial services for sixteen years, and, having a daughter with spina bifida, is conscious of the special requirements of handicapped children.

Some financial advice on securing the children's future

HOW WOULD you like to own your very own money machine? No — not one you put money into, but one that PRINTS money! Every time a bill arrives through your letter box, you would be able to go to your machine and simply by turning a handle you would run off the amount required.

You could pay for holidays, a car, even a house. A dream, you may say, even the computer age cannot make it a reality.

Imagine for a moment that you had one, where would you keep it? Indoors, I hope, safe and secure so that nothing untoward could happen to it. It might be stolen, burnt or even struck by lightning. Now that would upset your finances, would it not?

If you are an average family, you already have one of these fantastic machines. It is often called a *husband* or a *father* and sometimes a *mother*, so it could be you.

For the sake of this article I am assuming your family "money machine" is a father. Mums will be discussed in a future issue.

The Problem

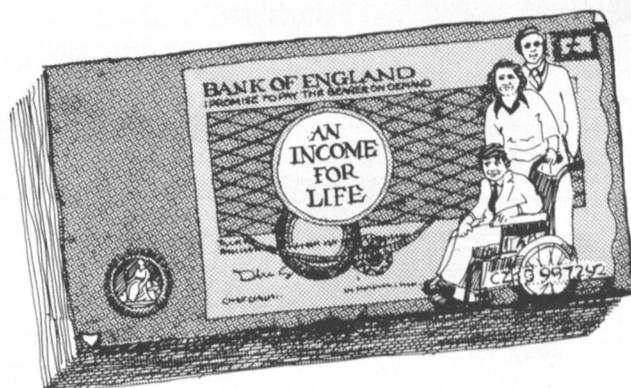
Unlike the fantasy money machine, that amiable provider who cheerfully foots the majority of the household bills goes out into the hectic world in order to obtain the income necessary to maintain the family's standard of living. He is constantly at risk, perhaps not of being stolen, but he could be involved in a car accident, suffer a stroke, a tumour, cancer or even be struck by lightning, as well as numerous other final events.

Would that present a financial set-back to your family? It does for thousands of ordinary families each year. After health, this could be the most serious problem existing for your family.

The Solution

Now, this may be a little disturbing if you relate this situation to your own family. If so, do not despair. The purpose of this article is not just to highlight problems, as I am sure you already have enough as it is. The aim is to show a situation as it exists and how it can be resolved, thereby eliminating the problem.

Let us go back to our money machine. If you really had one, what would you do to protect yourself against the financial loss caused by the failure or destruction of the machine? I believe the first thing you would do



would be to insure it. You do insure lesser valuables — your car, jewellery, hi-fi, house, do you not?

Assuming your money machine is unique, you would not be able to replace it as you would a washing machine, house roof, or rear wing for your car. You would therefore insure it in such a way as to provide sufficient income to pay for those things you will need in the future.

If the machine was producing, say, at the rate of £10,000 per year, then how much would you insure it for? Not, I hope, for £10,000. Your family will require their income for longer than one year. In fact, it will be required for as long as they live.

How many years will that be? Think about yourself first. How old are you? If you are reasonably healthy you are *expected* to live to at least 70. Taking your present age from 70 gives the number of years that income will be required. Do the same calculation with your spouse's age.

Now think about your children. The average parent will expect their children to be dependent upon the family money machine until they start working, i.e. from 16-years-old onwards. This is a valid assumption within the average family which consists of fully able-bodied children. Can we make the same assumption? I think not.

It is now becoming evident that, with proper care and treatment, a child with spina bifida probably has the same life expectancy as an able-bodied child. Another fact emerging is that some children suffering from spina bifida may not start a job or may not earn sufficient to meet their real needs. In these cases they will be dependent on others during their daily lives to do for them what able-bodied children would do or provide for themselves.

For those of us faced with this situation it is even more important to insure our machine for an amount sufficient to guarantee as good a standard of living for our children as is possible.

Of course the State does, at present, provide certain benefits by way of mobility allowance, attendance allowance, supplementary benefit, pension, etc., but is this enough to provide as high a standard of living as your "machine" provides or you would wish your child to have? In my experience people relying on State assistance usually have a life-style that is at 'existence' level.

In considering the amount required to make up the financial loss of our machine (or parents), we should consider not only the ordinary bills that need paying but the other services given freely by parents to their children. Of course we do not expect to replace the love and care given by us to our children, although by providing for their future needs we will show the love we have for them.

We do various things for them that will not be *freely* done when we are not here. Decorating, repairs, helping with mobility, nursing, gardening, shopping, etc., are just some of those everyday things that may have to be done by others.

We have an idea how much we need each year to live on because we know how much we earn. From this figure we can easily calculate how much is required, if invested, to produce that figure each year.

Say I earn £7,000 per year and, if I invested money in a building society, the interest is 10% net per annum. On this basis I would need £70,000 invested in order to receive £7,000 per annum.

If the rate of interest were 8% then I would need £87,500. The lower the interest rate the more capital is needed to provide the income required *today*. You may have noticed that a thing called inflation exists and we tend to accept it as part of life and ignore it — but it is real and will probably be with us for some years yet.

If £7,000 is required *now* what will be needed next year, in five years, and so on? Next year it will be around £7,420, and in five years time it will be £9,367 p.a. if inflation is 6% p.a.

From these figures it can be seen that capital of £87,500 will not last long if each year an increasing amount is taken out of the building society and the interest remains at 8% p.a. (the interest rate does *not* increase each year in line with inflation).

Another thought is "I'm still here (right now) and do not require the income as I am earning it". Quite right! The income will be required at some time in the future, but we do not know exactly when. We can be sure of one thing, an escalating amount will be required at some time. So, to combat inflation a breadwinner should be insured for either a higher amount than is necessary today or review the amount of cover on a regular basis.

It is now becoming clear that the problem of providing for the future is not so much a problem but simply a situation that exists for the majority of families in the same way as "how to pay for next year's holiday or electricity bill". The majority of people do not consider these two situations as "problems", they budget for them, normally by putting a certain amount of their income to one side.

Most future financial events can be catered for by saving a little now, insuring your children's financial future is no different. You can put an amount aside on a regular basis and guarantee the availability of a tax-free cash sum at the right time to ensure a continuing income for your family. Indeed, you may well be doing this already. If you are, I would urge you to review the amount of cover you have. The average father in the U.K. has cover of less than one year's income. When you consider that many have more than ten times their annual income, it means that a large number have no cover whatsoever.

So far I have been discussing what is needed and not "how much it costs". This will, of course, depend on individual requirements, age and health.

As a guide let me assume father is aged between 25 and 34 years old. He earns £8,000 p.a. and would like a plan that allows him to increase his cover in line with inflation. The amount of cover needed would be approximately £100,000. The cost for the cover would be £17.50 per month initially.

This represents approximately 8% of the various possible payments from State sources. When you consider the amount of money that goes towards the many other areas to sustain life, 8% is a small price to pay for a secure future and peace of mind.

If you feel that what you have read is a little disturbing, then it will mean that the article has achieved its objective. If, having the problem set down before you causes you to do something about it, then not only will you feel more relaxed about the situation, your family will be ever grateful for the consideration that would have been shown them.

Should you have any particular problems or queries about the subject covered, I would be pleased to hear from you via ASBAH.

● Insurance proceeds are not the only capital asset likely to be inherited at the collapse of the money machine. Mr Taylor will consider the full range in later articles.

Editor

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- Finished in brilliant poppy red
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roll it mould it ..

stretch it to fit !

"Cohesive" Ostomy Seals can remain in position for several days without renewal, due to a slower rate of dispersion than most other products. Folds and scar tissue surrounding the stoma can be filled with "Cohesive" which forms a perfect base for most ostomy appliances. Additional adhesives are unnecessary, "Cohesive" Ostomy Seals are extremely tacky upon both surfaces. "Cohesive" Ostomy Seals can be used on broken or excoriated areas of skin, to produce a soothing effect which allows healing to take place. "Cohesive" due to its slow rate of dispersion, is excellent for urinary diversions and for fistulae.

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95mm (3 7/8") dia.,
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L/7/C

Sores — causes, prevention: *continued from page 9*

an uneven sitting posture to use a supportive cushion, e.g. a Roho cushion which distributes pressure more evenly over the buttocks and thighs.

Prevention of burns

It is important that all concerned are aware that the child with anaesthetic skin will not consciously withdraw the insensitive part from heat. It is prolonged exposure to less intense heat which causes the majority of burns and scalds in these young people.

The child (like any child) must be made aware of the dangers of intense heat — fire, hot water and radiators, but he must also be taught the dangers of less intense heat such as dripping hot taps and showers, hot water bottles, warm food plates on laps, hot air from convection heaters and the radiant heat from a fire.

Minimising the effects of moisture

The child with anaesthetic skin cannot feel whether his skin is really dry. Therefore, great care must be

taken to dry the skin particularly in the creases between the toes. Absorbent clothing and cushion covers will help to minimise the effects of sweating.

Correctly fitting urinary appliances and regular emptying of urine bags will help prevent sores caused by the leakage of urine.

WHAT DO WE CONCLUDE?

As a result of our study it has been shown that sores and their resulting limitations are a real problem to the young person with spina bifida. It is therefore vital that professional counselling and advice on the prevention of sores is improved, especially on the avoidance of burns.

The effects of friction and pressure on anaesthetic skin can be minimised by regular skin examination, good basic skin care, the maintenance of an adequate circulation, good posture with frequent changes of position, and the correct fitting of clothing and appliances.

Although most of the measures described may be considered

common sense, our interviews with parents and teenagers showed that it is these single techniques which play a major role in reducing the occurrence of sores.

We wish to thank the parents and teenagers who took part in our study and shared their knowledge with us; Mr Geoffrey Walker, FRCS, for his help an encouragement; Mr R. Wade, Medical Photographer and Miss S. Wadd for typing the manuscript.

Youth Year is coming

REMEMBER that next year, 1985, is International Youth Year.

ASBAH is making plans to become involved in this international celebration and concentration on youth.

Many local associations may get the chance to play a part, too, and LINK will be carrying news of the Year and making a special feature of youth in its six issues of 1985.



BRITISH fervour at its height at the end of the very successful Stage Door Canteen staged at the Lyceum in London by Barry Mishon in aid of ASBAH.

Millions of BBC2 viewers were able to enjoy this patriotic event, which was televised the day after D-Day.

A great many stars of stage and screen not only performed but also mingled with the audience as waiters and waitresses and taxi drivers. The star of the evening was undoubtedly Vera Lynn, at the centre of the stage left for the final song of the evening — 'Land of Hope and Glory'.

It was a wonderful occasion which raised at least £24,000 for ASBAH.

JOHN GROOMS HOLIDAYS

**All facilities specially adapted for wheelchair users
(family friends and escorts welcome)**

Seaside Hotels: Llandudno and Minehead. (Bargain Winter Breaks for only £10 per day, incl. VAT)

Self-Catering Units: Near the sea at Barnstaple, Borth, Poole, New Milton, Tenby, Looe, Maplethorpe and Camber Sands. Also in the Cotswolds. Ramps and other aids

Holiday Chalet: Near Skegness (Lincs)
London Holiday Flat: London, N.4.

Motor Caravan: Hire for one or two weeks. Tail lift, wheelchair, WC/Shower unit, etc.

Bungalow: In the heart of the Norfolk Broads

Canal Holiday: In adapted narrow boat.

For further details contact: John Grooms Holiday Department, John Grooms Association, 10 Gloucester Drive, London N4 2LP. Tel: 01-802 7272.

WHY WAIT?

Trust in North West Ostomy Supplies for unique service. One which offers probably the largest and most comprehensive ranges of Ostomy and Incontinence appliances and accessories all under one roof.

All products are stored under controlled conditions. Our policy is to provide you with a personal, confidential and specialist service, whether you are a private individual, Pharmacist or member of the Medical Profession.

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The largest selection of Ostomy appliances-
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***Get out and about with the
SPEEDWELL SUPAKART***

Get out and about with the Speedwell Supakart.

Designed primarily for physically handicapped but is suitable for all children from 6 to 16 years of age who have reasonable strength in their hands and arms.

The Supakart is a rugged, stable, outdoor vehicle which has a range of six miles, will mount shallow kerbs and climb steep gradients.

To have one, is to have fun, and you will see more places and people.

For further details contact:
SPEEDWELL ENTERPRISES,
NORTHAMPTON AVENUE,
SLOUGH, BERKS.
Telephone: SLOUGH 72249

MONDAY, May 14, will be a day long remembered in the annals of ASBAH's Appeals Department. In pursuit of funds for boosting the Association's work, a squad of intrepid parachutists — members of the crack RAF Falcons — dropped out of the hazy skies over London and landed in the River Thames just a few yards away from the Houses of Parliament. It was the official launch of our "Pie in the Sky" contest and it is difficult to imagine a launch that was more spectacular or daring! (See front cover).

Arranging the drop was an awesome responsibility. We needed to ask the Port of London Authority to close the river to all craft not directly connected with the event; and we also needed to persuade both the Royal Navy and the Royal Marines to provide us with a flotilla of small boats for rescuing the gallant parachutists from the inhospitable waters of Old Father Thames.

The Falcons themselves had the task of rescuing a mammoth pork pie which was floating tenuously on an enormous inflatable directly opposite the Palace of Westminster. This enterprise successfully accomplished, the Falcons brought the pie on board the good ship "Silver Baracuda", where they were guests of honour at a reception held by the Meat Promotions Executive to mark the start of the "Month of the Pie".

Amongst the other guests on the "Silver Baracuda" was Mr Fred Marsh of the Royal Aero Club, who presented ASBAH with a cheque for £7,500 — our fee for arranging one of the most imaginative ways of publicising pork pies that has yet been conceived.

BY NO means all of ASBAH's recent fundraising successes have taken place in mid-air. Indeed, one of them has been wholly concerned with the turf.

On Saturday, April 28, a race meeting was held at Ripon Race Course in aid of the Association. Seven thousand pounds were raised through a combination of race entries, donations and a raffle. According to our fundraiser, Richard Poole, all now seems set for a similar event on a bigger scale next year.



Moyna Gilbertson, ASBAH's Executive Director, with the 'Pie in the Sky' cheque.

There's more to 'Pie in the Sky' than it first appears

EARLIER in the month, Jane Hayman presided over the first ever "Marathon Escape" competition. One hundred and fifty runners spent twelve hours in Epping Forest in Essex, armed only with survival packs and minimal instructions as to the route they were expected to follow.

On their heels were sixty "catchers" recruited from Wanstead Police Training College, whose goal was to apprehend the runners. Shortly after the contest commenced, snow began to fall on Epping Forest for the first time in over a year. Blizzard conditions developed but the Marathon Escape continued and has now made a profit of £2,000.

BAD WEATHER — this time in the form of heavy rain — broke on another of our fundraising ventures towards the end of May. A team of our fundraisers gathered in East London for a collecting day with a

difference at East Ham's old market hall.

They were dressed in a bizarre selection of disguises; as a bumble bee, as a court jester and as Sylvester the Cat. Moreover, a brace of actors dressed in fourteenth century armour were also present to entertain the crowds with resounding thwacks and blood-curdling yells as they fought to the "death" every hour, on the hour.

Unfortunately, the crowds were thinned by the bad weather and profits were substantially reduced as a result. Nevertheless, the armoured knights live to fight another day. So do the bumble bee, the jester and Sylvester the Cat.

NEARLY three years ago, ASBAH's Appeals Staff joined hands with our Southampton Association in a multi-media campaign aimed at raising funds needed for building a block of flats designed for independent living. With the help of a local housing association and the Housing Corporation, the flats have now been built and on April 14, they were officially opened by Sir George Young, MP. The Appeals Department is proud and pleased to have been associated with this success. We view it as a harbinger of the future. (See page 7).

IAN MORRISON
Assistant Appeals Director

Full access and a welcome from Crafts Council

THE CRAFTS Council extends a warm welcome to disabled visitors to its gallery and information centre at the bottom end of Lower Regent Street in London.

The building was opened in 1982, and because it was the Year of the Disabled, the Council felt it was particularly important to have it designed to give full access to people with disabilities. There is a ramp, lift and a wheelchair access toilet. All staff are briefed to offer as much help as possible to disabled visitors.

The Crafts Council holds regular exhibitions of the work of a wide range of craftsmen. Its information service has leaflets and details on craftspeople, courses, supplies, fairs and markets, setting up a workshop, and a selection of current magazines.

From August 1 – September 23 the Council will hold its first open exhibition. Exhibits will be drawn from the fields of furniture, bookbinding, clocks and other instruments of measurement.

The address of the Council is 12 Waterloo Place, Lower Regent Street, London SW1Y 4AU. Tel: 01-930 4811.

Gliding high in Midlands

THE MIDLAND Gliding Club at Church Stretton, Shropshire is happy to welcome disabled people on one of its club courses, or on an air experience flight.

The experience flights are held on two or three evenings each week in the summer for parties of up to 20 people. They enjoy a flight and spend the evening at the club. Flights are also available on some weekends.

The normal cost of one of these 20-minute flights is £10, but the club would be willing to negotiate special rates if necessary.

For more details of courses and flights contact the Secretary: Mrs D. M. King, 3 Hazel Grove, Hockley Heath, Solihull, West Midlands B94 6QW. Tel: 05643 2951.



MESSING about on the canal – traditional steel narrow Kingfisher II, designed to be both suitable and practical for wheelchair users. It sleeps five, and its sister ship, Kingfisher I, sleeps six. They offer disabled people the chance of a lifetime – a holiday afloat with their family, actually handling a boat, without any problems.

The boats are owned by the Spinal Injuries Association. For more details contact the Association, 5 Crowndale Road, London NW1 1TU. Tel: 01-388 6840.

Garden Club decides to branch out

THE GARDENS for the Disabled Trust which, for the past 16 years, has been helping to encourage gardening activities in small hospitals, homes, institutions and schools, is extending its work to help disabled would-be gardeners who live either at home, or in small sheltered units.

The Trust has a Garden Club which publishes a quarterly newsletter with articles of special interest to disabled gardeners. It prides itself on being able to obtain the answer to any horticultural question. It encourages handicapped gardeners to get together over the exchange of plants and seeds and to share experiences in overcoming gardening difficulties.

Through the Garden Club grants may be made to individual members to help them adapt a garden to their particular needs and requirements. Requests for such grants must be sponsored by the Social Services Department in the gardener's area, and the applicant must have been a member of the Garden Club for at least a year.

Gardens for the Disabled Trust has appointed the charity Horticultural Therapy as its technical advisers, and HT's horticulturists will visit applicants for grants, helping the Trust to assess their needs and how best to

respond to them.

The yearly subscription to the Garden Club is £1 (minimum) for individuals and £2 for groups. Life membership is £15.

The Membership Secretary is Mrs Marjorie Haines, Church Cottage, Headcorn, Kent TN27 9NP. For more details of the Gardens for the Disabled Trust contact Mrs Margaret Knight, Little Dave, Biddenden, Ashford, Kent TN27 8JT.

Pruning and planting

A SEASON of Gardening Activities is being arranged in the Demonstration Garden for Disabled People in Battersea Park. Until October there is a monthly free gardening workshop, designed so that elderly or disabled people can join in.

On August 8 the subject is pruning trees and shrubs, on September 5, it is planting bulbs for indoor winter flowering, and on October 10 the subject is bottle gardens.

More details from Malcolm Weare, Horticultural Therapy, Goulds Ground, Vallis Way, Frome, Somerset BA11 3DW. Tel: 0373 64782.

CLASSIFIED 'ADS'

The advertisement rate is:

£2.25 for up to 30 words. £3.30 for 30-45 words.
£4.50 for 45-60 words.

Please send remittance with your advert.

Please note that there is a 10% discount if you book six advertisements in advance.

Adverts for the next LINK (Sept/Oct) should be in by August 5. Send to the Editor Mrs Susan Gearing at home: The Gables, Long Lane, Wrington, Avon. Tel: Wrington 862279.

HOLIDAY ACCOMMODATION

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

CENARTH, W. Wales. Luxury chalet adapted for wheelchair. Sleeps 6. Colour TV. Heated pool, restaurant, shop, launderette. Details: Mr T. Noon, 14 The Chase, Leicester LE3 2WA. Tel: 0533 895691.

CHAPEL-ST-LEONARDS, Lincolnshire. Huddersfield and District Association have vacancies at their luxury holiday chalet. All amenities, including colour TV. Details from Mrs J. Brook, 11 Standiforth Road, Dalton, Huddersfield (21776).

HEYSHAM, Nr. Morecambe. Purpose built 6-berth fully equipped mobile home. Convenient and accessible for the largest wheelchair. Large bathroom. Details: Mrs H. Campbell, 5 Roman Way, Whitchurch, Shropshire. Tel: Whitchurch 3691.

PRIMROSE VALLEY. Fully adapted luxury caravan. Sleeps 6. Bath/shower, ramp. Many facilities on site. Details: Mr J. Adams, 105 Blakey Close, Redcar, Cleveland. Tel: Middlesbrough 472920.

WINTERTON-ON-SEA, Nr. Gt. Yarmouth. Fully equipped chalet. Sleeps 6. Indoor heated pool, shop, amusements, snacks, club, play areas. Details: Mrs A. May, 20 Ridley Close, Blaby, Leicester.

WINTERTON-ON-SEA, Nr. Gt. Yarmouth. Fully equipped chalet. Sleeps 6. Indoor heated pool, shop, amusements, take-away snacks, club room, play areas. Details: Mr R. Morris (0494) 32184.

EXCHANGE & MART

Leisure Wear: White cotton Tee Shirts with green family symbol and words 'Support Spina Bifida'. Also Sweat Shirts in reverse colours. All sizes. Details from Mrs M. Humphreys, 27 Orchard Way, Holmer Green, Bucks.

Chairmobile with battery charger. Although bought in 1973 it has very little use and only requires new batteries. **Mecanoids Ambulift** with seat and slings suitable for transferring patient from bed to bath or toilet. Although not the latest model it is in good working order.

Any reasonable offers considered for the above two items. Apply: Miss Raymond, Coney Hill School, Hayes, Bromley, Kent. Tel: 01-462 5462.

Batricar. New! Only eight hours use. £800. Tel:

Orpington 24700, after 6 pm.

Set of hand controls — Alfred Becker accelerator/brake hand controls suitable for Mini 1000. Right hand fitting. Pull accelerator/push brake. £30 ono. Tel: 0748 811607.

Holiday chalet. Pleasant semi-detached 6-berth holiday chalet, 150 yards from sea with easy access. Attractive site near shops. £8,250 fully furnished and well equipped.

Details: (Cambridge Local Association), Mr D. Greasley, 2 Waddelow Road, Waterbeach, Cambridge. Tel: 0223 213823.

Ford Cortina. 1982 (X). 2-door saloon. 1600 automatic. Radio/cassette. 25,000 miles. Optional hand controls. Light blue. Available early August. Price: £3,200 o.n.o. Tel: 0903 724545 — Ian Laker.

WANTED

Child's Triang Tricycle adapted for hand operation.

Contact: Liz Fisher. Tel: 01-393 1388.

ASBAH booklets, etc . . .

Children with Spina Bifida at School,
Ed. P. Henderson, CB, MD, DPH. 50p
The Handwriting of Spina Bifida Children,
by Joan Cambridge and Elizabeth M. Anderson. . . . £1.25
Sex for young people with spina bifida or cerebral palsy. £1.25
The Nursery Years
by Simon Haskell & Margaret Paull. 35p
Little Joe (A Grandmother's story) by W. Foster. . . . 50p
Life & Death—thoughts on bereavement. 75p
Making our Way — individual experiences of young people with spina bifida & hydrocephalus. . . . £1
Information leaflets. 100 for £4.00

Asian language translations of a Fact Sheet about spina bifida and hydrocephalus and ASBAH's work are available free from national office. Translations into Bengali, Gujarati, Hindu, Punjabi and Urdu. Welsh language sheets are now ready too. All available from ASBAH. (Special rates available to Local Associations.)

Please allow at least 30p for postage.

Scottish Spina Bifida Association Booklets

The Spina Bifida Baby by O. R. Nettles, McSP, ONC . 40p
Growing up with Spina Bifida
by O. R. Nettles, McSP, ONC 35p
Keeping Fit by Jean M. Temple MCSP 10p
Self Help with Spina Bifida
by E. Wilson and E. Taylor 10p
Postage and packing is extra.

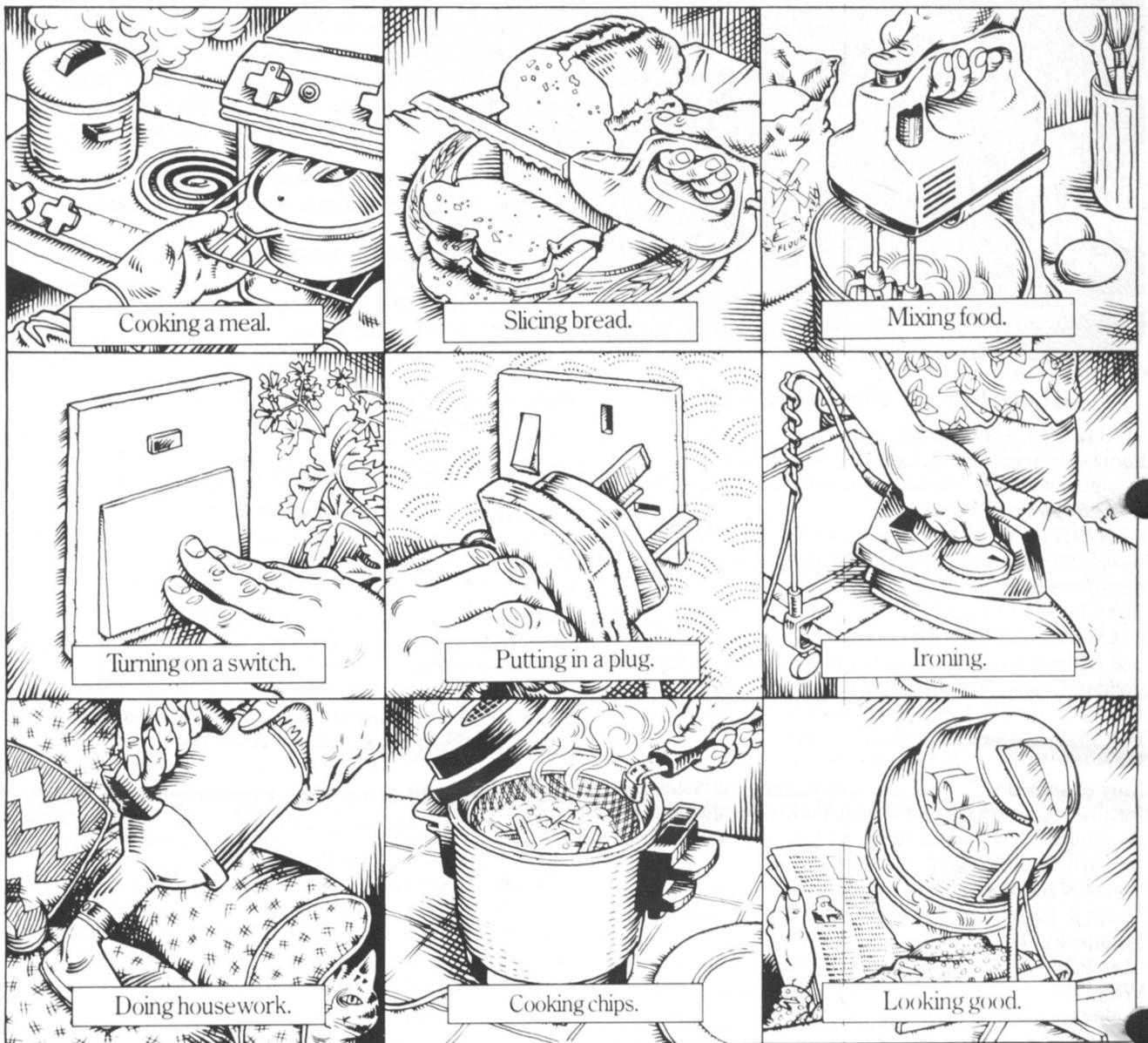
Available from: The Scottish Spina Bifida Association, 190 Queensferry Road, Edinburgh EH4 2BW.

TICKETS

LINK readers have asked to be kept informed of ASBAH fundraising events so that they can apply for tickets.

We are pleased to announce that "A Night of 100 Stars — if they could see me now" (a star-studded spectacular) will be held again this year, just before Christmas.

For more details and tickets contact the Appeals Department at National Office.



Is it this easy in your home?

At your Electricity Board, we have a leaflet called "Making Life Easier for Disabled People".

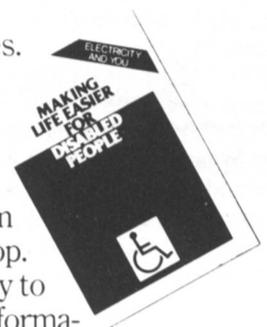
It contains lots of helpful ideas and lists many electrical appliances which can make life easier.

Appliances such as table-top mini cookers. Electric knives which require only a slight pressure to operate. And small, hand-held vacuum cleaners which can be used for dusting, too.

The leaflet also gives details of brailled controls that can be fitted to

certain electrical appliances. And specially designed attachments for plugs and switches which afford easier handling.

The leaflet is free, from your Electricity Board shop. Or you can write for a copy to the Electricity Council, Information Centre, 30 Millbank, London SW1P 4RD.



THINKELECTRIC
The Electricity Council, England and Wales.