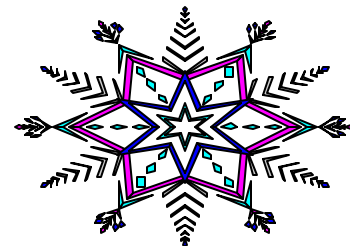


NORTHALLERTON AND THE DALES MENCAP SOCIETY

AUTUMN NEWS 2003

CAN YOU HELP YOUR LOCAL SOCIETY? CHRISTMAS CARDS AND GIFTS SALES VOLUNTEERS WANTED.....



Some of you will already know that Edwina Herbert retired from helping with the sales of Mencap Christmas Cards and gifts after more than 40 years service. The Northallerton and the Dales Mencap Society arranged for a surprise retirement party at the Mencap Centre, Northallerton at the end of May which was well attended by volunteers and helpers from Hambleton and Richmondshire who have given their time freely to help with the sales over many years and representatives from the Royal Mencap Society, Mencap District Office and Webb Ivory the company who supply the Christmas Cards and Gifts stock. Edwina was genuinely surprised and had no idea about the secret party. Thank you to all those who had to tell little white lies to keep the secret!!!!

Edwina was presented with various gifts from the local society bought with kind donations from Mencap members and a long service certificate marking the many years of service to the Royal Mencap Society. Edwina and her friend and loyal supporter Elizabeth Bradley have raised

more than £1 million pounds for Mencap over their many years service. Edwina will still help out and remains as Vice President and Holding Trustee of the Northallerton and the Dales Mencap Society. Elizabeth Bradley will continue with the sales of Mencap Cards and Gifts in the Richmondshire area.

Northallerton and the Dales Mencap Society needs the help of members and other supporters to fill the gap left by Edwina especially in the Hambleton area.



- ♦ **Can you hold a coffee morning in your home and invite friends ?**
- ♦ **Can your group or society hold a sale in your local village hall?**

- ♦ **Can you distribute catalogues to your friends and family?**
- ♦ **Can you give some time to help at local sales in your area?**
- ♦ **Can you hold a sale in your place of work or take orders from your work colleagues?**

There are many ways that you could help the Local Society to raise funds this Christmas however much time you might have to give. If you do hold a sale Mencap will provide invitations, coffee, biscuits etc so that you will not have any extra expense.

New venues for sales are needed all the time and can be arranged easily with the help of the Local Society. Please try and offer help so that the funds raised locally can benefit people with learning disabilities across Hambleton and Richmondshire.

**For more information contact:
Sue Lear, Northallerton and**

CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE



The Mencap Centre has been closed for the August break partly due to the fact that it is the school holidays but also due to the fact that Sue has been recovering from an operation. We are pleased to hear that she is making good progress and look forward to her return to full action. Even though the Centre has been closed there are still matters that need to be seen to and, in this respect, I would like to express my thanks and appreciation, on behalf of members, to Peter Moon and Anne Baker. Peter and Anne have been keeping an eye on the Centre and on the post as well as dealing with urgent matters. Also in Sue's absence, Anne did a splendid job in managing the Scarborough trip which I understand went very well. Well done Anne.

The Centre continues to be well looked after by Ray Pratt, our caretaker and our thanks are also due to him for his care and enthusiasm.

Once again I must endorse what has already been stated regarding the need for further help with the sale of Christmas cards and gifts. The Society does need new supporters to fill the gap left by Edwina. We do hope that you will contact Sue at the Mencap Centre to offer your support. Every little helps, so don't be shy, we would love to hear from you.

We hope you find this newsletter helpful and of interest. I know Sue would appreciate your feedback and any ideas for articles or information that would be of interest to our readers.

With best wishes.

MESSAGE FROM ELIZABETH BRADLEY



I hope that you will all have read the front page and feel that you can offer help in some way to promote the sales of Mencap Christmas cards and gifts during the 2003 season. I did not realise how important fundraising was until I had a daughter of my own with learning disabilities and here I am 40 years further on and still helping families by volunteering to organise sales in the Hambleton and Richmondshire areas.

I was sorry to see Edwina retire as we have had many happy years together organising sales of Christmas cards and gifts. Unfortunately many of Edwina's original customers retired with her as most of them are well past retirement and feel they have done their bit. This year the Local Society is appealing to all its members to consider whether or not you can offer help in any way.

Last year the Local Society raised £7000 towards the Chopsticks Appeal through the hard work of volunteers selling Christmas cards and gifts. If everybody who receives a Mencap catalogue bought one pack of cards or one gift it would make a big difference to the total sales, and it would help towards the 28% profit that stays in our local area. If you can hold an event it is important that you contact the Mencap office as soon as possible as the sale dates will be published in the Darlington & Stockton Times on 3rd October.

For further information contact: **Sue Lear 01609 778894 or Elizabeth Bradley 01969 622172 or**

COMMUNICATION IS THE KEY



Liz Stone has been appointed as Total Communication Officer for Community Support at the Royal Mencap Society. The job is for a year and will cover three main tasks:

- Working with Mencap's National Information Service and the Learning Disability Helpline to make sure Mencap has information that is easy to understand for people with a learning disability.
- Supporting National Assembly and District Committees to be inclusive.
- Producing a Total Communication Policy for Community Support. Organising and de-

livering training to make the Total Communication policy work.

Total Communication is not a special way of communicating. It is a way of thinking about how you communicate and always trying to use the best method. It can be difficult to make someone understand you if your speech is not clear, or you don't use words, or read or write. When we think about Total Communication we think about using other ways of communicating. Things like:

- ◆ Gesture Speech
- ◆ Signing Symbols
- ◆ Objects Photographs
- ◆ Drawing Pictures
- ◆ Writing and typing

Mencap also has an accessibility unit that gives help and advice on making information accessible and works mainly with organisations. More information about this is available from

Rachel Hughes 020 7696 5551

More information about Total Communication is available from:

Liz Stone 0121 707 7877

PAYING YOUR BILLS HELP LEAFLET

British Gas and the Employers' Forum on Disability have teamed up with mencap to produce an easy to read guide to paying household bills. Written by mencap using information from British Gas and ideas and advice from focus group members with a learning disability, the leaflet is designed to help people with a learning disability understand how to pay their bills and how to avoid potential debt.

If you would like a copy of the leaflet, please call the

**Learning Disability Helpline
Tel: 0808 808 1111**

FANCY THE NEW YEAR IN ARIEGE, FRANCE?

Would you like to go skiing, dog sledging or just relax by a log fire, drinking mulled wine, with a chance to meet new friends and sample the local cuisine?

Graham Cook is willing to take people who live independently in their own homes with minimum support to his house in France for a New Year break. You would depart on 27th December 2003 and return on 3rd January 2004. The price includes insurance, flights, transfers to and from airports, some excursions and accommodation including meals. The price is approximately £850 depending on demand as there are limited places available.

If you would like to rent the accommodation privately at any other time of the year there will be a 10% discount for anyone in the caring profession.

If you are interested and want to know more please contact:

Graham Cook 07811546730.



WAVING NOT DROWNING

Parents at Works project for parents trying to combine paid work and caring for children with disabilities. The project produces a free newsletter, provides a helpline

020 7253 7243, and campaigns with Government and decision makers.

The Waving not Drowning guidebook is available Postfree for £11.95

(£2.99 to parents) from
1-3 Berry Street, London, EC1V
OAA



AUTUMN NEWS 2003

HAMBLETON AND RICHMONDSHIRE CARERS CENTRE

OPPORTUNITIES FOR CARERS SEPTEMBER 2003

Sue Lear
Administration and
Development Officer

Phone: 01609 778894
Fax: 01609 778894
Email:

Please contact the Local Society and let us know what you think of the newsletter. Do you have any issues that you think we should try and address. Tell us your news. We want to hear from you.



- ◆ COMPUTERS every Tuesday 10am to 3pm at Northdale Horticulture, Northallerton
- ◆ YOGA every Tuesday 1.45pm to 3.15pm at Hambleton Forum, Northallerton
- ◆ T'AI CHI every Thursday 1.45pm to 3.15pm at Northallerton
- ◆ MOSAIC WORKSHOP details not yet finalised (depends on interest)

All of these opportunities are provided **FREE** to Carers. If enough interest is shown in the Richmondshire area, it may be possible to arrange sessions in that area.

For more information or to register your interest contact:

Andrea Willis, Hambleton and Richmondshire Carers Centre,

SUPPORTING PEOPLE WITH PROFOUND AND MULTIPLE LEARNING DISABILITIES

The PMLD network, which was created in November 2000, works to help support people with profound and multiple learning disabilities. The network has produced a response to the learning disabilities white paper, 'Valuing People', including recommendations for further action.

To find out more please contact:

Beverley Dawkins, Mencap, 123 Golden Lane,

PARLIAMENTARY GROUP LAUNCHED

50 Members of Parliament and Peers have joined forces to form the first ever All Party Parliamentary Group on Learning Disability.

The new group will play a key role in Parliament discussing issues facing people with a learning disability.

Members of the group are from all the political parties and include the new Conservative spokesman for Disability, Nigel Waterson as well as long-standing supporters of Mencap including Lord Rix.

The group's first full meeting will be held in the Autumn and it will help Mencap and other learning disability groups to campaign on important issues. Members are already actively contributing to campaigns in a variety of ways including the submission of parliamentary questions.

LEARNING DISABILITY HELPLINE 0808 808 1111

IF YOU HAVE A LEARNING DISABILITY – OR SOMEONE YOU KNOW DOES – AND NEED ADVICE OR INFORMATION, CALL THE HELPLINE **FREE**. THE HELPLINE IS AVAILABLE 24 HOURS A DAY

