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Year Book 1982-1983

EDITED BY DEREK MILLER

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MESSAGE FROM THE RT. HON. ALAN WILLIAMS
PRESIDENT, SWANSEA & DISTRICT SPASTIC ASSOCIATION

It is good that all age groups have expressed concern at the effect long-term unemployment might have on the school-leaver. But it should make us pause and reflect when we realise that this trauma of recent years for our youngsters has always been a real fear and threat to a surprisingly large number of disadvantaged young people.

Longfields was not established as a YOPS course to help the young through what is hoped will be a temporary experience. Soberingly, Longfields was established when we already had full employment. Because for some there has never been full-employment. For some there was never much hope even of temporary employment.

If the prospects for these youngsters was bad when unemployment in the area was 3 or 4%, you can guess what their prospects are when it is over 15%.

Longfields was needed even when temporary employment schemes for the young were unnecessary. It is not a cheap facility to supply. But as more of us grasp the awful significance of the fear of being unemployable more of us should recognise the urgent need to keep Longfields operating.

Inflation hits Longfields as it hits firms and households. I hope you will feel that you want to play a part in keeping Longfields alive. We need your support.

Alan Williams

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Swansea and District Spastic Association

WHAT DO WE DO?

“ the aims and objects of the Association are the well-being and welfare of sufferers from cerebral palsy and its allied conditions.”

“ the general social welfare of such sufferers and advising and assisting their parents and those caring for them..”

“ taking all measures to assist those handicapped by spastic paralysis and its allied conditions to take their normal place in the community and to help them so far as is possible to become physically, socially and economically independent.”

“ to receive donations and subscriptions and to raise money for the purpose of the Association and to disburse same for the fulfilment of its objects.”

BRIEF EXTRACTS FROM THE ASSOCIATION'S CONSTITUTION

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Chairman's Foreword

THIRTY YEARS have gone by since the Association was formed by a small number of parents who were anxious about the future of their Spastic children for whom no provision was then available. Many of those handicapped children, who are now adults, are still with us but several of the parents have passed on. Recently the father of two of our Trainees, Mr. Leslie Bailey, died suddenly and fellow members extended their deep sympathy to the bereaved family.

The last twelve months have seen some steady progress at Longfields Centre despite difficulties due mainly to the serious recession in industry and mounting inflation. Our running costs have increased—expenditure for the year ending 31st March, 1982 was £81,967 compared with £71,087 the previous financial year. Our income from all sources—over half from voluntary effort—amounted to £71,955 last year, leaving a deficit of £10,012, which has to be met from our limited reserve fund. This financial situation is causing much concern to the management committee, members of which are giving careful thought to ways of economising on running costs and increasing our income.

Our organised events during the past year brought the usual generous response and we heartily thank all those concerned. We also received substantial donations during 1981—the International Year of Disabled People—from many kind friends and organisations including The Methodist Churches of Swansea and Gower, the Girl Guides, Scouts and Cubs of the district and the Swansea Police Recreation Club Badminton Section, to all of whom we are truly

grateful. I should also mention that last March, in response to an application, a grant of £1,000 was received from the 'Royal Wedding Souvenir Fund (1981) for the Disabled' towards our work at Longfields. A happy sequel to this was an invitation to three of our members to attend a Reception by the Prince of Wales at Buckingham Palace on the 21st July. This event was greatly enjoyed by one of our Trainees and her parents.

Our sheltered workshop, in common with most open industry is suffering from a shortage of the contracts we used to have, but the handcraft and printing sections are almost fully occupied. All the premises at Longfields have been re-decorated with the valuable help of the Youth Opportunities Programme and a new garage for our ambulances has been erected at cost price by a local builder. We are very thankful for this excellent support. We have new members of staff including caretakers to reside in the house, all of whom are welcomed. Our best wishes for the future were conveyed to those members who retired.

Our close connection with the Wales Regional Committee of the Spastics Society has been kept up and we welcome Mrs. Moi Pritchard, our new Senior Regional Officer. In response to an appeal from the above Committee we have agreed to the use, under certain circumstances, of the residential unit at Longfields by Group members from other parts of Wales. Appreciation of this goodwill gesture of co-operation has already been shown by the donation of a Parker bath, specially designed for the disabled and costing around £1,200, by the Wales Regional Committee. This has been installed and used with much benefit in the Residential Unit. A

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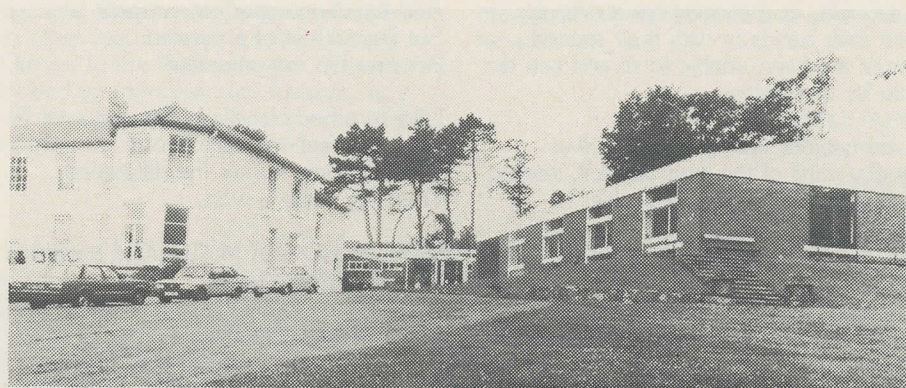
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generous donation towards the heavy running costs of the Unit has also been received from the Cardiff Group.

In entering its fourth decade the Association is determined to carry on its work at Longfields with undiminished energy—we can have pride in our achievements in past years but cannot afford to rest as we provide an ongoing and very necessary service for those who cannot help themselves. The Spastics Society, to which we are affiliated, is also

celebrating its 30th anniversary and looks forward to intensifying its efforts for the welfare of spastic people all over the country. To all those who have helped us in the past we offer our sincere thanks and at the same time express the hope that they will maintain their generous support in the future. On this depends the well-being of the many disabled people in our care.

OWEN J. LEWIS
JULY 1982



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What it means to be 'spastic' -

Reproduced by courtesy of Spastics News, June '82.

SPASTICITY (cerebral palsy) is a disorder of movement and posture appearing in the early years of life. It is due to damage or failure to develop normally in a small part of the brain controlling movement.

Cerebral palsy takes many forms—in fact no two spastic people are precisely alike. Some are so lightly affected that they have no obvious disability. Others may be much more seriously handicapped. They may be clumsy in their walk, or they may have difficulty with their hands or with their speech. Some are even unable to sit and can do little for themselves.

Sometimes the damage involves nearby parts of the brain as well, leading to deafness and other difficulties of perception.

People

Spastic people sometimes have higher than average intelligence, though many are backward because of their handicaps.

Cerebral palsy is not a disease and it certainly is not catching. It is unusual for two cases to occur in the same family. Broadly speaking a spastic child is born once in every 400 births, without any distinction of sex, race, maternal age, or social background.

It can be caused by many factors. These may arise during pregnancy, or the child's brain may suffer damage while it is being born. In a minority of cases the problem can be traced to an illness or brain injury during the early years of the child's life.

The birth of a spastic child is not the fault of either parent. But experts are still unable to identify all the causes. More research is urgently needed.

Handicapped

I live in a body labelled: 'handicapped'
Stunted legs and arms askew
I live in a body I wouldn't have chosen
But then few of us do.

People say I'm brave
As though bravery were a choice
I learned early not to scream
For mine is an unheard voice.

The world is competitive
And I'm ill-equipped to compete
But I'm no less of a person
Because I'm not complete.

I live in a body labelled: 'Second rate'
Though I feel second to none
When Society knows the difference
Then my battle is won.

Poem by ROGER McGOUGH published during I.Y.D.P. 1981

It could be you, or you, or you
It could be one of your loved ones too
Fate does not choose from colour or creed,
Handicapped folk have a just right to say
'We need the best we can get from each day.'

In a motorway crash or a fall from a horse,
Or a fire in the kitchen, and fireworks of course,
Or a crippling disease that seizes at birth,
The power to explore the four corners of earth,
Handicapped folk have the right to say,
'We want the best we can get from each day.'

(Taken from a Young Farmers' Club scrapbook entered in the Monmouthshire County Rally)

Message from the Wales Region

THE Swansea and District Spastic Association has continued its excellent work for cerebrally palsied people during the past year and, despite increased costs and rising unemployment in their area, have maintained the high standard of care which has always depicted the work of this Group.

During the past twelve months, they have agreed to open the doors of their beautiful Residential Centre at Longfields to other members of Spastics Society Groups in the Wales Region. This is indeed an immense step forward, as it will give parents a tremendous sense of relief to know that their children can be

looked after in such first class accommodation.

The Longfields complex is a place to feel very proud of—not just a collection of buildings in lovely surroundings, but somewhere where there is genuine care and understanding for handicapped people. The continued hard work of all in the Swansea and District Spastic Society has made this a reality. Long may your efforts continue and your goals be achieved.

MOI PRITCHARD
Senior Regional Officer, Wales



Members of the Wales Regional Committee outside Bungalows for the Disabled at Cardiff Spastics Centre, which were opened on 17th April, 1982 by The Right Honorable George Thomas, M.P., Speaker of the House of Commons.

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'Large oaks from small acorns grow'

I WONDER if the original founders of the Spastics Society foresaw the huge network of facilities and services which would exist in 1982. Certainly without their vision and commitment we would not be in the position we are in now. The same applies at local level — here in Swansea the same qualities led to the Longfields Nursery, and when the role with children was taken over by the local authority our present work centre which is so beneficial to young adults. The Longfields project is once again branching out — to encompass the short term care needs of local group members throughout Wales.

The will to create better services for children and adults with cerebral palsy is evident at many different levels within Swansea and district. Early intervention is increasingly being seen as important, and it has been a privilege for me to be involved with the Killay Family Support Group during my short time with the Society. This is a N.C.H. sponsored group which offers stimulation for young handicapped children, and support to their parents. The group includes several young children with cerebral palsy and the leaders are active in finding out the best methods of helping these children. The needs of the young C.P. child are very complex and each family needs very specific advice about the best sort of handling, and young families are often bewildered in the face of a wide range of Health, Social and Educational Services. The basic need remains as it has always been emotional support and understanding — and this can be offered by a Group such as Killay where young mothers are able to talk over their experiences and problems with others in a similar position.

As each need is seen and that particular gap is plugged yet another need is uncovered which demands a response.

In the case of the young mothers at Killay, the need identified has been that of parents to receive the moral support of another parent soon after the diagnosis of handicap, when it is so easy to feel completely alone and isolated. A new group, the 'Swansea Parents' Support Group', has now been born and at the inaugural meeting it was encouraging to see a wide spectrum of voluntary bodies, as well as professionals represented. Contact has been made with Paediatric departments in West Glamorgan's hospitals and it is hoped that where circumstances allow, parents of newly diagnosed children will be given the option of contact with other mothers and fathers who have a handicapped child. The co-ordinator of this project, Mrs. Tanya Parry, is herself a nurse and the mother of a Downs Syndrome baby — several parents of C.P. children have shown interest in being involved.

These are only two examples of the kind of work which is progressing in the voluntary sector and which will improve the situation for parents of young C.P. children. There are others such as the efforts of parents' associations in Swansea's special schools, Friends of the Young Disabled, who offer holidays, West Glamorgan R.E.M.A.P. which offers the insight of technology to the field of handicap.

The voluntary sector is not only alive, it is growing. In the years which lie ahead it will be necessary to innovate in the face of rapid change — today's role may not necessarily be that of tomorrow. Whatever changes come, however, there will always be a common bond in working to maintain and improve the outlook for spastic children and adults in the Swansea district.

Mrs. JUNE BARNES
Regional Social Worker, Wales

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West Glamorgan REMAP

REHABILITATION Movement Advisory Panels (REMAP) is a countrywide organisation who are prepared to give some of their spare time to design and build aids for the disabled.

In West Glamorgan the Panel is made up of engineers, occupational therapists, physiotherapists, school teachers and representatives of Manpower Services. We meet once a month at the University and discuss cases brought to us from many sources. After a short discussion, if we feel we can do something to help, an engineer will take on the job of designing and building an aid to try and solve the problem involved.

In the last few years we have tackled more than 70 cases and in almost every instance constructed a successful aid. There are obviously some jobs we can't do but occasionally we might have an idea which allows us to solve the problem at a later date. Nor do we make aids which are already commercially available.

Some of our more notable successes include a computer and voice synthesizer for Sara Miller; whose story appeared in your last Year Book. We have made special jig saws for Dyfatty School; a task and reward unit for Maytree School Autistic Unit; a motorised chair to lift a disabled man on to his feet; arm supports for motorists with spondylitis and many more.

One recent development of particular interest to the Spastics Society arose accidentally. Three years ago Mrs. Jan Burgess, the Advisory Music Teacher for the disabled, requested REMAP to make some sounding boxes for deaf children to hold against their chests. These boxes would then vibrate and the children

could copy the vibrations while they spoke so that their voices could be controlled to the correct pitch. REMAP made an electronic device that was very successful but a reorganisation in West Glamorgan Education Authority meant that Mrs. Burgess was temporarily without her deaf pupils. So she decided to try the box out on some severely disabled spastic children to see if they would respond. To her surprise the children immediately responded to some notes and appeared to enjoy the vibrations very much. So much so that they relaxed and the spasms in their limbs were relieved.

This obviously warranted further development and eventually a device was made that could be fitted into a bed or chair and, instead of single notes, music could be played through the system. This has been found to be very successful at Broadway House School for relaxing spasms in the children so that they may eventually be responsive to a teaching programme. A research programme is planned to commence in September with a special panel to monitor progress made up from representatives of the Education Authority, the Area Health Authority, the University and the equipment manufacturers. The aims of this programme is to develop a new teaching method using the equipment and to see if there are any lasting medical benefits to be obtained.

As a panel, West Glamorgan REMAP is anxious to help anyone with a problem concerning an aid to help them with leisure, work or just plain everyday coping with life. We do not charge for the work but are always happy to receive a donation towards the cost of materials.

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Anyone with a problem should contact our Cases Secretary, Miss Esther Searle, Occupational Therapist, Occupational Therapy Unit, Cefn Coed Hospital.

REMAP works in close conjunction with West Glamorgan Association for the Disabled (WEST GLAD) who have approached the West Glamorgan County Council to make Brondeg House a centre of Technology for the Disabled. The Social Services Committee have unanimously agreed to this and a great deal of support to the idea has been given by Mr. Malcolm Walker, the Director of Social Services. A computer has been installed at Brondeg using a donation from Skewen Ladies and a computer programming class started by West Glad for the disabled and parents and friends who would like to learn.

There is a small charge for the classes to enable materials to be purchased and to develop the technology side still further but the main function of the course is a service to bring modern technology into the lives of the many disabled who can obtain tremendous benefit and perhaps go on to more advanced courses with a view to career opportunities. Anyone interested in these courses should contact Mrs. Marion Leach, Secretary, West Glad, Brondeg House, Manselton, Swansea.

I hope that this has given you some idea of what's going on in the area and that your will take advantage of help that we might be able to give.

Dr. H. GRENFELL

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Work Centre Report

THE YEAR ending March, 1982 has been another busy time for the three Departments of the Work Centre.

All the regular customers of the Printing Department have continued to support us and many new orders have been received from people who have recently become aware of the quality and promptness of the service we give.

Orders for Wedding Stationery have also increased and we hope that more people will take advantage of this service in the future.

The sub-contract Workroom has also been fortunate during the past twelve months in obtaining adequate quantities of work, mainly from Addis Ltd., of Fforestfach, and we are most grateful to them for giving us the opportunity to carry out these contracts successfully. Other contracts worked on have been lamp-holder assembly for Sully Work Centre, and the making of Chamois Mops and Coat-hangers.

The trainees in the Craft Room have again spent the year producing large quantities of trays of various shapes, patterns and sizes, also baskets and various other items for sale at 'Longfields' and the various Fetes and Shows that we attend.

Recently all the trainees were taken on two trips arranged by Mr. & Mrs. Emrys Williams. The first was to the Swansea Art Gallery and the second to the Swansea Maritime Museum, and everyone enjoyed the visits and are looking forward to the next one.

At Christmas, Mr. Wilf Jones, who worked for the Association for many years and was Workshop Supervisor for the past eight years, left to enjoy a well earned retirement. All members of the staff and the trainees were sorry to see him go, and wish him every happiness and good luck in the future.

In conclusion, I would like to take this opportunity of thanking three ladies: Mrs. Paton, Mrs. Grey and Mrs. Alice Owen, who over the last seven years that I have been manager have given of their time and energy in attending at Fetes, and Shows selling our Craft Goods from the stall, sometimes in adverse weather conditions. This has meant them working on six Saturdays and two Bank Holidays plus five days at Swansea University in November each year, and their efforts in helping the Work Centre in this way are greatly appreciated.

R. COOK
Work Centre Manager

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Longfields Leisurecrafts

IN MARCH, with two of our new ambulances filled to capacity with Trainees, we visited The Glynn Vivian Art Gallery to see an Arts Council Exhibition called 'ONE GOOD TURN'. We had an hilarious afternoon as it was a wonderful exhibition of moving models in all shapes and sizes. The Gallery was filled with shrieks of laughter all the time.

In May we made another excursion, this time to the Maritime Museum where there is much of interest to see, including the front of the old Mumbles Train. The Woollen Mill was a great attraction too.

We plan to visit The Royal Institution Museum later this year.

We continue with a little painting, although this year the weather has been too good to stay indoors. One of the Trainees has made a pottery butterfly which looks very realistic hanging on the wall.

MARJORIE K. WILLIAMS

Society's Plans for 'Save a Baby' Week

IN ITS 30th anniversary year, the Spastics Society launched the third phase of its 'Save a Baby' campaign by holding a special 'Save a Baby' week from June 14-18.

The Society has four major objectives for Phase Three. They are:

The implementation of minimum standards of obstetric care and neonatal care promised to the Society by the DHSS, which it is hoped will eradicate the wide regional differences in the prenatal mortality figures.

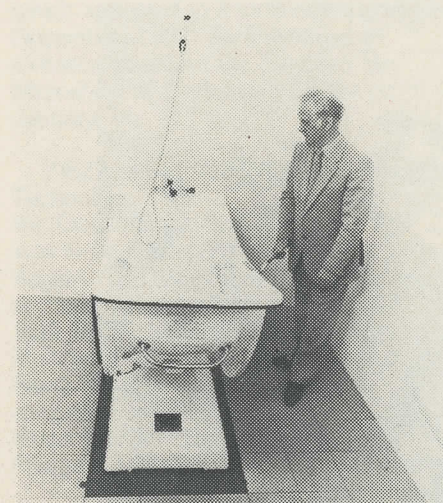
The establishment of compulsory health education, including full sex education, as part of a central core-curriculum and the increase in screening and genetic counselling.

The extension of community midwifery services, and the improvement in the antenatal clinic system.

The eradication of poverty in pregnancy by measures which include pressing for a rise in the maternity grant.

The Welsh Region and Swansea

By T. Gwyn John, Delegate to Wales Region & Spastics Society



Mr. T. Gwyn John, our delegate to the Wales Region and Spastic Society checking the Roy Parker Bath kindly presented to us by the Wales Region.

The bath has won a top award presented by Prince Charles on 'Tomorrow's World'. It has been a huge success with the staff at the Residential Unit and made things easier all round and the residents love it. A well worth while purchase.

IN OUR 30th year what does the future hold for Longfields?

We have been through many financial crises in our 30 year history, none worse than the one in 1979 when even closure was talked about, but that was alleviated by a concentrated effort on publicity through the local press and radio and we came out of it with credit.

It seems that 1982 will bring some financial difficulties and with the appeals for the Dyfatty Hydrotherapy Pool, the South Atlantic Appeal and appeal for equipment for the extensions at Morrision Hospital we will have to be on our toes.

I pose the question, would a closer relationship with the Wales Region benefit us and would the Region work for Swansea?

In the past we have been bitterly opposed to the Regional Organisation fund raising in Swansea because we foresaw great difficulties if two organisations were to fund raise in the City, confusion would exist.

This means closer co-operation with the Wales Region and certainly the need for proper **communication** to avoid duplication of effort.

The Wales Region have now employed full time appeals organisers. Should we make full use of them and give them the opportunity of justifying their existence. Why not?

We must try every avenue to keep Longfields alive, can you imagine what life for parents and offsprings would be like without it, I shudder to think.

Longfields takes the burden off parents and Social Services and until we get the full support of Government and Local Authorities we must keep on fighting for its existence. We are all going to need it for many more years.



Gwyn, Lena and Linda outside Buckingham Palace

News in Brief

THE 1981 Christmas Raffle raised £1,400

• • • • •

'Sara's Feet Launch Micro-Chip Exhibition'—this was the headline which appeared in a local newspaper. In December, 1981, Sara received an invitation to attend the Swansea Bay Microshow at the Leisure Centre on January 7th.

1982 has been designated Information Technology Year—IT 82 for short—by the Government, and the Microshow was to be the launch of IT for the Wales Region. The Show was officially opened by Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Wales, Mr. Michael Roberts, M.P. and he showed great interest in Sara's accomplishments with her computer. Following the show we have heard that the Prime Minister, Mrs. Margaret Thatcher, wishes to meet Sara.

• • • • •

The Annual Sponsored Walk from Swansea to Mumbles held on 21st February, 1982 raised over £2,700.

• • • • •

Our Annual Garden Fete held on June 5th in the grounds of 'Longfields' was officially opened by Mr. Alan Richards, author of Ennals Point. Also present were the Deputy Lord Mayor, Councillor Charles Thomas and our President, Mr. Alan Williams, M.P. This annual event was once again a great success and raised £1,900 towards the running costs.

• • • • •

Our Vice-Chairman and Regional and National Delegate to the Spastic Society, Mr. T. G. John. Mrs. John and daughter Linda were fortunate enough to be

invited to a reception at Buckingham Palace hosted by the Prince of Wales and spent three hours in the Palace and met several people from all over the U.K. including Brian Rix, the Director of MENCAP and were introduced to the Prince.

To make the day more eventful, through the help of our President, Mr. Alan Williams, M.P., Gwyn, Lena and Linda were able to visit the House of Commons and Gwyn also had the honour of going along to meet the Speaker, Mr. George Thomas at Speakers' House and spending 20 minutes with him to reminisce over the meeting they had in Cardiff in 1952 along with the late Mr. Bill Paton, then Secretary of the Swansea Group and the late Phillip Northan then Secretary of the Cardiff Group.

The Speaker was a founder member of the Cardiff Group and Gwyn, a founder member of the Swansea Group.



Gwyn accompanied by Alan Williams presenting the Speaker with our First Year Book

Anyone wishing to make a donation or bequest to the Association may care to use the forms below.

Donation

To: H. G. Austin, Esq.,
Honorary Treasurer,
Swansea & District Spastic Association,
'Longfields', 6 Bethany Lane,
West Cross, Swansea SA3 5TL.

I enclose a donation of £ _____
to the funds of the Swansea and District Spastic Association.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Signed: _____

Form of Bequest

To: _____
(Solicitors)

Please arrange the following codicil to my will:
I give free of duty to the Swansea & District Spastic Association the sum of
£ _____ to be applied for the general purposes
of the Association and I declare that the receipt of the Treasurer or other
proper officer for the time being of the Association be sufficient discharge of the
same.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Signed: _____ Date _____

Covenant Form

I _____
(Block Capitals)

of _____
(Address)

Hereby Covenant with Swansea and District Spastic Association that for a

period of seven years from _____ 198 (this date must
be after the date of the covenant) on which the first payment shall be made or
during my life whichever period shall be the shorter, I will pay annually to the
said Association for its general purpose such yearly sum as after deduction of
Income Tax at the current rate will leave the net yearly sum of

£ _____

£ _____
(Amount in figures and words)

IN WITNESS WHEREOF I hereunto set my hand and seal this _____

day of _____ 198

named Covenantor in the presence of:
SIGNED, SEALED and DELIVERED BY THE ABOVE

(Usual signature of Covenantor)

Signature and Address _____

of Witness: _____

N.B. This form should be returned to Harold G. Austin, Honorary Treasurer,
The Swansea and District Spastic Association, 'Longfields', 6 Bethany Lane,
West Cross, Swansea SA3 5TL.

To give you some idea of just how valuable the Deed of Covenant method of
subscription is to the Association, for each £5.00 net annual subscription
entered in the Deed and paid to the Association by the subscriber, the
Association recovers £2.14 Income Tax making the total gross benefit for the
year £7.14 (based on a basic rate of Income Tax of 30%).

A Synopsis of the Association's History

- 1952** Association formed with less than a dozen parents. First met in a rented school room in the Grove, Uplands.
- 1953** Centre officially opened 15th April, by Sir Ben Bowen Thomas, then Permanent Secretary to the Welsh Board of Education.
- 1955** 'Longfields' acquired by the Association with the help of the late Mrs. F. M. Phillippe, a London philanthropist. Centre officially opened in September by the then Mayor of Swansea, Councillor Percy Morris.
- 1962** Work Centre opened by Lord Brecon, the Minister of State for Welsh Affairs (cost £10,000).
- 1967** Occupational Therapy unit opened by the Rt. Hon. Sir Elwyn Jones, Q.C., M.P. (cost £35,000).
- 1972** Local Authority provided a teacher for young children.
- 1973** Short-term Residential Care Unit completed at a cost of £12,500 and opened in June.
- 1976** Children of school age transferred to Morfydd House Special School
- 1980** Twenty-five years at 'Longfields'.
- 1981** Ladies Guild celebrates 21st Birthday.

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Battling With Buffets

By Owen Davies

FEW PEOPLE can have failed to notice how the pace of life has increased during the past few years, bringing with it a lack of courtesy, efficiency and a general 'slap happy' attitude.

One of the biggest casualties in this field is 'Eating Out', once a leisurely pastime, where one could amble through a four course meal, freshly cooked, served on a salver by a pleasant waiter or waitress who took pride in their profession, by ensuring that every crease had vanished from the white table cloth.

Unfortunately those days have gone, as the Restaurant trade is suffering from a terminal disease known as 'apathy' or living under a trance of 'Microwave Magic'.

For starters, I'm convinced that chefs have been replaced by surplus staff from 'Datapost' who, with lightening speed chuck your meal from the deep freeze into the Microwave Oven and then on to the naked table with the plastic table mats, thus making the whole event about as enjoyable as a hernia operation.

However, it would appear that there are an increasing number of people who cannot even sit down to eat, this is why we are now suffering a 'Buffet Boom'. After attending a number of these, I've reached the conclusion that buffets fall into three categories; 'Yuk', 'Super Yuk' and 'Deluxe Yuk'.

Now the 'Yuk' buffet is generally an informal affair, although if you happen to live in a rather up-market part of the country, it may be referred to as a Cheese and Wine Evening or a Finger Buffet.

But the title is of the least importance, because these events are either held in the stock room of a hotel or a private house, but wherever it is, it's obvious that the Bailiffs have called in earlier and whipped all the furniture, no tables, no chairs, not nothing, just a large Ash Tray in the middle of the floor and a small card table in one corner of the room.

After saying 'good evening' a million times and falling over that damn Ash Tray, you finally make it to the table, where you are offered a glass of red or white two star plonk, which smells and tastes like that well-known household product, that kills ninety-nine per cent of germs.

To avoid this drink causing any lasting damage to your liver, you are invited to take a plate and choose some light refreshments, now this does not mean actual real, live, proper food, oh no, it's all the numerous items which come from the humble spud, Crunchies, Munchies, Crisps, Sticks and of course Nuts, Pea if you're common, or Cashew if you're posh.

As you stand in the middle of this crowded room, you quickly realise that who ever devised buffets were fortunate enough to be born with three hands, one to hold the glass of wine, one to hold the plate and one to eat with.

Being a humble sole who has been blessed with only two hands, one of which is on short-time working, it becomes necessary to improvise, so I move inconspicuously to the corner of the room, sit on the floor and wedge the plate between my knees and the skirting board.

This strange sight creates a degree of panic amongst the other guests, who take turns in coming over to me and picking me up, so I spend the entire evening sitting down and being picked up again, thus making the 'Yuk' Buffet totally void of enjoyment and a very bruising experience.

Next comes the 'Super Yuk' Buffet, now this is slightly better because the Bailiffs have returned the tables and chairs, so at the very least, you can look forward to eating in a more conventional manner.

The food at these occasions is like Monday's washing, it has been left out to dry, but it hasn't been put away yet, firstly you form up in an orderly line, like Oxfam Refugees waiting for a bowl of Rice, then a large plate and paper serviette is thrust under your nose.

You then move slowly past a long table, helping yourself to yesterday's Pastie, today's Sausage Roll and a Vol-au-Vent which, like many ladies in my life, refuses to disclose its age, although I must confess that Vol-au-Vents always remind me of a 'Living Bra' with lots of padding, but very little contents.

Still, with some degree of foolish anticipation, you continue along the table, until your eyes come to rest on the saddest sight of all, the poor chickens, which have been roasted, forgotten, then discovered again, chopped in half and laid to rest on a stainless steel salver, now comes that heart-breaking decision, do you pick up a half and eat it, or do you leave it, hoping that in time it will find a permanent resting place in the large black bag in the sky.

In conclusion, the 'Super Yuk' Buffet has an element of fear, because there is always a Raffle and guess what one of the prizes is, a free ticket to another 'Super Yuk' Buffet, what else.

Last, but by no means least, we come to the 'Deluxe Yuk' Buffet, now this is so completely void of any taste or purpose, that it is reserved exclusively for Wedding Receptions.

Ah, Weddings, those strange, superfluous events, which bring together all the branches of the Family Tree, who play the game of 'one upmanship' in dress and presents, then congregate in a Church or Chapel, sing 'Love Divine' and 'The Lord's My Shepherd' just in order that two people can have sex legal and proper like, it's similar to a 'rigged Raffle', everyone buys a ticket, but only one person gets a prize—and that's the Bridegroom.

We now travel to the 'Olde Oak Inn', situated in the quaint village of Soditall, where the 'Deluxe Yuk' Buffet awaits you, on these occasions you do not help yourself, because the Ham Salad has already been set out on paper plates.

Actually it looks more like a mini Compost Heap, the only difference being that while you were in Church, a local Cavity Wall Insulation Company popped in and sprayed the top of each Salad with Cottage Cheese, alternatively, if the Ceremony is running late, the Barmaid will put the watering can over each plate, just to keep the Lettuce in the land of the living.

With the innocence of an idiot, you walk over to the table, pick up your Salad and watch with stunned helplessness, as the plate bends in the centre, sending a tidal wave of Mayonaise and Beetroot Juice, straight up your shirt sleeve, making a mini reservoir under your elbow.

Still as this is a time for goodwill, you suffer the unusual experience of having a 'floating elbow' and begin playing the role of Robin Hood, battling your way through the vegetation in search of the

Ham, there it is, lying like a pink Beer Mat on the bottom of the plate, so with one bold thrust you stab at it with your fork, the result is that the fork travels through both Ham and Paper Plate, leaving you with the alarming sensation of the remaining Salad liquids going down your inside leg.

Under normal circumstances, you may be tempted to say 'enough is enough', but you cannot adopt that attitude at a 'Deluxe Yuk' Buffet, because it's 'Fruit Salad and Cream Time' folks. Naturally by the time you return to the Buffet Table, all the dry,

clean paper plates have run out, therefore you now endure the flavour of Fruit Salad, Cream, Mayonaise and the remains of Coleslaw Salad and to add insult to injury, you don't even get invited to the Honeymoon, which is very sad and extremely selfish.

Having returned from the 'Deluxe Yuk' Buffet, you stand alone in the bathroom, trying to restore your shirt sleeve with a damp sponge and longing for the time when you can indulge in a civilised meal, followed by a night of uninhibited lust.

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Swansea & District Spastic Association Ladies' Guild

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Vice-Chairman: NESTA MOORE
Treasurer: JOAN OWEN
Catering Officers: ELSIE ROWLANDS, JOYCE WILLIAMS, AMY HARRIS
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The Deputy Mayor and Mayoress of Swansea, Councillor and Mrs. Tyssul Lewis with members of the Swansea Spastics Ladies' Guild at a Sherry Evening at the Mansion House, Swansea. In the photograph are Mrs. Gwen Davies, Chairman; Mrs. Nesta Moore, Vice-Chairman; and Mrs. Barbara Hanney, Secretary.

The Ladies' Guild

AS ANTICIPATED, the last year has been rather less active than the previous one, when we were all striving so hard to raise the money for the mini-bus.

It was felt that to embark upon such another busy year would be asking too much of our members, whose numbers have now declined even further.

However, we have been by no means idle and our income for the year amounted to £4,119.39.

The number of organised events was deliberately curtailed, but a very enjoyable Sherry Evening was held at the Mansion House by kind permission of the Mayor and our Annual Christmas Fayre at the Patti Pavilion, although showing slightly reduced proceeds on last year was still very successful. Our thanks are due again to the many outside organisations and friends who contributed stalls to this event.



After officially opening the Swansea Spastics' Ladies' Guild Christmas Fayre, at the Patti Pavilion, Mr. Malcolm Walker, West Glamorgan Director of Social Services is presented with a cane tray by Miss Linda John, a trainee at Longfields Spastic Centre, West Cross. Also in the group are Mrs. Gwen Davies, Chairman of the Guild, Mrs. Barbara Hanney, Secretary and Mrs. Joan Owen, Treasurer.

Mrs. Jean Turner held a Fashion Show at Mumbles and several members held coffee or sherry mornings in their own homes or gardens and Mr. and Mrs. Evan Michael continued with their Mail Order Catalogue. The Guild benefits greatly from this venture and I should like to ask you to support Elaine and Evan by taking catalogues and passing them around among your friends. Christmas cards and other stationery items as well as gifts are listed in the catalogues which may be obtained through Matron at Longfields.

Two Variety Concerts were staged, both in the Morriston area and in connection with these, our thanks are extended to Mrs. Gwyneth Llewellyn who arranged the artists, including Miss Diane Cousins, the Welsh singer and comedienne. Miss Cousins is well known all over the country and abroad and has had her own T.V. series on BBC Wales, but was kind enough to take part in our show without a fee or expenses.

We were unable to hold our Shrove Tuesday Coffe Morning with Pancakes this year, unfortunately, as Longfields was being redecorated, but, as many enquiries were made regarding its non-appearance, we very much hope to restore it to our calendar next year.

Longfields, generally, has undergone a facelift this year and the Residential Unit was the last area to receive the treatment. Labour was provided by the Manpower Services Commission, but the Guild undertook to pay for all decorating materials used in the Residential Unit and also to engage a professional decorator for the lounge and to meet the cost of his services. The result is very pleasing and many compliments have been received since the work was completed.

It would be impossible here to mention every individual effort which has been made by members and friends during the past year, but to everyone who has helped us in any way at all, I extend our grateful thanks. Please be sure that your efforts are very well appreciated.

This has been another happy year in the life of the Guild, but I have to conclude on a sad note.

During the past few weeks we have been very concerned about the health of our friend and Vice-Chairman, Mrs. Isa Morgan. Isa has been unwell for some months and therefore unable to attend meetings and last week we received news of her death. Isa has been a most loyal Guild member, generous in her support of all our events and has for many years held an annual coffee morning at her home, which we all enjoyed immensely and which raised a considerable amount of money for the Guild. She was loved and respected by us all and will be sadly missed.

And, at the A.G.M. in June, we were sorry to receive the resignation of Mrs. Barbara Hanney, our Secretary for the

past seven years. Barbara is now working full time and feels that she can no longer maintain the necessary contact with the Guild to continue in office, but assures us of her continued support as a member.

Barbara has been a most conscientious and efficient Secretary and we thank her sincerely for her past work and look forward to seeing her whenever possible.

As no nominations were forthcoming for the office of Secretary, we are now without one. For the present, therefore, I shall do my best to act as Secretary, as well as holding office as Treasurer. With the support of our Chairman and the co-operation of all members, I hope that the Guild will continue successfully until the next A.G.M. when the position will be reviewed.

We have pledged our help in providing another vehicle for Longfields and we will honour that promise and I am confident that we shall always be on hand when Longfields needs any kind of help in the future.

JOAN OWEN
Hon. Treasurer

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Please tell others about us

Do You Believe

by Joyce Williams

IF SOMEONE said, do you believe in God,
I would have to say I do,
And looking round about me,
I'm sure that this is true.

For I have walked through bluebell woods,
And heard a blackbird sing,
And I have crossed a mountain stream,
On a lovely day in Spring.

And on a Summer's day, I have walked on the shore,
With the waves gently lapping the sand,
And I have seen small children at play,
Or walking hand in hand.

In Autumn too, when, apples are ripe,
And harvest time has come,
I have walked at evening through fields,
Made gold by the setting sun.

So, it's Winter once more and the weather is cold,
And the frost nips our fingers and toes,
And icicles hang from the branches of trees,
Like diamonds in a crown of gold.

And so through the year, as each season unfolds,
All around his creation I see,
From the first day of Spring, to the last of the year,
God will always exist for me.

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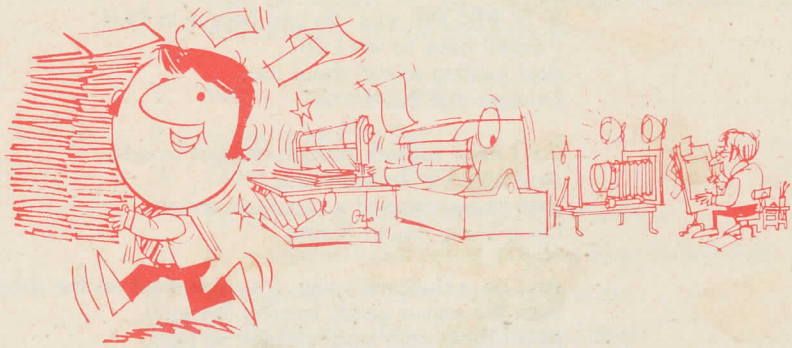
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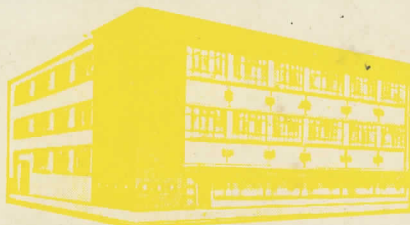
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