



Link

Association for Spina Bifida and Hydrocephalus/ASBAH

January/February 1988

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Editor's Note

KAREN'S COLUMN

INSTEAD OF writing myself this time I thought this letter and call for your support from Kent ASBAH member, Karen Gold, made a number of good points and was worth airing. Karen moved in May to a purpose-built flat of her own in Westerham, Kent which she thinks is great...

"Having lived with my parents for so long (I'm 26) it took quite a while to get used to being independent although it was something I always wanted. My boyfriend, Trevor, lives with me now and there's not much we can't do as we're lucky to also have a car. I find it very tiring, but I wouldn't change anything. We also have three nutty cats who cause us a lot of hassle, but we wouldn't be without them.

"The other thing I would like to mention is this - although we like it here very much the access to most places is pretty useless. I was so "annoyed" by this that I wrote to Radio Kent (I know them quite well), the Parish Council and the Westerham County Border News. To cut a long story short we were interviewed on Radio Kent. We also had a letter from the Parish Council to say they appreciate our problems and my letter was copied and passed to the Borough Council, District Council and Trading Association, so I was quite pleased. It is hoped that dropped kerbs are going to be organised and any new buildings considered must bear the disabled in mind.

"So my plea to all LINK readers is if you're fed up with lack of access to places such as the doctors, the bank, building society, shops in general etc. don't moan about it. Do something about it - NOW! - not tomorrow. I would like at least one reader in each area to write a letter and make it a national campaign. The only way we're going to educate people is by talking about our problems and showing the difficulties...."

A VERY HAPPY NEW YEAR TO ALL READERS

Sue Gearing, Editor

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FRONT COVER:

Setting off for a day's caving - a group of adventurous young people on one of Five Oaks' Outdoor Pursuits courses last year. From the front going clockwise: Geoffrey Macintosh, Robert Hawes, Hazel England, Lesley Powell, Ben Gurney, Philip Gatley (in wheelchair), Simon Shimbles, Adele Gudgin, Claudia Booth and Erika Shilling, with Sharon Veitch in the centre.

Photo: Bradford Telegraph and Argus.

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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 February 18. Send to the Editor, Sue Gearing, at National Office

Letters

What has been happening to Michael Steele since the LINK article 'My Lifeline'?.....

No pipe dream after all

Further to my contribution to the Sept/Oct LINK in which it was mentioned that I hoped to get a colour printer for my computer, I am writing to let you know all that has been happening to me.

Following a visit from an ASBAH fieldworker, it was suggested that I should apply to the Professor Zachary Fund for a grant after first making out a list of all the equipment I would like to get for my computer. It was also suggested that I should contact local organisations...

I, therefore, started an appeal, writing to a number of local organisations as well as to 'The Prince's Trust' and in due course to a local charitable trust.

My reason for wanting the equipment was to produce what I hope will prove to be professional-looking printing and graphics... it is my aim to put my computer to work for me. My objectives are to produce greetings cards, pamphlets and posters and to devise programs to help children with learning difficulties. (I've already had some success in this).

In time I received grants from both the Professor Zachary Fund and the local Spina Bifida Association. I also received some individual donations and one from the Inner Wheel. These enabled me to obtain the colour printer as well as three other items from my list. I then received a further donation from the Inner Wheel as a result of one of their members holding a coffee morning.. The local Lions Club decided to purchase two further items for me. At this point I had received far more than I could ever have imagined - £700 plus the Lions contribution. But that was only the beginning.!

Our local evening paper (through the local association) saw LINK and rang up to ask if they could run an article..... as a result I have been inundated with mail from their readers, sending me numerous gifts of money and even software .. and also offers of practical help and advice. ..

I have been able to get every piece of equipment I originally put on my list together with other pieces I had hoped one day to have but never in my wildest dreams really expected. I then had a reporter down from London from THE INDEPENDENT, and expect soon to see her report on me. That again is as a result of LINK.

I have also just heard that I have been given a grant to purchase an Amstrad computer to extend any programs for children with learning difficulties to other computers as well as the BBC. I have also had a couple of requests for copies of my TABLES program and have even received enquiries to do printing work for various people. It, therefore, looks as though my ultimate aim of setting up my own home-based business may not be such a pipe dream after all.

I am extremely grateful to both LINK and ASBAH for setting the wheels in motion in the first instance.

**Michael Steele
Christchurch, Hants**

Aged 76 and A2!

I was born on December 4 suffering from spina bifida with a massive meningocele in the centre of my back. Apparently the doctor said "Don't bother with the baby. It will only die", but my mother decided that she would endeavour to find someone who would do something. She took me to all the major hospitals in London and then tried all the various consultants... and finally got to Sir Charles Waterhouse who said "Yes, I will try". He phoned Philip Gibbs of Charing Cross Hospital. They put up a cot in the men's ward and operated. I recovered pretty well but I did not walk until I was five and then with calipers on both legs. At the age of ten they performed a successful tibial transplant on my right leg.

In 1940 I volunteered for the Army and was accepted at a medical category of A2. I served in the R.A. in England...and then went abroad to Ceylon and transferred to field Security Service serving in India and Burma - returning to England in 1945

I am still reasonably active, considering I am 76.

**W.A. Astley-Cooper,
Weymouth, Dorset**

Helpful LINK

I felt I just had to write to tell you how helpful LINK has been to us. Our daughter, Laura, is four years old and suffers from spina bifida. She is lucky enough to be able to walk quite well but has a valve and is also incontinent.

By co-incidence every time we have had to face a new problem a relative article has been featured in LINK. The first occasion was when self catheterisation was mentioned by the consultant. The whole idea sounded awful as we didn't really understand it. We wondered how Laura would be able to cope, but after reading your article we felt a lot happier.

Then there was another article about spina bifida and education. It was very encouraging for us to know that other parents had come across similar problems to us in our endeavours to have Laura integrated into a mainstream school. We feel that Laura should have the opportunity to attend an able-bodied school as long as provisions are made for her physical handicaps.

Most recently it has been suggested to us that an operation to enlarge Laura's bladder may be of help. The sheer idea horrified us at first - such a big operation for a little girl. But after reading of Lisa Leeson's account of a similar operation we feel we understand more about it and appreciate the benefits for Laura.

I would finally like to thank LINK and all its contributors and look forward to further helpful articles in the future.

**Mr and Mrs S Marsden,
Walton-Le-Dale, Preston**

DISABILITY RADIO -

A GOOD IDEA OR JUST A GLORIFIED SHELTERED WORKSHOP?

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permission of
CONTACT,
the magazine of
RADAR.
Andrea Fricker
is Editor.*

A recent report by a national disability organisation has again raised the subject of participation of disabled people in the broadcast media. It is a topic that is sure to be controversial and create heated discussion.

Andrea Fricker Reports

The Talking Newspaper Association has, in response to the Government's Green Paper on the future of radio, put forward the view that there should be a radio station devoted entirely to disabled people. The station would be controlled and run by a committee drawn from all disability organisations in the country, plus Government and legal representatives.

The reasons behind such a proposal on the outset appear reasonable. A station devoted totally to disabled people would mean that their particular needs in terms of information and advice could be met effectively. Obviously if such a station is to be run and controlled by the disability sector then it has implications for the employment of people with disabilities.

The Talking Newspaper Association also believes that one station would solve the practical problem that many people face in operating a radio. There would no longer be a need to search the dial for the programme you wanted, nor would you have to be aware of all the schedule details of the various specialist programmes. The radio could simply be pre-set.

Broader aims

These are good points, but surely the solution they have come up with is approaching the problem in a very short term way. Shouldn't we be looking at the broader aims of increasing disability coverage in the broadcast media as a whole?

Over the years disability groups have fought long and hard to get their messages across to the public only to be prevented by the negative responses of journalists and editors. Disability is seen essentially by those working in the news media as 'soft' news. Coverage of events or lobbies organised by disability groups always depends upon the amount of 'hard' news items that day: e.g. attacks in the Gulf, share prices. 'Soft' news items fill gaps and can easily be dropped if something 'more important' comes up.

It should be our aim to raise the profile of disability issues and to maintain that as any other current affairs topic they deserve to be recognised as 'hard' news. We have got to stress that if the figure of one in four families with a member who is disabled is correct then the subject is not of minority interest but is an important topic which should be covered.

Of course, there will always be specialised programmes, because they have the air time to be able to go into more detail than a news or current affairs programme. However, if we are to increase the public awareness of certain issues they have to be covered in mainstream mediums. Otherwise we will always be preaching to the converted.

A special radio station would make an unnecessary definition between news and entertainment for able-bodied and disabled people.

Opposite effect

One special station would jeopardise the future funding of specialist disability programmes on the other stations and would encourage a tendency to hive off disability issues to that single station. In the long term therefore it would have the opposite effect to what all disability groups should be aiming for and that is increased awareness of disability.

The 'Today Programme' on BBC Radio 4 is listened to by the prime decision makers in this country and is one of the programmes that we should ensure is kept up to date with developments in the disability field. I am sure that the Talking Newspaper Association is not suggesting that we remove our attention from mainstream news and entertainment programmes in order to concentrate upon a single station, but there is always the risk that disability will be 'pigeon holed'.

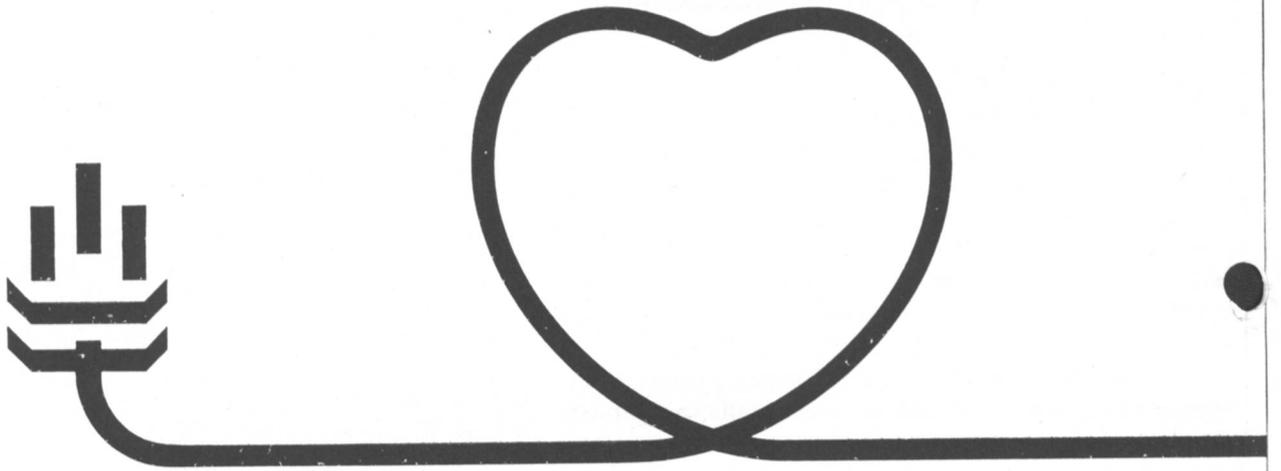
If you also look at the employment implications there are similar problems. Yes, a new station would offer employment and training opportunities for disabled people. But it could also have the effect that if you are disabled and want to get into radio then you may be pushed towards the disability station. Other stations could use it as an excuse not to develop their own initiatives and disabled people may still find it difficult to enter the areas of broadcasting they wish to and compete on equal terms with able-bodied people. They might not want a glorified sheltered workshop.

New ideas and programmes

The Talking Newspaper Association say that most organisations have among their staff people who have a wealth of knowledge and experience that could be used to run such a station. Why not then divert that energy into mainstream radio to produce new ideas and programmes?

One of the main reasons put forward for a separate station was the problem of operating a radio. I am sure that in this high tech age someone can come up with a solution to the problem of 'dial searching'.

A new station is not solving the problem, it is avoiding it. Disabled people will still wish to listen to other stations like anyone else, so do we want to restrict choice?



We'll always put our energy
into helping.

ELECTRICITY
— Energy for Life —



New labelling scheme for batteries



Help is in sight for users of powered wheelchairs who are sometimes let down by the battery.

The Electric Vehicle Association (EVA), with the help of the DHSS, wheelchair manufacturers and the British Association of Wheelchair Distributors, has launched a new scheme in which properly tested batteries are labelled.

The first batteries to be tested and approved are made for hard usage on outdoor and indoor/outdoor chairs where some problems have arisen in the past. To qualify for the label, the battery must survive at least 300 days of hard usage and at the end must still retain 80% of its original capacity.

"Labels will bring you peace of mind. When you see them on new wheelchairs you will know that the manufacturers have decided to fit the best" says EVA. "Please avoid the temptation to buy car batteries. The labels 'maintenance free' and 'heavy duty' seem to be just what you want. But they tell you very little about how a battery will behave on a wheelchair. Indeed, the guarantee on a car battery will be rendered invalid if you use it to power a wheelchair. Something much stronger is needed." Eva claims that its labelled wheelchair batteries, although more costly, will last six times as long as car batteries.. "We think a

year or more of trouble-free service is the least you should expect".

The first two British battery companies to have their batteries tested are CBS Batteries and Oldham Crompton (see below).

"Remember, it will take time for news of the labelling scheme to reach everyone. So don't be frightened to stand your ground until you obtain what you want... We will be pleased to advise in cases of difficulty" says EVA.

Labelling for chargers too

A battery can only perform well if it has the right amount of charge put back into it each time it is connected to the charger. Too much charge can kill a battery as easily as too little. What is needed is a charger which puts back what was taken out plus a controlled amount more - just enough to keep the battery full of pep but not too much or the battery will smell and will need too much water to top it up.

"...one day you may be tempted to buy a cheap trickle charger from a local shop or garage. As with batteries, we ask you not to do this. Car battery chargers will seldom give enough current for the batteries used on outdoor chairs..." added EVA. It is introducing a testing and labelling scheme for chargers so that the time

will soon come when you can buy a labelled charger matched to your labelled battery.

Useful information:

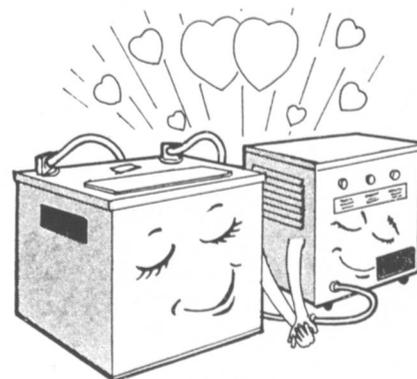
CBS Batteries, Liverpool. Tel: 051 523 9000. Popular sizes in their GKP range are approved.

Oldham Crompton Batteries, Newport. Tel: 0633 277673. Popular sizes in the CXL range are approved.

Two makers of battery chargers exhibited at Naidex 87 under the banner of EVA: **Benning (UK)** and **RD Power**

British Association of Wheelchair Distributors. Secretary - Mr D R Smytheman. Tel: 05645 3843.

EVA, Aberdeen House, Headley Road, Grayshott, Surrey GU26 6LA. Tel: Hindhead (042873) 5536.



Booster Town and Country is a robust, stable scooter able to climb 6" kerbs and tackle difficult terrain. It was developed by Booster Electric Vehicles of Newsome, Huddersfield in response to the need for a 'go anywhere' scooter. It retails at about £1,196. The seat is available in a range of widths at no extra cost and the scooter dismantles easily for carriage by car.

Also available now is a smaller, rear-wheel drive version for disabled children and small adults - the Spirit. For more details contact Booster Electric Vehicles Ltd., Newsome Mills, Hart Street, Newsome, Huddersfield, HD4 6LS. Tel: 0484 666300.

A 'go anywhere' scooter



Local Association
Round-up



Midland

There aren't many couples who can say that their engagement actually received Royal approval, but Simon West and Belinda Thoneywork can!

The photo shows Simon and Belinda (centre) in their wheelchairs talking with the Princess of Wales when she visited Sparkhill, Birmingham recently. Both Simon and Belinda work at Midland Association workshop, Court Enterprises, in Sparkhill, and were amongst the crowds waiting to see the Princess when she visited the area.

Workshop Manager, Godfrey Cheshire asked if perhaps the Princess would have time to congratulate Simon and Belinda. "She even surprised the press with the speed with which she went back to talk to the happy couple and asked for details about their plans" he said.

The workshop members were given pride of place by the local police outside the Barnardo's charity shop which the Princess opened. On leaving the shop the Princess spoke with another member, Peter Cook, whose birthday it was. "Indeed she spoke enthusiastically and with warmth to almost all of our members and staff. It was a memorable occasion in the history of our workshop, now over five years old" said Godfrey. Also in the photo is Faith French on Belinda's right.

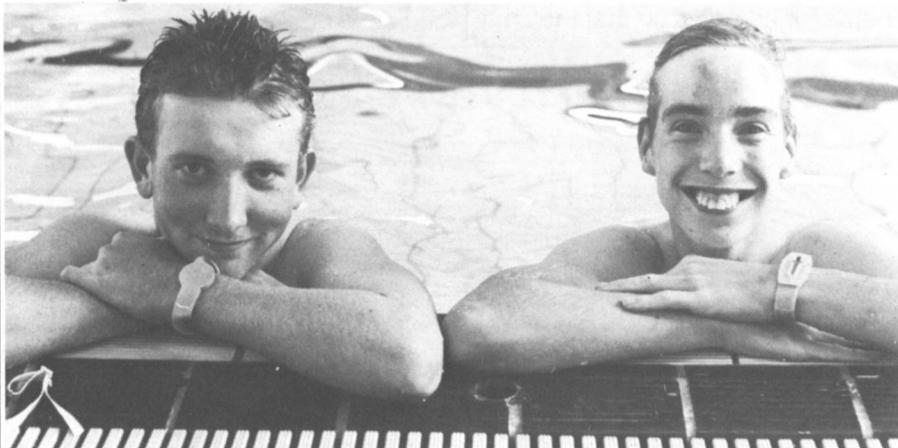
Photo: Birmingham Post and Mail



Worcestershire

Edward Grazier, 13, of Bromsgrove in Worcestershire, and a member of Worcestershire ASBAH, proudly holds up two Gold Medals and a Silver which he won at Edinburgh when swimming for England in a Home Championship Match. His Gold wins were in the 25 metre freestyle, and backstroke, and the Silver for 25 metre breaststroke. Edward does all his training with Stourbridge Swimming Club and at the time of writing is hoping he will qualify to take part in the National Games for the disabled in March.

Photo: Bromsgrove Advertiser



Chesterfield

Two friends making a splash for themselves and raising money for Inkersall Junior and Infant Schools in Staveley, Derbyshire - Chris Haywood (left) and Danny Jones - who completed a half mile sponsored swim for the schools and hoped to raise about £100. Danny, 17, has spina bifida and is a member of Chesterfield ASBAH.

Photo: Derbyshire Times

Looking for a penfriend

Anne Skidmore, age 32, of 34 Figtree Hill, Queensway, Hemel Hempstead, Herts, HP2 5HQ, is looking for a penfriend.

She writes "My favourite pop group is Queen. I have a mum and dad and I have a brother and two sisters.I would like a penfriend.."

Coventry

Denise Cave, 28, who has spina bifida was one of 9 people who learned to fly last year thanks to the International Air Tattoo Flying Scholarships for Disabled People. Denise is a junior medical laboratory scientific officer in the Midlands. When she was in her teens she had to have her right leg amputated, although she has never thought of herself as 'disabled'. She holds down a full time job, drives a car, has walked 20 miles for charity. She has also won a gold medal from swimming for her home city of Coventry.

Each scholarship covers up to 4 hours dual and solo flying in a Piper Cherokee aircraft leading hopefully to the award of a Private Pilot Licence. Also included are all the required ground instruction and examination fees, books, charts and equipment, 42 days accommodation, food and the cost of the licence itself. 132 disabled people applied for the scholarships in 1987.

Applications are now open for the scholarships for this year. Applicants must be between the ages of 17 and 40. Forms have to be returned by January 31, so hurry. For more details contact: John Patterson, the Administrator, International Air Tattoo Flying Scholarships for Disabled People, Building 1108, RAF Fairford, Cirencester GL7 4DL Tel: 0285 713300.

COMPETITION: OUTDOOR ADVENTURE FOR THE DISABLED

Closing Date: Jan 31, 1988
**Win an Activity Weekend at
Fairthorne Manor, an Adventure
centre run by the YMCA in
rural Hampshire.**

**Design a poster or write a song
on the theme of Achievement.**

Send your completed poster (painted, drawn or collage any size) or song on tape (with words) to: **The Director, Adventure Competition, YMCA National Centre, Fairthorne Manor, Curdridge, Southampton SO3 2GH** plus your name/address/tel. no stating whether you are an individual applicant or representing an organisation. The competition is open to any individual disabled young person aged 9-16 able to participate in a weekend activity course. Groups may also enter. Winners may bring helpers with them on the holiday.

For more details tel: Botley (04892) 5228.

A winning smile

Photo right:

The cheque for £6,381 is magnificent but it is really the smile on 12 year old Tammy Bryan's face that says it all. It says thank you to staff at Hope Hospital, Salford, Lancashire, to the Jersey Public Health Committee, and to staff and pupils at her school in Jersey - Bel Royal - and to everyone else who helped her to achieve a very special sponsored walk.

Tammy put her all into the mile's walk in Jersey and completed it in the style of the late PC Olds, wearing a new walking brace (reciprocal gait orthosis). It had been fitted earlier in the year by Dr Peter Bowker at the North West Orthotic Unit at Hope Hospital, Salford, and funded by the Public Health Committee of her home island of Jersey.

When Tammy returned home after the operation she was determined to raise money for a new orthotic unit at Hope Hospital, so that other children could benefit in the way she has.

Tammy's mother, Margaret said: "The walk was Tammy's own idea. The people at the unit have been so helpful to her".

She was accompanied on the walk by 50 of her school friends.

Dr Bowker said: "We currently have 70 or 80 people on the waiting list who need the kind of help we've been able to give Tammy....She has delighted us all with her determination. For a youngster with her disability to have covered such a distance is fantastic"



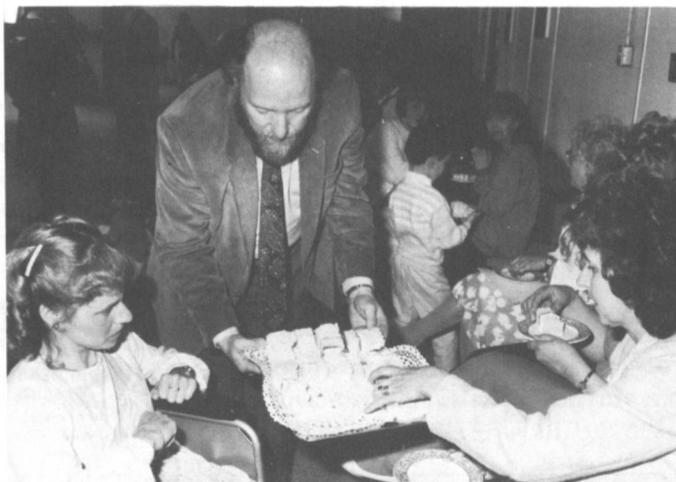
Jersey



Photo: Mike Grimes,
Jersey Advertiser

South Wales

A picture to remind South Wales ASBAH members of their 21st birthday last year. It shows Mike Sharp, husband of the Secretary, Brenda Sharp



handing out pieces of SWASBAH's 21st birthday cake. Leanne Jewell (left) is clearly anxious to try a piece and her mother (right) is leading the way!

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Local Association Round-up

South Wales

Mark Davies can go places on his motor bike that he couldn't any other way - up the side of mountains, over rough ground, through water...and he even hopes it may take him to the USA!

Mark, 16, of Pant, Merthyr Tydfil, South Wales was born with spina bifida and is now a very keen motorcross competitor. Mark can walk with the aid of thigh calipers and crutches, but he certainly couldn't negotiate the kind of terrain that he can on four wheels.

His love for the sport is even more remarkable because it was a motor bike that severely injured him when he was only seven. His stepfather, Alan Cowdell explains "He started walking unaided at about two and a half years but became totally paraplegic at age seven when he was hit by a motor bike while playing on the beach at Porthcawl on a Sunday school outing. For some time after the accident he was terrified of all motor bikes but he overcame his fear and has now been riding for about four years. He is aware that it is a dangerous sport but it doesn't deter him. We weren't very keen on him racing at first, but he's very resilient and strong-willed and it is something that he loves doing. We never encouraged him, but you can't treat disabled with kid gloves... He wants to lead as normal a life as possible.

"In June last year he went to a motorcross meeting at Maiden Bradley and found out that there was an association for paraplegic races - the British Wheelchair Motorcycle Association. We got in touch with the Secretary, Andy Strong, and he told us their next meeting was at Absom near Bristol. So Mark joined the Association...

"Mark did not think the farm trike he had was suitable for racing as it was very heavy, and as it had no back suspension it hurt his back on rough ground. He then arranged with a friend for his dad to take them to West



Top photo: Mark getting ready for a timed lap. Left: cornering on two wheels. Right: Mark with British Quad Racing Champion, Steve Clitheroe. Mark is trying out Steve's bike.

Wales in his lorry to part exchange the trike for a Suzuki 250cc quad racer. We didn't think this was suitable as it had kick start and no automatic gear change, but where there's a will there's a way, and Mark proved us wrong by flying round the track at his first meeting."

Mark has already proved himself a very capable driver and has won quite a few trophies. He has been encouraged by other drivers and enthusiasts to pursue the hobby further because of his natural aptitude for it. After an appeal against refusal Mark has just heard that he has achieved another ambition - to become a member of the Auto Cycle Union which means he can now race against able-bodied competitors. "In timed laps he has already proved he is up to it by coming only marginally slower than some of the able-bodied experts" said Alan. Unfortunately Mark's hobby is expensive. His bike alone cost £2,800 plus spare parts and spe-

cial clothing. Mark's bike has hand operated gears. His feet are taped onto specially fitted boards with velcro which keep him steady while racing, and if he falls off the tape releases and stops him from being trapped. Because of the expenses of the sport Mark and the BWMA are hoping to get sponsorship to take it a stage further. Mark's next ambition - after racing in this country with the Auto Cycle Union - is to race in America.

"Motorcross is a dangerous sport but all these lads race for fun, not just to win, and you make friends from all parts of the country. said his stepfather.

New members of the 60 strong British Wheelchair Motorcycle Association are warmly welcomed. If you'd like more details contact the Secretary: Andy Strong, 16 Tippetts Mead, Tawny Croft, Bracknell, Berks RG12 1FH. Tel: 0344 59796

Escaping to sunny climes



A second look at the Florida Holiday enjoyed by LINK readers in October 1987. Clare Michelmore, ASBAH's Disabled Living Advisory Manager who travelled with the second group (Manchester departure) reports on those wonderful two weeks. (The first report on the group which flew from Gatwick was included in the last LINK).

Saturday October 17 had at last arrived. It was no great surprise that the flight was a little delayed after the bad weather of the previous days. All of us were eager to escape to sunnier climes!

The staff at the airports in Manchester and Orlando were very helpful. There were several problems with wheelchairs during the transit - both in the air and on the coach. (John Seager's chair had to be taken away for a quick repair whilst we were in Orlando.) However problems were soon sorted out and nothing detracted from our enjoyment of the entire fortnight.

We arrived at the Continental Royale Hotel in Orlando on Saturday evening, when the town was full of the local young people driving through in their (or parents') large American cars with the stereo at full blast. They didn't seem to be going anywhere in particular - just driving around.

The hotel rooms were very comfortable although access to the bathrooms was for some not too easy. But everyone managed reasonably well. It was great to see a swimming



Paul, Richie and Keith relaxed and enjoying the first day of Disneyworld pool which we all enjoyed - either to get in or sit around.

The weather was very good throughout our stay - mostly in the high 70's. Most shops and all hotels had air conditioning so we had somewhere to retire to if we became too hot.

We enjoyed Disney World tremendously. The Magic Kingdom was great fun for young and old. The Grand Parade in the afternoon was really memorable - huge floats with many of the Disney characters and much dancing by those in the show. Epcot was fascinating - a wonderful combination of enjoyment and education. It contained so many exciting attractions. We were amazed to see dinosaurs that moved and looked so lifelike in the specially created environment. There were breathtaking rides and trips of all kinds. Some of the pavilions and attractions in the World Showcase were very impressive; my favourite was a film on the wonders of China. Most of the Epcot attractions were accessible, but this was less true of Disneyworld which is quite a bit older. Some rides were accessible only to those who could transfer very quickly or stand for a short while. On one occasion a member of the Disney staff, after negotiations with his boss, managed to get us on board one of the inaccessible rides by stopping the moving walkway for all of 20 seconds! An American couple in wheelchairs whom we met felt that Disney should charge a reduced rate as not all the attractions were accessible. We spoke to staff at the enquiry desk who said that hopefully everything would be made accessible, but it took time! The Guide Book for Disabled Guests provided by Disney proved to be very useful and I must say that there was so much to do in the three days we had at Disney World and Epcot that I don't think those in wheelchairs felt they had actually missed much. There just wouldn't have been time for everything.

Sea World was for many the highlight of the fortnight - particularly the show by Shamu the baby killer whale.

Continued on next page



One of our group sets off to enjoy the freedom of Disneyworld

Escaping to Sunnier Climes *continued*

Others enjoyed Kennedy Space Centre although Duncan Macbeath commented that it was disappointing that the coach could not stop at the various high spots long enough for those in wheelchairs to disembark and take it all in at their leisure.

One memory we will probably all have of Orlando were the trips out to the shops and restaurants - convoys of chairs rushing across the junction of a busy intersection because none of us could work out the pedestrian crossing signals! (We felt it was because so few Americans walk they hadn't checked whether you had time to cross before the lights changed!). One thing people commented on was the lack of animals - we didn't see a cat or dog during the entire fortnight. The absence of dogs helped enormously to keep everywhere so clean. On our way down to Clearwater for the second part of the holiday we called in at Busch Gardens, and some of our party were very partial to the free beer provided...and on the boat trip that followed there was a good deal of merriment. I think the poor guide on our boat will remember us for some time!

Clearwater was very relaxing and beautiful - time to work on the suntan and catch our breath after the previous



Peter Buckley making his way to Spaceship Earth in Epcot

hectic days.

Our flight home was unfortunately delayed for over 20 hours, but we were grateful to British Airways for finding us accommodation overnight at a hotel in Orlando. The only real grumble of the entire holiday was the inadequate dinner served to us that evening. Other families were none too impressed either and the hotel received many complaints. Eventually we did get on a plane to Manchester, and it was hard to believe that it could possibly take off with all our the additional luggage.

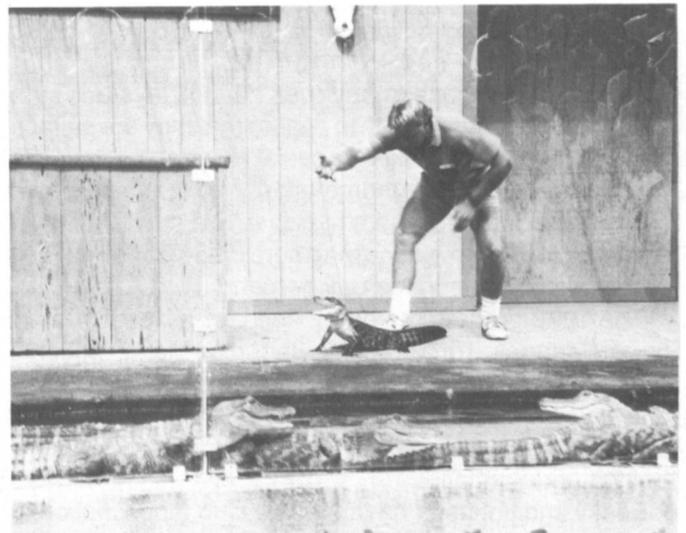
The holiday was a great success, and like the first group we are grateful for the attentions and concern of the travel agents, John and Dorothy Brown of Panovista and the drivers and lifters. To them many thanks, and hopefully it will be au revoir and not goodbye.



A photo for the album - a reminder of hot days spent in Florida: the Seager and Ferry families.



Outside the cantina (where else?) in the Mexican pavilion of World Showcase: Duncan, Keith, Richie and Paul.

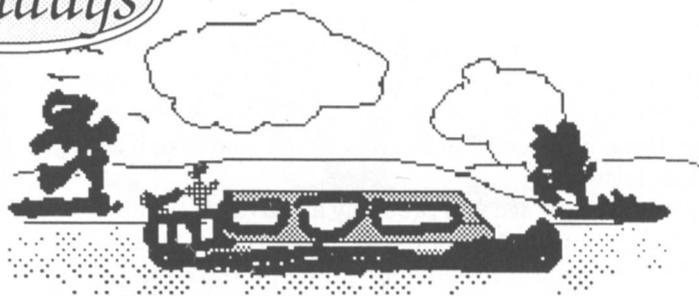


A very enjoyable show at Sea World - a demonstration of alligator handling.

holidays

"We thought we'd booked a palace"

Michael Daniels from the Bristol and District ASBAH writes about last summer's canal holiday with the 133rd Newfoundland Venture Scout Unit:



On a boat up the Llangollen Canal

Last Summer I was a member of a party of 16 from the 133rd Newfoundland Venture Scout Unit, who spent a week travelling on a Canal Boat up the Llangollen Canal.

We hired two boats. One was a normal commercial narrow boat, 56 feet long, from a company called Black Prince, based at Whixhall in Shropshire. This boat was for the walking boys. The other, was a specially designed boat to hold wheelchairs and was 70 feet long. This boat is based at Lyneal in Shropshire.

When we boarded the specialised boat, we thought we had booked a palace. It was fully equipped and furnished by Laura Ashley. All we needed to take with us was personal gear.

Our journey started at Lyneal and we travelled 27 miles up the canal to Llangollen then back again. On our way, we passed two long tunnels, two locks and two aquaducts. My favourite moment was when we passed over the Pont-Cysyllte Aquaduct which was 120 feet high. It was great fun looking down from such a great height.

It took us about three days to get to Llangollen. We spent about one and a half days there, looking at the sites and around the town. It was then time to make our way back to Lyneal. Everything was going smoothly until we reached the second lock. The normal boat got through without a hitch, but when it came to our turn there was problem. As the boat was 70 feet long and the lock was 72 feet long there was no room for error. However, the boat was let down too fast which meant that the rudder caught the sill and jammed the steering. In order for the boat to be repaired we had to get it to a dry dock. The only way to do this was for the normal boat to tow us there.

We all had a marvellous time, and for anyone who is thinking about hiring a canal boat for a holiday, I can thoroughly recommend it.

The Lyneal Trust offers canal holidays and land-based accommodation in canal side cottages for the disabled and their families and friends. The address is: Richard Sawtell, Honorary Secretary, the Shirehall, Abbey Foregate, Shrewsbury SY2 6ND. Tel: 0743 252701.

Boswell and Johnson's Travel Club

A special division providing travel and holiday arrangements for disabled people has been formed by holiday tour operators, Boswell and Johnson. They have been joined by Sean O'Shea who has a wealth of experience in handling tours and holidays for disabled people and is himself disabled.

Boswell and Johnson say that "All holidays are stringently researched in depth to ensure that they are suitable for disabled holidaymakers' special requirements. You will also travel with the home telephone numbers of two senior members of the staff so that you may always be confident in the knowledge that there is someone available at the end of a telephone day or night".

The 1988 programme offers holidays at resorts in Cyprus, Portugal, Turkey, Italy, Sardinia, Malta, Majorca, Spain, the Canaries, Jersey, Gibraltar and Israel. There are also group holidays in Canada, Israel, Malta and in Florida. Coach tours will be going to Holland, Southern Ireland and Scotland.

Boswell and Johnson have a travel club (subscription £3 per year per family) which offers some concessions and

special help in booking holidays. Members receive three newsletters each year.

For more details contact Boswell and Johnson Travel Ltd., 2nd Floor International House, 82/86 Deansgate, Manchester M3 2ER. Tel: 061 832 1673.

MPH Travel Club

This club offers holidays for small and large groups of mentally or physically disabled people to most parts of the world especially Europe. These include weekend or mid week breaks to some of Europe's most popular cities and towns plus the Dutch bulbfields, a holiday at a holiday centre in Belgium and 5/6 day breaks to various parts of Europe, as well as to two locations in the UK - the Isle of Wight and Folkestone. Holidays at holiday villages are also offered. Family holidays are available using your own transport plus a limited number of departures by coach for families and individuals. Public service tours are included and coaches with wheelchair lifts are provided. MPH will try to find a suitable companion for individuals wishing to travel without family or friends on a public service tour.

For a copy of the very simple brochure contact MPH Travel Club, 12 Saxon Street, Dover, Kent CT17 9RT. Tel: Dover (0304) 210788.

Journeys of Discovery

Mobility International invites you to join them on their Journeys of Discovery for 1988. Mobility International is made up of young people from a variety of backgrounds in different countries. Some have disabilities, some don't.

The aim of the programme in the words of Mobility International is "Because we want to find out for ourselves and show the rest of the world that it is possible for handicapped and non-handicapped young people to participate in joint activities on an equal basis. By sharing experiences we can learn a lot about ourselves and about each other."

Most of the projects are subsidised, and travel awards are available on some.

If, after looking at the list below, you want to know more, contact Mobility International at 228 Borough High Street, London SE1 1JX. Tel: 01 403 5688.

KEY; L= language. NP= maximum number of participants. DA= deadline for receiving completed applications. Make enquiries well before then.

APRIL 23-30. THE ROLE OF DISABLED PEOPLE IN THE COMMUNITY

Sea Breeze Hotel, Malta

This is very much a "working visit". An international leadership team of disabled people will stimulate discussion on a variety of inter-related themes, including independent living, community care, decision-making, community involvement and integration. In particular, the situation of the island community will be examined. There will also be opportunities to explore parts of Malta - both in the context of the project theme and in a more light-hearted vein (not suitable for people with intellectual disabilities.) Ref: EYF-24A-88

L-English. NP-30; DA-Feb 29

MAY 1-7. 10TH INTERNATIONAL WEEK FOR DISABLED YOUNG PEOPLE

Akademie Remscheid, Germany
This will be the usual Remscheid Creative Arts Week, designed for

young people with intellectual disabilities around the themes of music, puppetry, eurythmics, arts, games and 'under water'! Special attention will be given to training the education/social workers accompanying the participants, so that they can introduce some of the Akademie's techniques and skills to their own programmes back home. Ref: D-1-88
L-English, German. NP-40.
DA-March 15

MAY 10-15. A COMPARISON OF APPROACHES TO WORKING WITH DISABLED YOUNG PEOPLE

MOBILITY INTERNATIONAL'S 6th AGM

Schloss Heiligenhofen, Dusseldorf, Germany.

The theme is independent living versus residential care. This is an opportunity to look at a variety of approaches to working with people with disabilities. There will be introductions by 'professionals/experts' from different European countries and, we hope, contributions from many people who are experts by virtue of their own personal experience of disability. Ref: EC-6-88
L-English; NP-55. DA-March 15

JUNE. INTERCULTURA SICILIANA

Caltagirone, Sicily.

A chance to sample the best of Sicily. The action-packed programme will include horse riding, cultural activities and excursions to different parts of this beautiful island. Projects in Sicily are always oversubscribed, so apply early. Ref: EC-7-88
L-English, Italian. NP-45.
DA-March 31

AUGUST 21-28 . MUTUAL TRAINING COURSE FOR DISABILITY/CONSERVATION ORGANISATIONS

Trent Polytechnic, Nottingham.
This is an innovative idea to provide a mutual learning/familiarisation experience for members of the British Trust of Conservation Volunteers and Mobility International. Each morning there will be an introduction to a

specific and different disability. The afternoons will be spent with all participants working on a specific conservation project. In the evenings there will be evaluations of the experience and compatibility of participants. Ref: EYF-25A-88

L-English. NP-30. DA-June 30

SEPTEMBER 25-30. THIRD EUROPEAN MEETING OF DISABLED WOMEN

De Hunneschaus, Uddel, Netherlands.

Another opportunity in this popular series of projects for formal and informal talks. On the agenda are genetic engineering, relationships, sexuality, access, independent living.

Ref: EC-3-88

L-English. NP-30. DA-June 30

ASBAH'S INTERNATIONAL FASHION COURSE FOR YOUNG PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

Five Oaks, Ilkley, Yorkshire.

LINK readers will already be familiar with the fashion courses run at Five Oaks in conjunction with Nellie Thornton's workshop in nearby Shipley. This course to be held in the Autumn is for young people from all parts of the world - including Britain - to learn how to design and make their own clothes. Mobility International is encouraging young people to go on this course and it is included in the 1988 programme. For more details contact Susie Dobson at ASBAH's National Office (not Mobility International).

HOW ABOUT NEW YORK OR THE AEGEAN?

Mobility International are also hoping to set up two tourist programmes - one to New York, the other an Aegean Cruise.

Planning for these is in the very early stages, so no details are available. If you would like to be added to the mailing list for further information, send your name and address, quoting the reference number to Mobility International. Ref: DISCOVER NEW YORK: USA-1-88. AEGEAN CRUISE: GR-1-88

IVS workcamps - Zem's choice for a useful 'holiday' with a difference

LINK last year featured the workcamp holidays run by International Voluntary Service, and here one of the readers - Zem Rodaway from London - describes what happened when she took up the challenge and went on one of them:...

AS I HAVE recently returned from, and thoroughly enjoyed, one of the holidays mentioned in the Jan/Feb issue of LINK, I thought I'd write and tell other readers about my experience.

In August (15-29) I went on an IVS workcamp at Bromham hospital, near Bedford. This is home for about 300 people with mental handicaps, some of whom also had a physical handicap or were blind or deaf.

IVS stands for International Voluntary Service - the UK branch of an organisation operating in 15 countries worldwide. The idea is that an international team should work together on a project for between a week and a month. There are a number of different types of project to

chose from - e.g. work with physically or mentally handicapped people, work with children, agricultural work, renovation and manual work with local communities.

There were 14 of us on the team at Bedford, including a team leader. A number of nationalities were represented, including Belgium, West Germany, Italy, Portugal, Spain and Yugoslavia, as well as three English volunteers. We were all in our late teens/early 20s.

I arrived at about 6.30 pm on the Saturday to find that our home for the next two weeks was to be in the end two houses of a terrace of six, the remainder of which were used by small groups of residents, with staff coming in each day. We slept on mattresses on the floor in sleeping bags. I was sharing what should have been the kitchen with a West German girl, Ellen.

We made our own breakfast and supper on a rota system in pairs (in the kitchen of the other house).

The first evening we played some 'getting to know you' games which proved to be good ice-breakers and were quite a laugh. On the Sunday morning we played some outdoor games which were to help us in our work with the residents. These included quiet games as well as games of tag, through which we were taught the importance of having fun with the residents, without being competitive.

Then after lunch in the hospital staff canteen, we ventured onto our first ward. During the fortnight we worked with five or six different wards, usually for half a day at a time. We would go onto a ward and each find a resident to befriend. We took toys, balls, balloons and bean bags with us and could use any of these things whilst playing with 'our' residents. We also took residents out for a walk round the grounds a couple of times. Other events during our stay included several outings and a sports day which we organised.

Although it may have seemed to some of us that we were doing very little, we were told that for many residents even having one person's attention for a few hours would be a rare experience. With 20 or so residents per ward and perhaps only two or three staff on duty it is obviously dif-

holidays

ficult for them to find time to spend with them or to take them out round the grounds.

We had the weekend free and on the Saturday we decided to go to Oxford for the day whilst on Sunday we pleased ourselves. We were able to go to the staff social club in the evenings. Other evening entertainment included a party on one of the wards, a quiz between four nurses and four volunteers and our own party.

I thoroughly enjoyed what was for me a totally new experience. The team seemed to get together well - living and working together. I think we all got to know each other pretty quickly. I found that even though I was the only volunteer with a disability, I was totally accepted by the others.

I found the fact that volunteers came from many different countries gave me the opportunity to learn a little of other countries and cultures. Everyone spoke English, but sometimes I had to be patient and think of an easier way to say things. I also had to be prepared to describe things or to tell people the word for something they described to me. This sounds easy until you have to try it.

Although the camp I went on would have been difficult for someone in a wheelchair, there are a large number of camps to choose from and there is an extra form which you can send with your application form stating your needs etc. so you can be advised whether or not a camp is suitable.

Finally although I have tried to describe on paper my thoughts about the fortnight I really think it is something which needs to be experienced in person.

Volunteers for IVS workcamps need to be 18 years and those wishing to go abroad must have previous workcamp, or similar voluntary work experience.

*For details contact
IVS, .162 Upper New Walk, Leicester
LE1 7Q
Tel: 0533 541862 and ask for tel no of
workcamp department*

Courses

Skills for Disabled Counsellors

February 24026, 1988:

Avon Tyrrell, Hants (residential) Introductory courses in counselling skills for people with disabilities and those working in the field of disability. Organised by South West London College
Fee: Approx £60

Also -Evening course on same subject every Wednesday 6.30-9 pm starts February 3, 1988 for two terms
48 Boundary Road, London NW8.
Fee: Approx £43.50
Contact: *The Secretary, S.West*

*London College, Counselling Section, Wyvil Road Annexe, Wyvil Road, London SW9 2TJ.
Tel: 01 720 7553*

Disability, Handicap and Policy

July 27-29, 1988: **Bristol**
International conference organised by Bristol Polytechnic
Contact: *Len Barton, Dept. of Education, Bristol Polytechnic, Redland Hill, Bristol BS6 6UZ*

Dundee '88

September 12-16, 1988: **Dundee**
International conference on wheelchairs and special seating
Contact: *Dundee Limb Fitting Centre, 133 Queen Street, Broughty Ferry, Dundee DD5 1AG*

FIVE OAKS COURSES 1988 ARE ON PAGE 12

IEE Prize for helping disabled people

The Institution of Electrical Engineers (IEE) has announced details of the Third IEE Prize for helping disabled people. The £6,000 prize will be awarded in November this year.

Applications are welcomed from any part of the world for electrical or electronic devices or techniques which help overcome any type of disability. Applicants need not be members of the IEE. The closing date for entries is May 31, 1988

For further information contact: IEE, Savoy Place, London WC2R OBL. Tel: 01 240 1871.

LEARNER/DRIVER COURSE - FIVE OAKS November 1987

Car Sense

It hardly seemed possible that this was the sixth course held at Five Oaks to help young people make a good start and decision about driving a car.

The course members, Katie Bott, Jinny Iles, Susan Royle, Julia Thompson, Carol Aburn, Stephen Thomas and Andrew Leigh were all present and correct by Sunday evening; some feeling a little apprehensive but keen to start.

The first two days we left Five Oaks just after 8 am for the Army Apprentices Barracks, Harrogate. We had been given permission to use the parade ground and Barbara Simms had to wait for early morning drill to finish before setting out the cones on the test course. While the first two had their lessons with Warren Nicolls and Denis Sutcliffe, the rest of us made ourselves 'at home' in one of the army huts kindly made available to us. One member, Stephen, was a very reliable kettle boiler and hot drink maker and we appreciated his services as it was rather chilly up on 'them there hills'.

The group really worked hard and

applied themselves to the Highway Code and Barbara's tests - and soon most of the conversation was about driving, cars and how the lessons had gone that day.

On Wednesday, the first expedition onto the roads was made, starting from Five Oaks, a good downhill start! One or two had been having lessons at home and were familiar with going into traffic but, for the rest, this was the first time and they were pleasantly surprised by the experience. At least they all returned for lunch!

Some under bonnet recognition forms part of the course and Stephen and Andrew were able to do some really practical work assisting Bill Platt with changing the plugs, points and condenser on the bus. The female members were content to look rather than 'do'.

We were very fortunate in having a visit from Keith Crossland who is a local car conversion specialist and he was able to discuss costs of possible modifications our members would require. He also brought an electric rise and fall seat that we all tried, whether we needed it or not. An ex-client of his came along with his Astra and the Autobility conversion (the wheelchair stows on the door) and kindly allowed Katie to actually try this method of stowing the wheel-

chair.

WPC Ann Pitts spent an afternoon talking about legal aspects and documents needed for driving. She does it so enthusiastically that what could be rather difficult turns out to be most interesting and enjoyable. Arthur Ledgard, Chairman of the Disabled Drivers Motor Club, also gave up an evening to share with us. First we had a firework display, washed down with wine and fruit juice. The result was a rather silent and sleepy audience for Arthur but things perked up at question time.

In between all this activity Chris Beynon showed some videos (concerned with driving naturally). Malcolm Kleiman organised classroom tuition with remote control cars and mini-cones. This was primarily for Jinny who had not yet received her Provisional Driving Licence and so could not go onto the public pathway. It proved to be a very popular lesson and everyone wanted to join in.

The week ended with a night out in Ilkley at the Chinese restaurant - a rousing end to a very happy and successful week. Everyone had learnt a great deal and made progress, some more than others obviously but it was time well spent and an enjoyable experience.

Leonie Holgate
ASBAH's Mobility Adviser

holidays



Courses

- April 24 - May 1.....Driving Course
- May 9 - May 13.....Driving Assessment
- May 15 - May 21.....Fashion
- May 29 - June 4.....Day Tripper
- June 15 - June 23...International Wildlife
- June 24 - June 26...Fishing Weekend
- July 8 - July 15.....Outdoor Pursuits
- July 15 - July 22.....Outdoor Pursuits
(Dutch/English)
- August.....Individual Holidays/
Respite
- Sept 17 - Sept 25....International Fashion
- Sept 26 - Sept 30....Driving Assessment
- Nov 6 - Nov 13..... Driving Course

For further information about the courses and the costs please get in touch with Paul Cooper at Five Oaks, Ben Rhydding Drive, Ilkley, West Yorkshire LS29 8BD. Tel: Ilkley (0943) 603013

HOW BRITISH GAS HELPS ELDERLY AND DISABLED PEOPLE

British Gas has a long-standing and continuing commitment to caring. That's why we offer a variety of services for elderly and disabled people.

WE CAN GIVE ADVICE ON:-

- 1 Free gas safety checks for elderly and disabled people who live alone.
- 2 Special help for physically and visually handicapped people.
- 3 Fuel saving.
- 4 Paying for gas.
- 5 Gas safety.
- 6 Appliance servicing.

Tick the subjects which interest you and send this advertisement to FREEPOST, British Gas, P.O. Box No. 82, Chesterfield, Derbyshire S41 8UT and we'll send you our helpful leaflets.

Name _____

Address _____

I am a member of the caring professions

British Gas
ENERGY IS OUR BUSINESS

●The Department of Education and Science is to carry out a five year research evaluation of a conductive education project in Birmingham. The project is run by the Foundation for Conductive Education and the research team will study the effectiveness of the method and monitor differences between the Birmingham project and the Hungarian model.

●After much pressure from the ACT NOW Steering Committee, MPs and others, the Government has given dates for the implementation of Sections 5 and 6 of the Disabled Persons (Services, Consultation and Representation) Act 1986. On November 4 it was announced that disabled school leavers would have their needs assessed by local authorities. The costs have been agreed with the local authorities as £5 million in 1988/9, £14 million in 1989/90 and £20 million thereafter. The announcement has been welcomed by RADAR and disabilities organisations. RADAR says "It shows that if there is concerted pressure by people on their MPs and on Parliament in general, as there was in May when the mass lobby of Parliament took place, then the Government will listen. The ACT NOW Steering Committee will be monitoring the implementation and will now press for implementation of the other sections of the Act in full consultation with organisations of and for disabled people.

●A Telecom scheme to prevent elderly or disabled people's telephones being disconnected through circumstances beyond their control is being launched nationally. Known as the

Newslines NEWSLINES Newslines



Peter Bottomley, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State at the Department of Transport launching the new facilities for handicapped passengers on the frequent London Transport AIRBUS A1 service. It links central London with Heathrow Airport. He is photographed with a passenger trying out the wheelchair lift.

All buses on AIRBUS route A1 have now been equipped with special lifts and space for two wheelchair passengers. The buses run every 20 minutes daily between Victoria Station and the Airport (terminal 4 and terminals 1,2,3) via Hyde Park Corner and Cromwell Road. First buses leave at about 6.30 am and the service continues until about 10.30pm (10 pm Sundays). Drivers who have been specially trained in the needs of travellers with disabilities will be on hand to assist boarding and alighting and to operate the lifts. The central London inter-station bus link for disabled passengers -Carelink-will continue and will connect with AIRBUS A1 at Victoria

AIRBUS A2, which runs half-hourly between Euston and Heathrow, will have buses similarly adapted early this year.

Protected Service Scheme, it enables those for whom the telephone is a lifeline to appoint a third party or 'nominee' whom BT can contact for information if a bill remains unpaid after the final notice letter has been set. A Telecom leaflet 'Keeping your Lifeline

Open' gives details and how to apply. The Protected Service Scheme has already had a trial in the North and West Midlands. For more information or a leaflet contact your local Telecom office, or ring Bob Hilson: 01 242 4411 ext 5146.

●Stannah Lifts have introduced a new rental service to help make their Silver Rail and Golden Rail stairlifts available to disabled people and their families on a short term basis. Now, without the cost of purchase, a stairlift can be installed to provide immediate access in the home. This service could be helpful to people convalescing or suffering from a temporary disability who need to adapt their homes for a limited period, or for family and friends who could now provide facilities for extended visits.

The Silver Rail stairlift is for straight staircases, and it also has an optional stand-on facility for people who suffer from stiffness of knee joints. The Golden Rail is for complex stairs with bends, curves and landings. Here each rail is individually tailored to fit the specific application

The lift can be fitted for an initial charge which covers installation and removal. A monthly rental includes a comprehensive maintenance and call-out support service.

For more information contact Stannah Lifts, Freeport, Andover, Hampshire SP10 3BR. Tel: 0264 64311.

●The London Dial-A-Ride Users Association has launched a campaign to persuade the Government to increase the funding of London Dial-A-Rides from £6 million to £50 million per annum so that Dial-A-Ride members may have at least one trip a week instead of the present average of one trip every 11 weeks. The Association makes the point that members of the public would be appalled if they had to use public transport with such infrequency.



The Purcell family - David, Ann with David aged 12 who has spina bifida and 11 year old Ian.

New book

I have SPINA BIFIDA

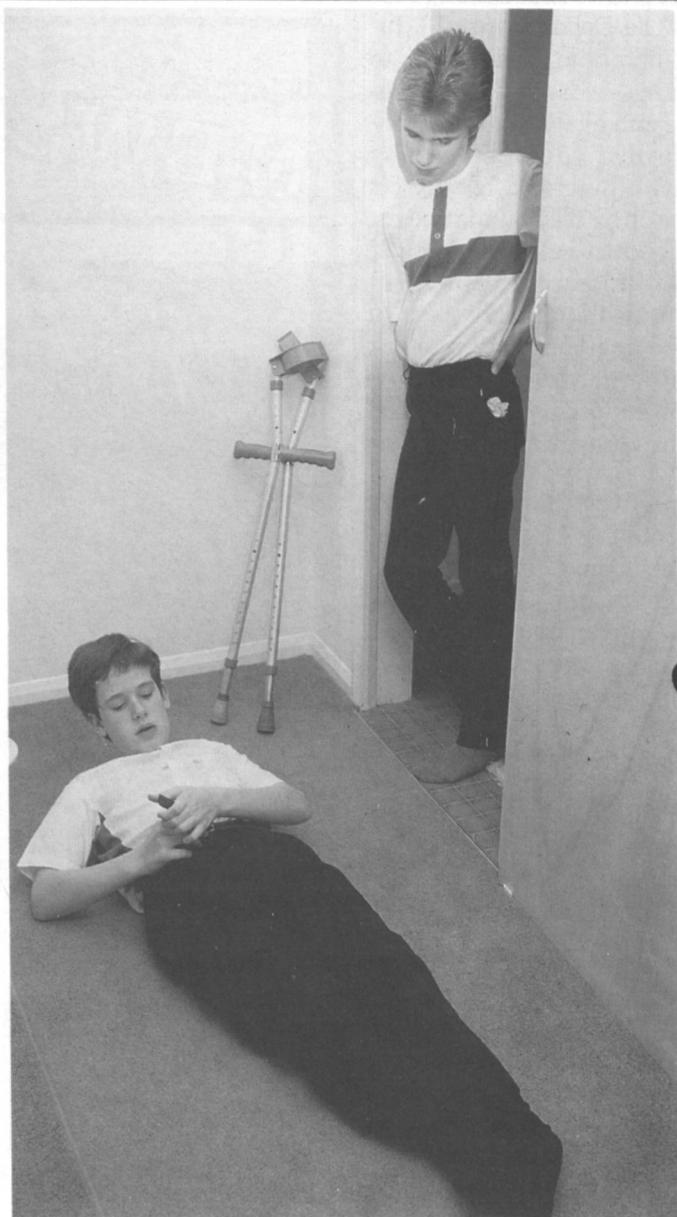
Brenda Pettenuzzo meets David Purcell

Photography: Chris Fairclough
Consultant: Moyna P. Gilbertson,
ASBAH.

Published by Franklin Watts

David Purcell is a 12 year old boy with spina bifida who lives at South Woodham Ferrers in Essex. He has a brother Ian, a year younger, and they both go to William de Ferrers School. Their father, David, is a company director, and their mother, Ann, is the welfare assistant at a local school.

This very attractive hard back book looks at David's life and aims to give schoolchildren an insight into disability. It could also prove of interest and useful to disabled children. David's disability is explained clearly and simply, as is the whole of his story including his experiences at



From *I have SPINA BIFIDA*, David getting himself dressed, watched by brother Ian.

school and at home. The 32 pages are beautifully illustrated. It's easy-on-the-eye and easy-to-read.

Price £5.25 plus 55p postage and packing (UK only). Orders to Pat Corns, Information Department, ASBAH, 22 Upper Woburn Place, London WC1H OEP. Please state if you are a professional

HYDROCEPHALUS SUPPORT GROUP STUDY DAY

MARCH 5, 1988. Liverpool University's Continuing Education Centre.

THE GUEST SPEAKER will be Mr Roger Cudmore, a Consultant Paediatric Surgeon at Alderhay Hospital, Liverpool. Mr Cudmore will give a medical explanation of hydrocephalus and its treatment and will then be available for questions. The afternoon will concentrate on psychological and learning difficulties and there should be time for discussion. If there is anything you would like included please let us know. A creche will be available and the venue is accessible. **The day is particularly aimed at parents.**

For further details and a booking form contact Phill Watson at ASBAH National Office.

APPEALS NEWS

More than 130 compete in a sunny Beaujolais Rally

This year's Beaujolais Rally was enjoyed by over 130 competitors. The weather was very kind - mild and sunny which made driving from the Vineyard and back to England an enjoyable event and there were no undue incidents.

The event, thanks to generous sponsors, should realise many thousands of pounds for ASBAH. We will let you have the final figure in a later issue of LINK. The whole Rally is sponsored by Pearl Contracts and organised by the British Association of Racing Clubs. Our thanks to them for their generosity.



Richard Poole, one of ASBAH's Appeals Organisers loading wine at the Lacenas vineyard.



The poets themselves in the centre - Ann Marie (in the wheelchair) and Jane behind her - together with others from the LIFT Beaujolais team: Chris Cain, Carolyn Smith, Philip Watson and Richard Poole

Un tres beau Rally rhyme

LINK asked Jane Salter and Ann Marie Haugh who both have spina bifida and/or hydrocephalus and work in the ASBAH office to write about the Beaujolais Rally. They were part of the LIFT team. Little did the LINK Editor expect the article to be in prose!

Friday the 13th- an ominous date for the start of this tale we're about to relate

We left ASBAH (England) at 'round about ten, and sped down to Dover. Was raining by then. Our crossing from Dover to Calais was fun unless you were sea sick - unlucky for some.

We sat by the windows, and thought of dry land and the French food just waiting - how very grand!

At Charenton we stayed - at Richard's friend's house with three lovely people, and a cat (but no mouse) So tired were we after our meal that be they chairs, sleeping bags, we just slept where we sat. The very next day off we did trot but alas, for the mileage we did - not a lot

'Cos we then got a puncture and also a squeak

thought we'd be in Paris for at least a whole week. But with true British grit we sorted it out once again, off we went with a cry and a shout We visited Dijon, and Bourg, Macon too very picturesque with very nice views

And then to the vineyard we had to go How did we get there? We don't really know We arrived at Lacenas at around about seven after hours in that bus it felt really like heaven We disposed of the brochures, collected the wine and sped back to Calais for the Sealink line

We travelled quite fast, but 'nicked' we were not the French francs that we had were alas not a lot So it was just as well that we didn't get done 'cos a night in a French jail would not have been fun We got on the ferry -after midnight we sailed With the crossing we had, we wished we'd been mailed

So this is the tale of our trip to France we'd go back next week if we got half the chance

More Rally and appeals news on the next page

APPEALS NEWS

Beaujolais Rally continued

Generous sponsors

The ASBAH minibus was once again generously sponsored by shopkeepers, restaurateurs, wine bars, record shops, florists, hotel staff and many others around the Camden Town, Southampton Row, Covent Garden, King's Cross, Long Acre, Gray's Inn Road, Holborn and Theobald's Road areas of London.

Our special thanks go to Sealink for donating a return trip from Dover to Calais, and we would also like to thank the Herald Tribune International, British Telecom, Evergreens (Long Acre), Sturt and Tivendale, and Majestic Wines.

Our prize draw winners from amongst the sponsors of the minibus were Mr P. Edgington of Edgington Electrics, Marchmont Street, and Mr Jones of Bohemia Crystal in the Brunswick Centre. Both won a case of Beaujolais Nouveau direct from the vineyard at Lacenas.

Unfortunately the sponsorship for Mr Cyril Levy as advertised in LINK was not very well supported. As a result we are able to offer only two cases of Beaujolais Nouveau as prizes (instead of 20) as a relatively small amount of money was raised through sponsorship in this competition.

The winners are: Miss P. Wood of Stourbridge, West Midlands, and Maxine Southall of Ayr in Scotland.

Four special fundraising evenings were held in connection with the Beaujolais Challenge, three of them at car sale rooms: Masters of Morden, Tice of Wimborne, and Tice of Dorchester, and at Cheers Wine Bar, in North Cheam, whose proprietor, Steve Jones is a generous supporter.

Dave Beattie, landlord of the Lord Wolsey Public House at Southall raised several thousand pounds from a Fun Run which, very sensibly



Beaujolais Challenge competitor, Tony Freeman, presenting a £1,000 cheque to ASBAH's Deputy Appeals Director, Stewart Morrison, on behalf of the George Wimpey Charitable Trust. Tony entered the rally in fine style in a 1969 Daimler V8250 recently restored by the Daimler and Lanchester

started and finished in his bar!

The Liverpool Victoria Friendly Society Sports and Social Club organised a sponsored relay run from their Head Office in Southampton Row, London, to Margate. The event took place in teeming rain and the energetic runners completed the course so far ahead of schedule that they arrived at the finish before the welcoming party.

ASBAH's Charity Football Match

Our elusive Charity Football Match has still not been finalised. We had hoped to substitute Coventry City, the English Cupholders, for St Mirren, the Scottish Cupholders, but it appears that the Football Association looks askance at Coventry's entourage of travelling fans.



The volunteers at ASBAH's shop in West Street Arcade, Fareham celebrate the anniversary of their first year's trading. It has been a good year. Turnover has doubled thanks to the hard work of the volunteers. Plans are now in hand in to redevelop the West Arcade shop, and so ASBAH is looking for alternative premises. The shop sells nearly-new clothes, books and bric-a-brac and is open five days a week. If you can help with any items for the shop please contact Margaret Gillmore. Tel: 0705 382661

Advertising

FOR THE USE OF LOCAL ASSOCIATIONS
AND OTHER READERS

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

Cheque or postal order payable to 'ASBAH'

Adverts for the next LINK (March/April) should be in by
February 15. Send to: The Editor, Mrs Sue Gearing,
The Gables, Long Lane, Wrington, Avon, BS18 7NE.
Tel: 0934 862279

HOLIDAY ACCOMMODATION

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

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

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

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

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

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

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organised by RADAR (the Royal Association for
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This one week holiday will take place June 18-25 at a cost of £125 including VAT and insurance. This covers full board and entertainment but does not include transport to and from Seacroft Holiday Centre, food and drinks purchased in the cafeteria or bars and any excursions.

A medical team will be available. There will also be a few volunteers to help, but holidaymakers must be self-sufficient for daily needs.

A non-returnable £20 deposit is needed for booking. Contact: Miss Moyra Carey, RADAR, 25 Mortimer Street, London WIN 8AB.

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