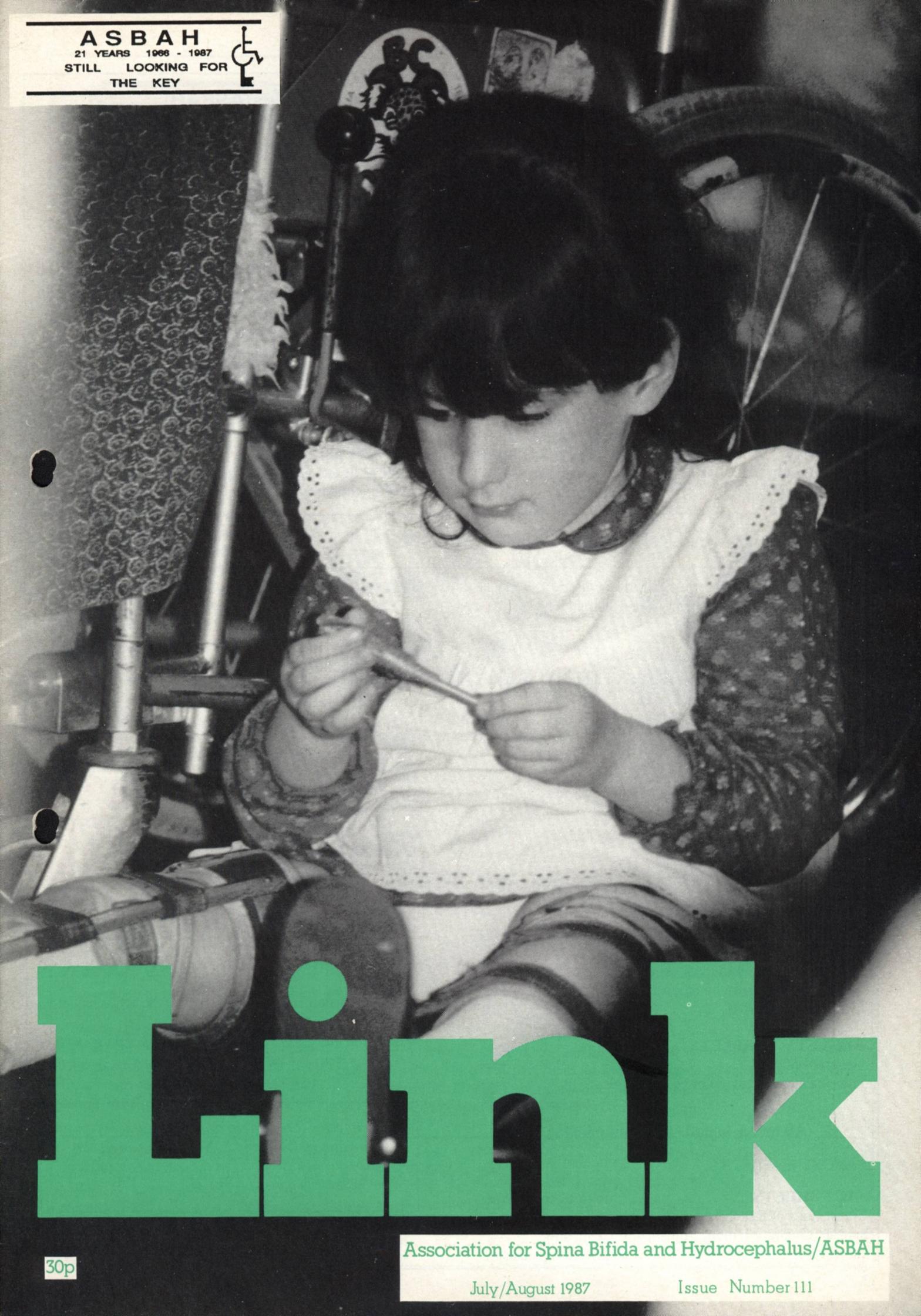


ASBAH

21 YEARS 1966 - 1987

STILL LOOKING FOR  
THE KEY



# Link

Association for Spina Bifida and Hydrocephalus/ASBAH

30p

July/August 1987

Issue Number 111

**Association for Spina Bifida and Hydrocephalus(ASBAH)  
22 Upper Woburn Place, London WC1H 0EP**

Registered Charity No. 249338

**Tel: 01-388 1382**

**President: Sir Hugh Rossi, MP**

**Patron: HRH The Duchess of Gloucester**

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ASBAH has an experienced staff ready to help with any problems relating to those with Spina Bifida and/or hydrocephalus.

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**Link Editor:** Mrs Sue Gearing

**Five Oaks, Ilkley, Yorks**

**Manager:** Miss Joan Pheasant, *NNC*

**Development Officer:** Mr Paul Cooper, *BA(Hons)*

## ASBAH Publications

All available from National Office  
Cheques payable to "ASBAH"

Young People with Spina Bifida and/or Hydrocephalus — Learning and Development (1985)  
*Leonie Holgate* . . . . . £1.60

The Handwriting of Spina Bifida Children (1979)  
*Joan Cambridge, Eliz M. Anderson* . . . . . £1.60

Spina Bifida & You - A Guide for Young People (1985) . . . . . £3.50

Sex for Young People with Spina Bifida or Cerebral Palsy (1984) . . . . . £1.75

The Nursery Years (1983)  
*Simon Haskell, Margaret Paull* . . . . . 60p

Life & Death-thoughts on bereavement (1983) . . . . . 75p

Making our Way-individual experiences of young people with spina bifida and/or hydrocephalus (1984) . . . . . £1.20

**BOKLETS/ LEAFLETS**

General leaflet . . . . . 13p  
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60p for professionals

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Five Oaks leaflet . . . . . Free

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Translations of fact sheets are available into Bengali, Gujarati, Hindu, Punjabi and Urdu, and into Welsh.  
Please send at least 30p postage

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

**MAGAZINES**

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

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# Editor's Note

## YOUR LINK

HAVE YOU EVER written to Link about any problem, success story, or with a query or an idea?

If not, please do make contact. LINK is a magazine to be shared by everyone one with spina bifida and/or hydrocephalus, their families and professionals.

If you are a young person who thinks that LINK is a bit "dry", why not do your bit and write and tell us what you'd like to see on these pages. Remember, of course, that there is also a LIFT magazine - although this doesn't mean that LINK can't be of interest to you as well.

As Editor, it is essential that I have a regular feedback and input from readers. I can't always publish your pieces, but I can promise to read what you send in and take it from there.

I look forward to hearing from more of you

Sue Gearing  
Editor

## Annual Meeting

It would be nice to see as many of you as possible at ASBAH's Annual Meeting in September when the speaker will be Duncan Forrest, so well known to ASBAH members up and down the country. See page 4.

## ASBAH Ties

The Appeals department is selling a new range - top quality black polyester ties. They have been made by Royal Appointment tie specialists and feature the ASBAH bell logo in green, and a green diagonal stripe. More details on page 4

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## FRONT COVER

Sally Ann Robertson, 5, enjoying the Suffolk Association Party. She was there with her pretty sisters, Julie and Sarah, and about 200 other members and friends of the local association. The party was held at Sally Ann's school - the Thomas Wolsey School in Ipswich.  
Photo: David Lawrence

**Link**

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

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

# asbah news

## CELEBRATIONS AT FIVE OAKS

**I**t was a glorious sunny day when Five Oaks celebrated ASBAH's 21st birthday.

Firstly, we had a visit from Peter Bottomley, the Under Secretary for Transport. He visited Five Oaks during our Driving Course.

A buffet lunch, including strawberries and cream, was enjoyed, and we were able to eat it in the garden.

Mr Bottomley joined the students on the course. He was game for anything, taking to a wheelchair and participating in the afternoon's activities. He wheeled up to a car and transferred from the wheelchair into the car. He was then instructed by Stephen Collett, one of the students on the course, on how to put the wheelchair into the car. He watched and participated in the psychological testing, pushing the wheelchair around the route.

Andrew Evans, one of Five Oaks' residents, demonstrated the Nippi vehicle and Mr Bottomley, after instruction from Andrew, took to the road and drove the Nippi (see photo right). He also observed other students going out for driving lessons, having basic instruction in under-the-bonnet maintenance and watching road safety videos.

After an enjoyable afternoon we said goodbye to Mr Bottomley, and then prepared for our second celebrations of the day - our birthday reception. There were about 100 guests, and the centre buzzed with people talking and wishing ASBAH 'happy birthday'. It was an enjoyable eventing, meeting old friends and making new ones.

Yvonne Cox, Chairman of the Five Oaks Working Party proposed a toast to ASBAH on its 21st and another to Five Oaks in its 10th year.

JOAN PHEASANT,  
MANAGER,  
FIVE OAKS

## BUY AN ASBAH TIE

Top quality. 100% polyester, made by Royal Appointment tie specialists, Toye, Kenning and Spencer.

Black with two-tone green stripe and the green ASBAH bell logo.

Price: £5.50 to include p & p from Appeals Dept, ASBAH, 22 Upper Woburn Place, London WC1H 0EP.

## ASBAH'S ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

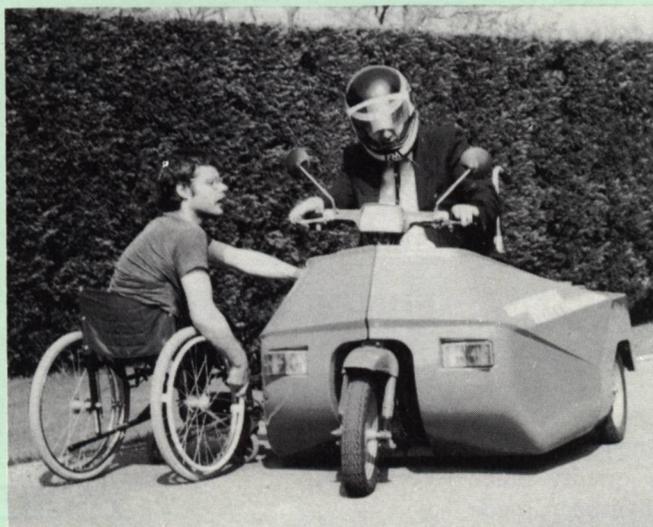
SEPTEMBER 5  
10 for 10.30 am

National Children's Bureau  
8 Wakley Street,  
London EC4.

As this is ASBAH's 21st AGM, we hope it will be well attended.

Duncan Forrest, FRCS, one of the Association's Founder members, and a member of the Executive and Chairman of the Medical Advisory Committee, will be the speaker. He is already well known by many associations in all parts of the country.

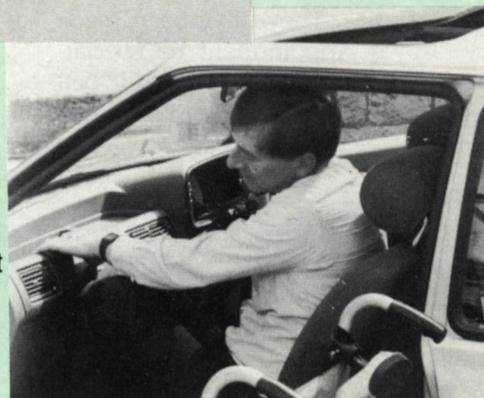
Everyone is very welcome. If you need more details please do get in touch with Susie Dobson at ASBAH National Office.



Peter Bottomley, top right, trying out the Nippi encouraged by Andy Evans.

Bottom right, he has just transferred from a wheelchair to the driving seat of an adapted Ford.

Photos by Chris Beynon, special driving instructor to the disabled.





FROM HER ROYAL HIGHNESS THE DUCHESS OF GLOUCESTER



KENSINGTON PALACE  
LONDON W 8

The Association for Spina Bifida and Hydrocephalus was the very first charity that I became Patron of in 1973 and so it will always remain close to my heart.

I send all members my best wishes in ASBAH's 21st Birthday Year and wish every success in the continuing research to overcome these puzzling disabilities.

*Bipilka*

*'There isn't a single British TV advertisement featuring a person with a disability. By contrast, in America, a man in a wheelchair is unremarkably included in a group sporting 501 Levi jeans.....'*

## The Media needs more vision when it comes to reflecting 'the quiet revolution'

*In this article, which first appeared in The Observer on June 14, ANNE KARPF looks at the British media's sad reluctance to rise to the challenge of the growing disability movement.*

**IF ESTHER RANTZEN wore calipers, would she have reached her present position in television?**

It's unlikely. More probably, her TV roles would have been a choice between the courageous overcomer of handicap interviewed by an able-bodied presenter, or she might have made it into a ghetto slot programme for people with disabilities broadcast in the early hours of Sunday morning when most people are still asleep.

A growing and articulate disability movement is challenging these stereotypes. Fair Play, set up in 1984, to campaign for images which accurately reflect the number and nature of people with disabilities in Britain, promotes equal training and employment opportunities for them in film, radio, TV and video.

Last week (*early June*), the group organised the first British conference on the subject at the Independent Broadcasting Authority headquarters, with plenty of broadcasters in attendance.

Yet it seems that the broadcasters have not recorded the quiet revolution among people with disabilities in the last 20 years.

"You wouldn't know there was a disability movement from watching television" Vik Finkelstein of the Open University told the conference.

Disability activists decry what they call the apartheid of disability. When Fair Play was putting together a videotape illustrating the portrayal of disability on television, the group had to turn to America for examples in commercials. There isn't a single British TV advertisement featuring a person with a disability. By contrast, in America, a man in a wheelchair is unremarkably included in a group sporting 501 Levi jeans; a schmaltzy romantic couple use sign language (plus subtitles) to decide to go and eat at McDonald's; and the blind man in a wheelchair is an IBM systems analyst.

America is years ahead in its soaps, too. Last year, Fair Play wrote to the producers of *Brookside* and *EastEnders* to encourage the inclusion of characters with disabilities. There are still no disabled characters in *EastEnders*, though *Crossroads* introduced a

Downs Syndrome child in 1983, and *Brookside* now has a deaf character. Yet, according to deaf presenter Maggie Woolley, she seems to have an uncanny ability to hear in a roomful of hearing people who make no concessions to her deafness. *Dallas*, on the other hand, has a disabled child, and *Cagney and Lacey* and *Hill Street Blues* have included excellent stories about disability. In recent British TV dramas, only *The Singing Detective*, its hero immobilised by arthritis and psoriasis, spoke with any authenticity.

Employment is the nub of the problem. When Fair Play organised a survey of British TV companies, it found that, though most companies had equal opportunities policies, very few had a programme for implementing them. What's more, they often cast able-bodied actors as characters with a disability, producing unconvincing portrayals, which Maggie Woolley likened to the blacked-up white actors of the past.

Fair Play, supported by Equity, calls for 'innovative casting' to include people with disabilities in the whole range of programming. These would include game shows (*The Price is Right* had one deaf contestant accompanied by her sign-language interpreter last December) and sitcoms, as well as newsreaders and reporters. They want a consultative committee of people with disabilities, which broadcasters can call on for advice.

And they suggest some kind of disability awareness training for directors, producers and casting directors to raise their consciousness.

What of the broadcasters? Some met the challenge defensively, pleading lack of cash or lack of control over freelance staff. Yet this rather confirmed disabled people's claims that their greatest handicap is the able-bodied.

The autumn brings BC TV's comedy *Raspberry Ripple* with seven out of nine actors disabled. Its producer, excited by the experience, now welcomes innovative casting.

But how long must we wait for a person with a disability to persuade us that Persil washes whiter?

## Government told - don't waste skills and abilities of disabled people

PEOPLE with disabilities must be able to reap the benefits of any increase in employment opportunities, said the Royal Association for Disability and Rehabilitation (RADAR), in a statement to the main political parties in the run up to the General Election.

None of the political parties had addressed this issue during the election campaign, said RADAR's Director, George Wilson; yet all parties have made claims that they will increase employment opportunities. Disabled people continue to be affected disproportionately by unemployment, and are likely to be out of work for twice as long as able-bodied workers. Research has also shown that disabled people are 1.6 times more likely to be rejected for an interview than other people with similar skills.

RADAR believes the 1944 Disabled Persons (Employment) Act should be enforced. Since 1979 the number of employers failing to meet their legal obligations under Quota

legislation has increased by 50% and over 5,000 firms fail to pay any attention to the law.

Six thousand people need places in workshops or under the Sheltered Placement Scheme and demand continues to outstrip supply. The Sheltered Placement Scheme, despite its popularity with employers and disabled people, continues to be insufficiently funded. RADAR calls for more resources, and for greater innovation in the sheltered employment field.

Disabled people represent a resource which is currently being under-utilised. Research has shown that disabled workers are more reliable, more productive and more efficient than able-bodied workers. It is, therefore, in the national interest that they are able to become productive rather than have to rely on state benefits.

George Wilson called on the new Government "to ensure that disabled people are given every opportunity to work and that their abilities and skills are not wasted"

## DRIVERS & L-DRIVERS WE NEED YOU!

AS PART of a research project funded by the Department of Transport ASBAH needs:

**DRIVERS;** who would be willing to spend a short time in their own homes, schools or workplaces telling us when and how they learnt to drive and about recent driving experiences.

**LEARNER DRIVERS,** who have had less than ten hours tuition who would be willing for us to follow their progress as they learn to drive.

IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO HELP OR WOULD LIKE MORE DETAILS, PLEASE CONTACT:

Barbara Simms, Banstead Mobility Centre, Park Road, Banstead, Surrey. Tel: 0737 351674

## Concerned Micros in Education and Training (COMET)

THE COMET Scheme was set up in 1984 by the organisers of the British Microcomputing Awards - Personal Computer World and the Sunday Times. The Scheme is administered by the National Bureau for Handicapped Students (NBHS).

Comet serves to increase awareness of the scope of new technology for all those with special needs arising from a disability. One of its main objectives is to award grants to disabled young people for

microcomputing equipment.

Comet has given bursaries to:

A young man who lost his sight in his early twenties; the bursary from Comet provided him with a microcomputing system with speech synthesis, which enables him to study for a history degree.

A young woman with cerebral palsy whose Comet award was a microcomputer with a scanning device which enables her to pursue "O" level studies.

These are just two examples of

how a bursary from Comet has improved the life of two disabled people.

If you are a student who needs microcomputing equipment to assist in your studies, why not apply?

For further details, write to: The Co-ordinator COMET Scheme c/o NBHS 336 Brixton Road London SW9 7AA

**Denise Dunning**  
Education, Training and  
Employment Co-ordinator,  
ASBAH

# Five Oaks goes wild!

BY PAUL COOPER,  
Development Officer at Five Oaks

**I**N THE WINTER of 1985 whilst sitting devising the Five Oaks course programme for 1986 I began to think about two things: 1 - Five Oaks is set in beautiful countryside, and, 2 - How could this countryside be utilised by our members when the terrain is hardly wheelchair accessible?

I decided to track down who was responsible for maintaining local moorland and the surrounding area. A trip to the local tourist information office told me that Ilkley Moor was the only council-owned moor in the country. I was also given a contact - Les Morgan.

The rest is history. In May 1986, Five Oaks hosted a Wildlife Weekend run by the Countryside Warden Service. It was so successful and enjoyed by all concerned that the Warden Service, firstly organised a fund raising event (a world first) by propelling Andy Evans in his wheelchair over the twenty-five miles of the Three Peaks. This event firmly cemented a growing friendship between Five Oaks and the wardens.

Secondly, building on last years Weekend is this year's Wildlife Week due to be held this Summer. This course, being a few days longer, allows for a more in depth study of the area.

Looking further into the future: in June 1987, two wardens, three members of West Yorkshire LIFT, and I were due to attend an "environmental and ecology" week in Denmark, with the view to hosting an international course in 1988 at Five Oaks.

Planning is underway for next year. I do not like predictions, but I'll make a promise: Five Oaks will go Wild in 1988!!



Paul Cooper took this photograph to show just what a beautiful setting Five Oaks enjoys

## From the Wardens' viewpoint.....

*AS A RESULT of a request from Five Oaks, Ilkley, in the Spring of 1986, the Bradford Metropolitan Council Countryside Warden Service agreed to organise a rural studies course for the young people at Five Oaks.*

*I must confess to a initial scepticism about our ability to cope with young people with physical disabilities and indeed with participants ability to cope with the rough terrain on Ilkley Moor. I need not have worried because the weekend's events were a roaring success.*

*In the regular Monday briefing of the Warden Service it was obviously apparent that these who took part (nearly all seniors except me!) had been deeply effected by the students, and by everything about Five Oaks and it was put to me that they wanted 'to do something for Five Oaks'. I agreed, on the understanding that it was challenging and had a Yorkshire flavour - like for example (I stressed the for e.g), the first traverse of the Three Peaks by wheelchair. The following day I was presented with a draft project for the traverse of the Three Peaks by a young person using a wheelchair.*

*The planning began. It involved reconnoitering the route, walking it to see if it was physically possible in the shortening daylight of late September, devising means of attaching ropes to a chair, and indeed, considering whether a production wheelchair was up to the job.*

*It was finally agreed that it was a feasible project and Andy Evans volunteered. We trained on Ilkley Moor, and several circuits of the route were undertaken; teams were organised. Every member of the Countryside Service volunteered. Climbers came forward for the steep bits on Whernside and Pen y Ghent and altogether over 120 people took part in the actual event which ran on September 20.*

*It was obviously a great success. The route was completed in an honourable thirteen hours and ten minutes (five minutes less my personal time!). We learned a great deal, mainly about ourselves, but also about the strength of character of Andy and his friends who took part. The team work and camaraderie will long be remembered.*

**Les Morgan**  
Head of Outdoor Recreation  
Bradford Metropolitan Council



The wardens and 'wildlife students' at Five Oaks

## Local Association Round-up

Please send in news of your local association or of one of its members. It might make interesting reading! Contributions for the next LINK August 10

### Beth's a model girl

TEN-YEAR-OLD Beth Hillman has joined her hand to model making and, with a little help from her friends, raised £50 for ASBAH.

Beth's specialities are badges and pendants made from Cernit Number One modelling materials. She made most of them herself but was helped, in the early days, by her friends Lucy Smith and Fiona Warburg.

Her headmaster helps too, allowing orders to be taken at the Whitehill Junior School, Hitchin, Herts.

Beth's mother Joy Hillman says: "Our baby, Alison, died in 1974 having had spina bifida and I am thrilled that her younger sister has been willing to make this effort to support ASBAH."

### Trust helps out with a scooter

EIGHTEEN-YEAR-OLD Helaine Woolls of Bury near Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire, has received a helping hand from the Royal Jubilee and Prince's Trust. The Cambridge Branch of the trust has given her £500 towards the cost of a motorised scooter.

The aim of the Trust is to help young people, aged under 25, to improve their prospects or lifestyle.

Helaine is on a business studies course at the Huntingdonshire College, Huntingdon. When she finishes she hopes to find a job locally but that would be more difficult without transport. The scooter cost £1,200 and Helaine is raising the rest herself.

Helaine's mother, Mrs Christine Woolls says: "A great deal of water has passed under the bridge since Helaine appeared in LINK magazine in the Spring of 1971.

"She has coped with life wonderfully and still amazes us with her efforts".



NEIL McCORMACK, pictured above with Sally Dobson who sadly died in January, has raised over £660 mainly from a sponsored 'organ play' at his home.

The 'organ play' was in memory of Sally, and the money has been split between Bedford ASBAH and the Kidney Dialysis Fund.

Sally has been awarded her Duke of Edinburgh Gold Award posthumously.

Neil was helped in his fund raising by a coffee morning organised by his mother. And there have been other social gatherings. Bedford recently held a 'Mums Chat Evening' and invited the Cambridge Association along.

## Stansted 'levels' with disabled

A SPECIAL seminar was arranged by Stansted Airport Authority in June and delegates representing various disability groups were invited to attend. The idea was to present future plans for the airport and invite discussion and questions focusing on the requirements of physically and sensorily disabled people.

Talks were given by the Managing Director of Stansted Airport, Allan Munds, the Director of Stansted Development, Tony Westbrook and the Architect, Spencer de Grey from Foster Associates. We also heard from the Project Planning Manager, Roger Miller and Operational Planning Manager, Chris Bush.

Considerable thought had gone into making Stansted an accessible airport for disabled people. The main concourse building is on one level. The only change of levels is for passengers arriving by rail and passengers coming from the short term car park. In both these

instances lifts, ramps and escalators are provided. There is ample setting down space under a generous overhang and no change of level is necessary here.

During discussion time it was proposed that representatives from key disability groups with specific interest in transport should be included at all stages of development. This was agreed by Allan Munds and he also emphasised that personnel training in understanding disability and handling disabled people would be a feature of their development.

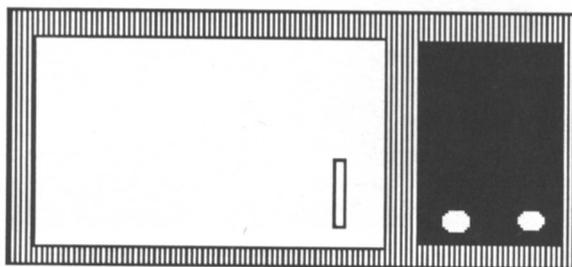
It was a most encouraging meeting and Stansted Airport Limited is to be congratulated on taking this step. Hopefully, it will set a model for other developments so that the ablebodied and disabled may work together to produce more buildings etc. that are accessible to all.

**LEONIE HOLGATE,**  
ASBAH Disabled Living  
Adviser

*Joan Ransley, Lecturer in Home Economics at Trinity and All Saints College, Horsforth, Leeds, reports on.....*

## MICROWAVE OVENS

### an aid to independent living



# What's cooking ?

**MICROWAVE** ovens are now a familiar sight in many kitchens in Britain today and they have become established as a compact, safe and versatile way of cooking most foods.

Combining the ability of an oven to reheat, casserole, roast and bake with the simmering, boiling and frying function of a hob, a microwave cooker is able to make light work of the daily task of cooking and preparing food. Research has shown that disabled people find using a conventional cooker a problem, for example pans are awkward to manage on a hob, ovens are virtually inaccessible and controls are often difficult to operate making the preparation of a meal a long, tiring and frustrating activity.

#### realistic option

Microwave ovens which are now quite inexpensive to buy and run, can offer a realistic option for those people wanting to cook for themselves on a regular basis. The main advantages of the microwave oven are two-fold. Firstly it is very

good at cooking - by that I mean it is a versatile appliance which has several cooking advantages and secondly the design of the oven makes it very easy and safe to use.

A microwave oven has three main uses in cooking: it can reheat food, it can defrost food and it can cook most types of food in a fraction of the time needed by conventional methods.

#### ideal for one or two

This sort of oven is suited to cooking fairly small quantities of food making it ideal for those cooking for one or two people. It will successfully cook vegetables including carrots, green vegetables, baked and new potatoes, white

meats such as chicken, turkey and fish as well as gammon and bacon. Scrambled eggs are tasty and easy to prepare as well as custards, sauces and desserts such as baked apples and stewed fruit. It will happily cope with an extensive variety of foods.

Besides being able to cook everyday foods quickly, the microwave oven can be used in conjunction with a freezer to defrost and reheat meals.

#### time saving

Several meals can be prepared or bought in advance, frozen and defrosted when needed. This can cut down on shopping trips, preparation time and washing up



*continued*



Enjoying the microwave in the kitchen at Beaumont College, Lancaster.

# What's cooking ?

*continued*

making meal preparation a much simpler, less time-consuming activity

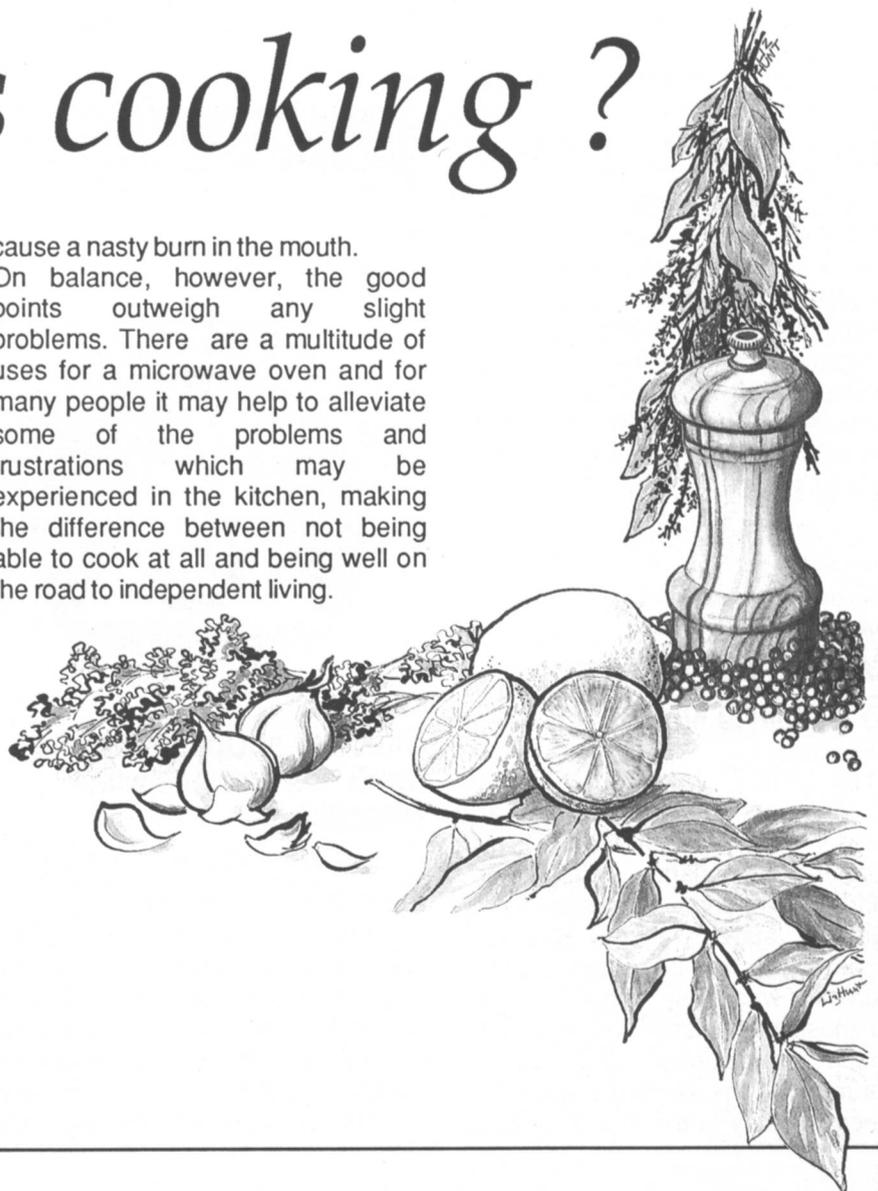
## making life easier

For those people who find difficulty with physical tasks such as filling saucepans from the tap, transferring hot food from one container to another, stirring liquids while heating up on the hob, a microwave oven may make life a great deal easier. Take for example cooking new potatoes; there is no need for a heavy pan full of boiling water. Four small potatoes can simply be placed in a perforated roasting bag with a little sunflower margarine and cooked for three minutes. After standing for microwave oven cannot boil eggs, grill, deep fat fry or cook batter mixtures such as Yorkshire puddings.

It must also be stressed that foods must be left to stand for the recommended amount of time after cooking otherwise the outside of the food may be hot enough to

cause a nasty burn in the mouth.

On balance, however, the good points outweigh any slight problems. There are a multitude of uses for a microwave oven and for many people it may help to alleviate some of the problems and frustrations which may be experienced in the kitchen, making the difference between not being able to cook at all and being well on the road to independent living.



## Access at the Channel Ports

by Gordon Couch and David Barrett.

IF YOU have ever planned to travel abroad, you may have been put off by the possible hassles involved in getting across the Channel, particularly if you are disabled - but not any more. RADAR (The Royal Association for Disability and Rehabilitation) has just published "Access at the Channel Ports"

The guide aims to take the uncertainty out of travelling and enables you to have a more relaxed time. By learning of the possible obstacles, you can plan ahead to select the route that will be most suitable.

It provides detailed information about the ports on both sides of the Channel and the ferry services which travel between them. The guide is essential for anyone who wants to avoid long walks or steps, or to know where there are suitable toilets. Details include access to passenger terminal buildings, location of wheelchair accessible toilets, accessibility of cabins and boarding arrangements. There is also a section dealing with general travel information and advice and a list of useful contact addresses and guidebooks available.

'Access at the Channel Ports' was prepared by Pauline Hephaistos Survey Projects. Many of the entries in the guide have been walked and wheeled over by various survey teams.

**Price £2.50, including postage from RADAR, 25 Mortimer Street, London W1N 8AB.**

## Camping Great Britain

by 'Camping for the Disabled'

THIS LATEST booklet for disabled campers and caravanners lists 200 sites with special facilities in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. Organiser David Griffiths stated recently that the book, which has taken two years to compile, was likely to prove helpful to those with disabilities who have found themselves restricted to returning to the same site each time because they knew that they could

## Reading Matter

cope there, and he hoped that it would also encourage others who perhaps had not realised how possible it was to "have a go".

"The number of sites offering facilities for disabled campers in Britain have increased seven-fold over the past three years, indicating just how caring and helpful many site owners are, once they became aware of the difficulties", he said. It is now possible for the wheelchair user to camp in virtually every county in Britain, although many offer better opportunities than others. particularly Cornwall, East Yorkshire and Mid Wales, whilst Kent and Lancashire fared badly.

The organisation also has lists of accessible campsites in France, West Germany and Switzerland, and gives information to enquirers on adapting and choosing equipment, and travel through Europe.

**Price £1.00, including postage from Camping For The Disabled 20 Burton Close Dawley Telford TF4 2BX Shropshire**

**For further information tel: David Griffiths (074-377-489) or (0952-507653).**



## Directory of Opportunities for School Leavers with Disabilities.

by the Queen Elizabeth Foundation for the Disabled.

IT GIVES information about facilities in the UK available for school leavers with disabilities. Details of facilities for assessment, further education, vocational training, sheltered workshops, day centres, hostels and residential homes are included.

It was originally produced in 1984 and amendment sheets brought out in 1985 and 1986. (The 1987 amendment sheets only will be sent on receipt of a stamped addressed envelope).

**Price £4 including postage and packing, from Queen Elizabeth's Foundation, Leatherhead, Surrey KT22 0BN. An alphabetical index is available at 75p. Payment with order please.**

## Phoenix

AIMED at people who are interested in the arts and also have an awareness of disability, this magazine is produced quarterley. It is based around writing by (or of particular relevance to) people with disabilities. Each issue contains a mix of fiction, poetry, prose, reviews and illustrations. In addition most issues contain some literary criticism, articles on "on disability movement" a TV column, articles on attitudes to disability and readers contributions.

**Available by subscription only: £4.00 for four issues. £1.00 for a sample copy.**

**(Overseas £7.00) from Phoenix, 10 Voad Lane, Great Coates Grimsby, South Humberside DN37 9NH.**

## Housing Rights Guide

by SHAC

THIS SECOND edition of the handbook is an up-to-date guide designed to be used by anyone with a housing problem as well as housing advisors. Each chapter contains clear explanations of the law and looks in detail at the practical problems people encounter, including: finding a home to rent or buy, help with housing costs for all tenants and owners including housing benefits and grants for repair and improvements, protection from eviction, rights to repairs and improvements, coping with mortgages and rent arrears, reducing housing costs, housing rights on the breakdown of a marriage or other relationship, how to tackle race and sex discrimination...

**Price £4.95 including postage and packing. Available from: SHAC, 189a Old Brompton Road, London SW5 0AR.**

*more reading matter on next page*

  
 THE NATIONAL TRUST  
**FACILITIES FOR  
 DISABLED AND  
 VISUALLY  
 HANDICAPPED  
 VISITORS IN 1987**





**Facilities for  
 Disabled and  
 Visually  
 Handicapped  
 Visitors in 1987**

by the National Trust

This free booklet indicates which National Trust properties and land are most likely to be enjoyed by visitors who are disabled. It indicates where wheelchairs are available, where toilets are adapted, and where there are any special facilities to make life easier. It is sponsored by Barclays Bank.

*For a copy please send an addressed adhesive label, stamped with the minimum postage rate to: The National Trust, 36 Queen Anne's Gate, London SW1H 9AS.*

**RADAR Publications  
 List**

DETAILS of all RADAR'S books are listed in sections and the whole makes a very useful reference. Prices quoted in the list include postage and packing to make it easier to work out the costs of orders. An order form is attached to the back.

*Available from RADAR, 25 Mortimer Street, London W1N 8AB.*

## REVIEW

### THE ADOLESCENT YEARS

By John Buckler MA, DM, FRCP, DCH

THE AUTHOR is a paediatrician in Leeds and has been Chairman of the Shaftesbury Society York House Local Committee since it was opened.

The book is directed primarily to parents and to all those who have a part to play in creating the environment in which boys and girls approach and negotiate the critical years from 10 to 20 when physical, hormonal and emotional changes are to a greater or lesser extent cause of worry, stress or confusion to child and parents.

The anatomical and physiological changes which occur with growth are very variable and the significance of these variations is discussed. Many parents and others who care for children professionally are apt to think that their own adolescence provided them with adequate knowledge, but this is far from the truth as the author himself confesses in relation to his own family.

Anxiety over stature, weight,

puberty changes, diet habits, sleep needs and ability at sport are subjects covered.

Though not written specifically to be read by adolescents the book is in fact a sensible and suitable source of information to which many a parent might be glad to refer and enquiring son or daughter. Facts are presented with clarity and line drawings are excellent.

Much of the content will be of particular interest to handicapped young people and their parents and a section deals specifically with such problems. I would strongly recommend this book to all parents of young children to prepare them for the sometimes awkward years ahead.

Dr Buckler has spent many years in studying in detail the development of groups of children in normal and special schools and this volume is guidance on the effect of religious upbringing and spiritual factors. Spiritual, emotional and cultural experiences do in fact have physical reactions.

**D.F. Ellison Nash OBE FRCS.**

Price £8.00 available from  
 Castlemead Publications, Ware,  
 Herts SG12 9PY.

### WHITEFIELD CENTRE Special Needs Library & Information Service

THE LIBRARY is of special interest to people involved with children who have special educational needs.

Two full-time staff are available to answer personal callers or telephone enquiries. They can point you in the right direction if you are unsure of the exact books or materials you are looking for.

The subjects include all areas of handicap from psychology and sociology to curriculum and management. Literature is also available on the use of micro-technology in special education.

Any publication not in stock can be obtained. The library is open 9am - 6 pm Monday to Friday and during school holidays. The library subscribes to about 100 relevant periodicals and several American

journals usually difficult to get hold of in other libraries.

"For parents and health service professionals, we keep an expanding range of information files on a wide variety of syndromes and societies for the handicapped. For those involved in training others, we are also developing a useful collection of videos such as the DES presentation *Children with Special Educational Needs*, the ILEA video *Working with Young Bilingual Children* and several of our own productions, eg *Organising the Microcomputer*", writes the Librarian, Barbara Phelan in the latest newsletter.

"So if you feel we can help you, then give us a ring! Membership costs £1 and you can take out 4 books at a time.. and we do provide a postal service..."

The Whitefield Centre, Macdonald Road, Walthamstow, London E17 4AZ. Tel: 01 531 3426

# Daily Living

## CARCHAIR

*Top right:* NINA BUGDEN of Southampton using her Carchair which enables her to get out and about on her own, and to and from work. The chair, costing more than £2,000, was bought for Nina by the Tiberius Sporting Club and the Royal South Hampshire Hospital Club. Southampton ASBAH recommended her for the chair and it was presented by the Mayor of Southampton.

The Carchair was fitted into Nina's Ford Escort just over a year ago. She has found it very satisfactory, if a little heavy - heavier than a normal chair that she would choose.

The chair system enables a disabled person to travel by car, either as a passenger or a driver, without transferring from the wheelchair into the car seat. The wheelchair is simply locked into the system and is hoisted up and swung round into the car to act as a driver or passenger seat, locking automatically into position. At the end of the journey the procedure is reversed.

The Carchair can be an attendant pushchair, an electrically powered chair or a self-propelled chair.

*Bottom right:* This Carchair is fitted into a Nissan Prairie run by Leicestershire Social Services. It enables them to provide an economic transport for people in wheelchairs. When not in use for this kind of transport, the Nissan helps out with Meals on Wheels.

For more details contact Car Chair Ltd., Car Chair House, Station Road Industrial Estate, Hailsham, Sussex BN27 2ES. Tel: 0323 840283

## ROCKER LIGHT SWITCH

LEGRAND ELECTRIC LTD produce a light switch which makes things easier for anyone who has difficulty turning lights on and



Two views of the Carchair (see first item on this page)

off. The difference is that the 'rocker' (switch) is much larger than on a standard light switch so enabling you to turn lights on/off with fist, head or feet!!!

The switches are sold in packs of 10 at a cost of £1.54 per rocker plate.

All enquiries to: Mrs Christine Rich, 18/20 South Shields Road, Dunstable, Bedfordshire. Tel: 0582 609261.

## REFLECTIVE TYRES

AT NIGHT, or when bad weather brings poor visibility, the road becomes a dangerous place for wheelchair users who are not always easily seen by motorists.

To help combat this hazard, special reflective tyres supplied by Gerald Simonds Wheelchairs Stoke Mandeville, can now be fitted to wheelchairs making road travel much safer.

These tyres, which can be fitted to all wheelchairs with 24 inch wheels, have highly reflective silver strips in their side walls. This allows wheelchairs to be more easily seen in vehicle headlights.

For details contact Gerald Simonds Wheelchairs Stoke Mandeville, 9 March Place, Gatehouse Way, Aylesbury, Bucks HP19 3UG. Tel: 0296 36557.

## MATTRESS PROTECTION

DRY MATTRESS is for the protection of mattresses from all types and causes of soiling and staining. The product is fully washable, and its polymer coating is unaffected by normal detergents.

For full information pack, samples and price contact: W.M Supplies (UK) Ltd., Medical Division, Park Mill, Bleasdale St., Royton, Oldham OL2 6PZ. Tel: 061 624 5644.

'People should see this play - as many people as possible'

# Stronger than Superman

by Roger Rushton, Administrator,  
*The Three T's T. I. E. Company*



*The Three T's performing Stronger than Superman*

*photos by Tom Hendrie*

ONE GREY, rainy afternoon in Barrow-in-Furness, almost 100 Fourth year junior school children were crammed into their dining hall watching as three strange teachers hurtled around in wheelchairs, pretending to be children of about their own age.

This was the twelfth and last schools' performance by 'The Three T's' (South Cumbria's Teachers' Theatre Team) of Roy Kiff's hugely enjoyable play about physical handicap, *'Stronger Than Superman'*.

The play was written about seven years ago with the co-operation of the South London branch of ASBAH. It is perhaps an ironic commentary on the need to raise public awareness of the needs of handicapped people, that such a funny and informative play should have been produced only twice since the 1981 original London production: recently by students of the Middlesex Polytechnic, and now by a Theatre in Education company in an out-of-the way corner of Cumbria!

'Where do you get calipers that join at the waist, which fit an able-bodied teacher-actor of fourteen stone?' 'Where can you borrow three wheelchairs for a few weeks, without leaving the usual occupants stranded?' 'What is a rollator, anyway?' 'How do you cope with those bags which some people have for their urine?' 'What, exactly, is spina bifida?'

These kinds of question, so pressing once we had decided to produce *'Stronger Than Superman'*,

immediately revealed to us the extent of our own ignorance about handicap, and underlined the need for such a play. We used to think that Theatre in Education meant teaching children through the medium of drama, but this time we had to recognise that the education process needed to start with ourselves. Fortunately we soon discovered that people involved with handicap are wonderfully willing to give practical help and advice.

In the ten years since 'The Three T's' was started by a group of Cumbrian teachers acutely aware of the lack of experience of the theatre available to school children in the South of the county, we have produced plays on pollution,



advertising, the media, local history, the 1st World War and the generation gap, as well as participation programmes for infants.

The criteria we have used in choosing material to perform have always been: 'Do we like it?' 'Will the kids enjoy it?' 'Will it work within the constraints of having to tour to twelve schools in six days, performing in anything from a corridor to a sports hall?' And, last but not least, 'Has it got anything educationally useful to say?'

With Roy Kiff's play, the answer to all these was an immediate and emphatic 'Yes!'. Here was a play which was hilariously funny, yet also very moving; which had as its central character a young boy, Chris, with whom children could readily identify, and through whose experiences they could discover, to some extent at least, what being 'handicapped' really meant; which also had a lively able-bodied girl character in Chris's sister, who played with him, fought with him, and could join with him in out-witting the villainous 'leg people', who tried to make his life so difficult.

The most frequent comment, however, from people who knew what handicap was really about, was, 'People should see this play. As many people as possible!'

'The Three T's' would like to thank ASBAH most sincerely for sponsoring *'Stronger Than Superman'* by paying the royalties on the schools performances. Also, grateful thanks to Sandra Wheatley, ASBAH's fieldworker in our area, for her time and advice.

LISA LEESON has written this account of her experience of having a bladder operation. She hopes that it will be of help to those who may be contemplating this operation and yet do not know anybody who has had it done. She, herself, was in that position last year. Her operation involved making a new bladder from a section of the bowel.

# 'How bladder operation changed my life'

*... in more ways than expected*

**I**HAVE spina bifida, and some of the associated problems. I had self-catheterised since I was 11 and I am now 21. I was reasonably happy with that situation; it was better than some of the other options.

For a year before the operation I had symptoms of a urinary infection, but medication failed to bring about an improvement. My bladder became unstable, holding the urine and not letting it out which necessitated visits to hospital, or the opposite, letting urine out with the associated problems of dribbling, flooding, and pain always.

On referral to the consultant and after tests under anaesthetic, I was told that I had only one option — to have my bladder removed and replaced with one made from a section of my bowel. After much deliberation I really had no option but to put my trust in consultants. By then I was weary of the pain, wetness and embarrassment and my bladder was now bleeding all the time. It was useless to me and I looked forward to returning to relative 'normalness.'

One good thing had already come out of my stay in hospital for tests; a young man also in there for tests, chatted to me to cheer me up, and within four weeks we were engaged to be married. I entered hospital for the operation with expectations for the future, my wedding dress already purchased and waiting until I was well enough to wear it. The thought of my future wedding helped me through the unpleasant times.

The preparation for the operation

• Lisa and husband Nicholas on their wedding day



involved eating no food for four days, suppositories, an enema etc. The bowel must be completely clean. I could drink only water. There were dreams of food! And one effect of having no food meant that wind travelled all around my body; it was quite painful. After the operation things had to improve!

I awoke with a drip to my arm, a wound-drain, a temporary bag to my bladder and a tube up my nose leading down to my stomach. My wound had been closed with clips. The process of resuming eating was gradual, water at first then a light diet until I was able to eat *normal* food (although you won't see much of that in hospital!!)

This gradual process is to allow the bowel to heal and resume working. Each day I had one or other of the tubes removed until I was 'portable' enough to get out of bed. The removal of my wound-drain was not too bad; then it was time for the removal of the bladder-drain, a catheter through my side into the bladder. That one hurt when it was removed and made me feel quite faint and weak. Later that day I did faint which is not really surprising when you remember I had not eaten for over a week and had lost fifteen pounds in weight! I

hoped my wedding dress would still fit me.

The staple-like clips were next to be removed from the wound, just a bit uncomfortable, not as bad as I expected. The best thing was that although of course, I had some discomfort, from the moment I awoke from the anaesthetic I was aware that I was no longer in pain. And the operation had worked! It takes a little while to get a 'true reading' of this whilst you still have catheters etc, but gradually my new bladder held more and more. A few bladder wash-outs were necessary.

My stay in hospital lasted three weeks and I was told my recovery was quick; it sometimes takes longer. All the attention and concern I received in Hospital was wonderful. My mum and dad travelled from our home in Kent every day to visit me, and my fiancé (now my husband) came from Bedford. If I had not had these people, that I love, caring for me, I don't know how I would have made it through the ordeal.

That was seven months ago and I am pleased with the result. I still have to

*continued* 

FIRST THE tricycle, then the bicycle were really little more than sources of frustration for young Glenn Sloane. He has hydrocephalus. For him the four wheels of a go-kart have turned out to be a better bet than three of a tricycle or the two plus stabilisers of a bicycle. And in learning this lesson his mother, Carol, has discovered a simple but important truth . . .

## 'Make sure your child can cope with the toys you buy'

**J**UST before Christmas we took Glenn and his twin sister, Katie, to a large department store. Glenn sat in the go-kart for a long time, getting the feel of it.

You could see he was working it all out. The assistants were very good allowing him time to do it. After some time with me pushing Glenn's legs up and down, one at a time, moving the go-kart, and chanting 'one-two, one-two', he moved the go-kart on his own.

*Continued from P16*

Characterise myself as my bladder has no feeling, but I do that every three hours and it keeps me dry during the day. I operate my bladder according to the clock, and one effect of this means that I am wet at night. This is a nuisance and I am having to set an alarm clock and then get up to empty my bladder. Another nuisance is that for a while after the operation the bladder produces mucus because it is bowel and its lining. I am told this ceases after a while but can go on for a year or so.

I am now free from pain and discomfort, and eight weeks after the operation I married.

A couple of people a week are now having this operation at the hospital where I had my operation, and I have met and made friends with some of them. Of course everybody's experiences are different but I hope this account will allay some fears.

**LISA LEESON**



Glenn, go-kart and twin-sister Katie, who does not have hydrocephalus.

His face was a picture. I was near to tears for him. And the assistants must have thought I was a little crazy until I explained all the bike problems.

While all this was going on Katie was off finding all the dolls prams and to her delight nobody stopped her. Needless to say Father Christmas was given his orders — one twin pram for Katie, one go-kart for Glenn.

Now Glenn has got the hang of his go-kart. In fact I have had to put a strap on the back to slow him down.

The pedals on his old tricycle — he outgrew it before he could use it — were at the wrong angle. The same was true of the two-wheeler where the pedals were under him. The go-kart has four wheels, so he feels more stable, and the seat has a back to it. Glenn pushes his bottom against the back of the seat which helps strengthen the push of his legs.

When Glenn feels he wants to have another go at the bicycle, he can, but until then he can be just like all normal 4½ year-olds when out riding his go-kart and he loves it.

Glenn's physiotherapist has seen Glenn in his go-kart and she says it's just perfect for his legs and of course his confidence. We really do feel we have backed a winner this time.

My advice to other mothers who have a hydrocephalic child who has problems of muscle control is don't do as we did and buy toys unless you feel he or she can cope with it. Explain, if need be, to the shop assistant that your child needs a little time to get the feel of the toy and maybe try it around the shop. Any good toy shop will understand and if they don't, try somewhere else.

**CAROL SLOANE**

Why don't you write in to LINK?  
Your support is needed  
— see page 3.

## Letters

### Believe me — it's a good life

I HAVE just been watching your programme on television about spina bifida (the 21st Birthday Appeal). This brought memories flooding back as I have spina bifida.

At one time I was very much like the children you featured. I was born in Yorkshire in 1937 which makes me 50. I have had lots of operations and was, in my younger days, incontinent.

I have had a good life and I worked from the age of 17 until I was 42 and only retired when I had to. I am also married. I have never had any help from any organisation, nor did my parents. I did go to special school for handicapped children.

I would like to help other spina bifida children and adults by telling them that they can live to a ripe old age, as I will. It always used to worry me that doctors told my parents that I would not live long. This was a most cruel thing since I grew up wondering if I would reach my next birthday.

**MRS KITTY OVENDEN**  
Folkestone  
Kent

### Holiday chalet is for sale

THE LEICESTER association chalet at Cenarth, West Wales is now for sale and I write in case any local associations may be interested in the purchase.

It is a luxury-styled Swiss Chalet bungalow which has been adapted for use by disabled people—set in 16 acres of picturesque woodland. The chalet has its own private car parking space. The site has a launderette, shop, entertainments centre and heated swimming pool.

The chalet has 2 bedrooms, lounge, kitchen, shower and toilet and dining room. It is carpeted and fully furnished to a high standard.

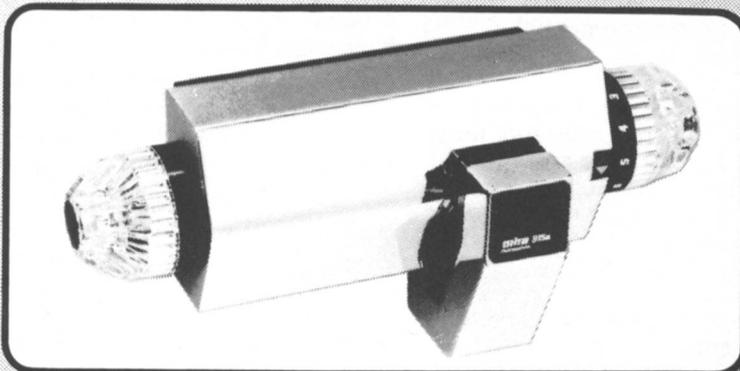
The price is £11,500 — any interested association should contact me to arrange viewing.

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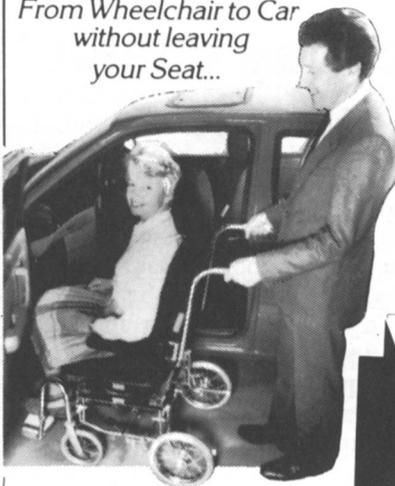


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## Let your Disabled Child ride a PONY.

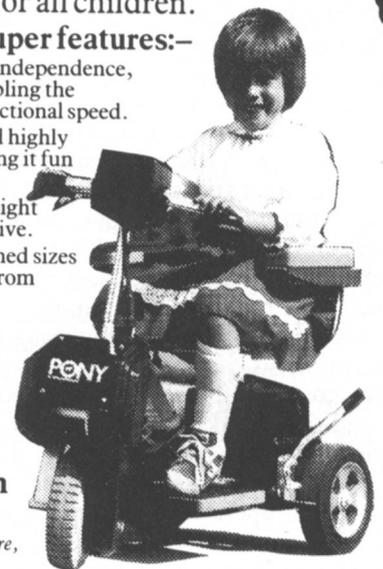
Unique, portable 3 wheeler (can be stowed in the boot of a car). Designed for the disabled child, but is fun for all children.

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LB7/7

•QUEEN ELIZABETH'S Training College is starting a new training course on travel and tourism.

Ten students will be accepted for one course each year, lasting 40 weeks. On completion, students will have a good background knowledge of basic administration and accounting procedures applicable to the industry, and understand and practise the social skills of dealing with people and generally satisfying the needs of consumers in a variety of practical situations. They will also develop the ability to communicate well. Students will have the opportunity of taking COTAC I and COTICC and Visitor Attractions exams

(COTAC = Certificate of Travel Agency Competence. COTICC = Certificate of Tourist Information Centre Competence).

The course is backed by ABTA (The Association of British Travel Agents)

The Manpower Services Commission will pay all tuition and residential costs as well as providing a training allowance and travel warrants to allow trainees to visit home every two weeks.

*For further information contact: The Principal, Queen Elizabeth's Training College, Leatherhead Court, Leatherhead, Surrey KT22 0BN.*

• THE ORGANISERS of NAIDEX have offered to finance annual REMAP prizes. Panels will be invited to submit a description of a recent project which designed and built, and which has been successfully used by someone who is disabled.

It is likely that there will be one main award of £100-£200 and several smaller prizes. The awards will be made at a NAIDEX exhibition.

## Newslines NEWSLINES Newslines



The Prime Minister handing over the keys of a Ford Escort to disabled driver Neil MacDonald to mark the 75,000th car provided by Motability.

"In providing this service to disabled people, Motability characterises the finest charitable instincts of the British people and the very best in co-operation between Government and the private sector" said Margaret Thatcher.

Ford was one of four manufacturers invited to the presentation as original suppliers at the start of the scheme in 1978. Also represented were ARG, Peugeot-Talbot and Vauxhall.

•THE ESTHER GARTNER FUND has been set up to help people with disabilities to participate more fully in drama. Esther Gartner was a disabled actress with PATH, a company of able-bodied - and disabled performers.

She died in March 1984. The fund commemorates her great contribution to PATH. The Trustees envisage grants to help with drama lessons/courses, expenses incurred during production, drama school audition fees and expenses. Applications for grants of up to £50 are invited - to £200 in exceptional cases.

*Apply to The Fund at 38a Duncan Terrace, London NW8*

•WELCARE is a project run by the Sheffield Subud Centre, which provides a free garden adaptation service for people with disabilities. It will provide a team of design workers, botanists, bricklayers etc. to reconstruct the garden with the individual's needs in mind. All design and labour is free. You are expected to cover the cost of materials. Subud has also set up a fund which is used, on a pound for pound basis, to assist the purchase of materials for people with financial difficulties.

*Contact the Sheffield Subud Centre, Swarcliffe Road, Darnall, Sheffield S9 3FA*

•TWO new lifts are now in operation at the Natural History Museum, London. Each can accommodate 32 people and will go to the public galleries and museum departments on the first, second and third floors. The new lift block also incorporates a new staircase and ramps.

• DIAL UK (The National Association of Disability Information and Advice Lines) now has 82 local information and advice centres in the UK. "The National Association is a young, fast-growing organisation and we believe there is no other national voluntary organisation which specialises in information and advice for the disabled, their carers and the caring professionals and which covers every disability or impairment currently known to us. We can only achieve this by working closely with, and learning from, other organisations, both statutory and voluntary, and by sharing our specialist knowledge of information and advice" said the Director Christine Brown at a presentation of DIAL's work in London in June.

•RADAR is investigating the extent to which disabled people may have difficulty in buying goods. Because the area is so wide it is concentrating on hire purchase and other credit offered by stores and not on mortgages or car purchase. RADAR would like to hear from people who have had a credit application rejected or who have only been able to obtain credit with difficulty.

*Contact John Stanford, RADAR, 25 Mortimer Street, London WIN 8AB.*

**A**SBAH's 21st birthday year has been marked by a number of notable fund raising events. (Two of them the Chatathon and the Ripon Race Day - are described in more detail on these two pages)

## APPEALS NEWS

### WINE TASTING

On Saturday April 4, a wine tasting was arranged by Douglas Endersby, a member of ASBAH's Executive Committee, at Kidbrooke School, Blackheath. This was extremely successful and enjoyable. Nearly £500 was raised.

### BBC APPEAL

ASBAH was the subject of the appeal on the BBC programme 'Lifeline' on May 17. The facilities of the BBC - producer, camera crews, presenter and filming time - were all supplied entirely free of charge and we are indeed grateful to the Corporation, and especially to Sarah Greene who delivered the appeal with the help of a brilliant performance by four year old Becky Ellison of Risely, Beds, and her parents. Our thanks go also to the producer, Mandy Temple, who made the appeal a really memorable one. The sum raised is not yet known but at the time of writing it is over £20,000.

### FOOTBALL

A team of insurance brokers and a team of insurance underwriters took to the football field in April, and a large number of companies and individuals in the insurance industry yielded to invitations to sponsor the match, or individual players. As a result about £4,500 was raised for ASBAH. We should add that the minimum age of the players was 37!

### BOXING NIGHT

In January the London Scottish Rugby Football Club held a Boxing Night at the Royal Lancaster Hotel, London, which raised over £3,000 for us.

### SHOPS

The build up of ASBAH charity shops continues and we now have four, at Southsea, at Fareham, at Risca (S.Wales) and a book boutique in Plummers Department store at Southampton. We believe that the latter is the first charity venture of its kind. Unfortunately, we have had to give up our spacious premises at Manchester Street, Southampton, due to the redevelopment of the area

### FUN BIKE DAY AND BEAUJOLAIS RALLY

Later this year Richard Poole from ASBAH Appeals department will again be directing his talents and experience to a third fun Bike Day, this time at Kennett, Newmarket on September 5 and 6, and to the Beaujolais Challenge in November which we hope will attract the support of many LINK readers by way of sponsorship. (Forms were included in the last two LINKs. If you would like another please let the Appeals Department know.

## 21st BIRTHDAY FOOTBALL MATCH

Arrangements for the anniversary football match are progressing, although we have been subject to some enforced changes

For many weeks we were assured that we could have the use of the Bradford City ground, only to be told, very late in the day, that this would not be available since it had to be resown. We were then offered the Leeds United ground, but on another date.

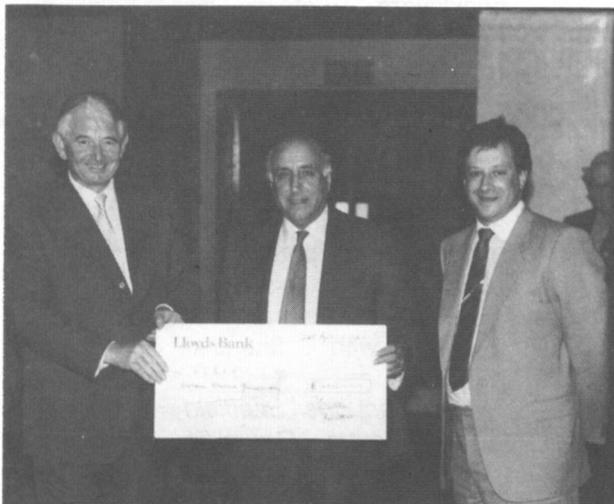
To complicate matters further, it has been suggested that it would be more of a crowd puller if the event were a 'double header' - the match between the England World Cup team and the 1967 Scottish being limited to 30 minutes each way, in deference to advancing years. This would be followed by a friendly between Leeds United and a leading Scottish club. This introduces further thoughts as to the date, in view of the early opening of the Scottish football season.

By the time this LINK is published all these matters will have been resolved and a memorable day's football will hopefully be in prospect.

## Friends from the world of Racing Pigeons

At the end of April, our Chairman Robin Mackenzie was presented with a cheque for £16,000 by the Chairman of the Homing World Show of the Year. This represents money raised at the Pigeon Racing Show at Blackpool in January. It is our biggest single donation from any source and brings to about £105,000 the money given to ASBAH over the years by our very generous friends in the world of racing pigeons.

The photo left shows the Chairman receiving the cheque from Mr Maserella and his son.



# A DAY AT THE RACES

THE Ripon Executive once again gave its support to ASBAH by putting on a Race day in the heart of North Yorkshire to help raise funds for us.

Many trainers, both National Hunt and Flat, along with racehorse owners, generously sponsored and supported the day and it proved to be a pretty competitive programme.

We held a raffle there which was slightly



Sam Kirby, from ASBAH Public Relations with Visionhire area manager (second left), other Visionhire staff from York and the winner of the main raffle prize.

*Sarah Pracey, one of ASBAH's two Public Relations Officers, went along to THE CHATATHON for the first time this year. Her first impressions shed a fresh light on this popular annual event...*

## RABBIT, RABBIT, RABBIT.....

THE CHATATHON must surely be one of the most unusual competitions around. For what other reason would perfectly sane men and women want to spend a whole day talking to people they've never met on subjects as fascinating as The Channel Tunnel or as intellectual as Soap Operas?

Well, for some reason, there were fifty of them anxious to do just that, and to talk their waythrough May 9 at the Glaziers Hall.

The Chatathon has been going on for six years now, helped along this year, as last, by generous sponsorship from Taylor's Port. Part of the finals went out live on LBC Radio, who were largely responsible for bringing in all these non-stop word crushers in the first place. And yet a handful of them were contestants from

dampened with regard to the takings, by the rain, but it still made £500.

Altogether a sum of about £5,000 was expected for ASBAH from the Ripon organisers from the proceeds of entry money to the five races.

Visionhire at York once again generously supplied the main raffle prize - a year's free rental on a video. Our thanks go also to our other prize givers -

Timeform, Coral Racing Ltd., Bass North Ltd., Vaux Breweries Ltd, Penfold Ltd, and Warmastyle Racing for Britain.

Quite a few young people from Five Oaks went along to watch the races, and braved the wet, cold weather.

Finally, a big thank you to Yorkshire Television for sponsoring one of the races and to Richard Whiteley for presiding over the draw



previous years, verbose (or mad) enough to come back for more.

The hall was half full of people locked in conversation for a total of ten hours. There was some respite for coffee, and the chance to enjoy marvellous food, laid on by Joan Chapman of ASBAH's Appeals Department, complimented by a generous supply of Taylor's Port.

The conversation was both interesting and witty, and the contestants did seem to be enjoying themselves. So too did the judges who were awarding marks for things such as content, relevance, wit, etc. etc. At the end of the first day the eight people with the highest score were invited to return the next day for more talking.

In the end the title was awarded to **Michael Gardner**, a Fisheries Consultant from Cobham in Surrey. Michael was also the 1986 runner up.

Apart from the obvious publicity such an event as this attracts, ASBAH benefits by £100 sponsorship from each contestant. And we all got chronic ear-ache by the end of the day as well!

**It was with deep shock and sadness that ASBAH learned of the sudden death of the winner, Michael Gardner, about a month after the event**



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Adverts for the next LINK (July/Aug) should be in by  
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*From Bryn Meirion Guest House,  
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*My wife and I are establishing a guest house/centre for the disabled. For some years we both worked at a residential school for the physically handicapped (Hebden Green, Winsford, Cheshire), my wife as a teacher and myself as an engineer developing various aids.*

*The main theme is to develop Bryn Meirion into a centre where the disabled and their families may enjoy a holiday in beautiful surroundings along with recreational facilities - gardening, pool, adventure playground, horse riding...*

*The council have given us planning permission to extend the property...Bryn Meirion is at the moment a 5 bedroomed guest house situated on a superb one acre coastal site with views across to Llandudno and the Snowdonia mountain range. The accommodation comprises 3 bedrooms, (1 with en suite), lounge, dining room, shower/toilet, bathrom/toilet - all on the ground floor, and two large family rooms upstairs. There are ramps to entrance and gardens and all shops and bowling green are approximately 500 yards away.*

*Chris and Tim Holland*

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