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& DISTRICT
SPASTIC
ASSOCIATION



*Activity Unit.
Mrs. Mary Fair - teacher, with Christine, Sandra and Cheryl*

Edited by
DEREK MILLER

1984-1985

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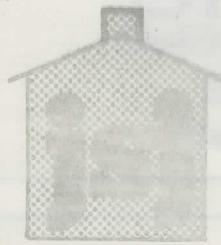
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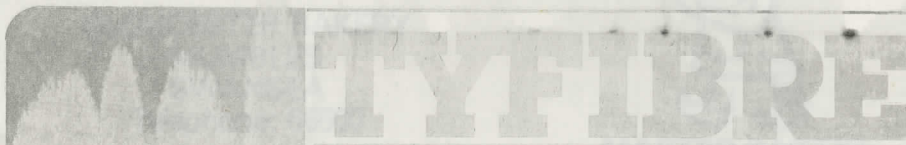
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The Swansea and District Spastic Association wish to express their
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Message from Alan Williams, M.P.



HOUSE OF COMMONS

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RECENTLY I SHOWED a disabled constituent in a wheelchair around the Houses of Parliament. I had not realised just how difficult a building it can be to negotiate.

I think this applies to most of us - we tend to assume that 'the Authorities' will have made the appropriate arrangements for people with special needs and difficulties. Our centre at Longfields disabuses anyone of this false pre-conception. It exists because a few individuals recognised that 'Mother State' still leaves loopholes. These loopholes may seem small in relation to the totality of problems which have to be met. But for those whose problem falls within

these gaps in State-provision there is nothing 'minor' in being an overlooked group. Obstacles not only seem immense, they are immense.

To realise the value of Longfields you just have to ask what would happen if it was not there. No real alternative exists. A group of young people desperately needing help and encouragement would be cast into hopelessness.

We have often had to live dangerously near 'hand-to-mouth' at the Centre. Please ask yourselves whether there is anything more you and your friends could do to give our young people a little more security in their lives.

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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

Chairman's Report

THE LAST TWELVE MONTHS seem to have passed rapidly by, but during this period there have been a number of events and changes connected with Longfields which we will long remember. Time has again taken its toll and we have lost several members of our Association. In January, 1984, Mr. Robert Wall, a faithful member of our management committee and a trustee, died after being in poor health for some time. Later this year we lost Mr. Elmur Thomas M.A., one of our early members who was vice-chairman for a few years and always a great supporter of our work at Longfields. Last May Mr. Evan Michael, father of Peter, one of our trainees, died after a long illness. He served on our management committee for many years, and with his wife, Elaine, did sterling work for Longfields in fund-raising and other ways. Two former members of our staff, Mrs. Mary Davies and Miss Mary Anderson, have also passed away after retiring through ill-health. They will all be sadly missed and our sympathy has been expressed to their respective families.

The various activities at Longfields Centre are being carried on with continuing interest and enthusiasm. Mr. Terence Powell, our new Work Centre Manager, started with us in November, 1983, after many years of work connected with disabled people and as a teacher. His experience enables him to bring some fresh ideas regarding the work here, especially training activities and leisure pursuits. Emphasis on more social and cultural development should add a new dimension to the search for fuller lives for the young people.

The financial year which ended 31st March, 1984, saw our annual expenditure in running Longfields reach



Gary Couch (Brother of Wendy), finished the Half Marathon in Cardiff (September, 1983). Gary was sponsored for Longfields and raised the sum of £325.

an all-time high, - £92,100, compared to £83,461 the previous year, but we have again managed to remain clear of debt. The increased expenditure is accounted for by the current inflation together with the cost of maintenance of our buildings and a large upward assessment of water, sewerage and environmental charges. Fund-raising is a continuing up-hill struggle and the Association is grateful to all who were concerned with our various efforts during the year.

The Work Centre receives fewer contracts because of the recession in industry, but demand for our handicraft work is as great as ever, and the printing section is kept going with orders.

The Care and Therapy Unit is nearly full to capacity and the Matron, Mrs. G. M. Watts, and her assistants are fully occupied as always with our most heavily handicapped people.

The Residential Unit has again been very useful for short-term care which is greatly appreciated by several members. The temporary residents are always happy there thanks to the kindness and dedication of the nursing care staff, — Mrs. M. Smith and her helpers.

Last May we were all sorry to learn that Mrs. Moi Pritchard, Senior Regional Officer for Wales of the Spastics Society, was retiring for health reasons after working with us for seven years. Moi has always been untiring in her efforts for the benefit of Cerebral Palsied people and we shall miss her greatly. She has our best wishes for improved health in her retirement.

At a recent meeting of the Association it was gratifying to see a number of younger parents present who were interested in our work although there is far more provision for disabled children's education and welfare now than there was in the early years of our existence. We are very conscious of the fact that the average age of our members has crept up over the years, therefore new members are welcomed so as to ensure the future of Longfields as a good, progressive Centre for people with Cerebral Palsy.

Finally, I would like to thank all members of our staff at Longfields for the way they carry out their duties and their dedication to the well-being of those in their care. To all our friends and supporters we again offer our sincere thanks for their unfailing help and goodwill.

OWEN J. LEWIS
(July, 1984)



Paul Comisini, a student at Dumbarton School, Swansea, presents a cheque for £500 to Mr. O. J. Lewis, Chairman of Swansea and District Spastics Association, at Longfields Centre, June, 1984. Included in the photograph are Mr. H. G. Austin, Hon. Treasurer, Mrs. G. M. Watts, Matron, Mr. T. Powell, Work Centre Manager and Mr. D. H. Aled Thomas (left) headmaster of Dumbarton School, which raised and donated the money. Mr. Aled Thomas is the son of the late Mr. D. Elmur Thomas, M.A., who supported Longfields for twenty-nine years.

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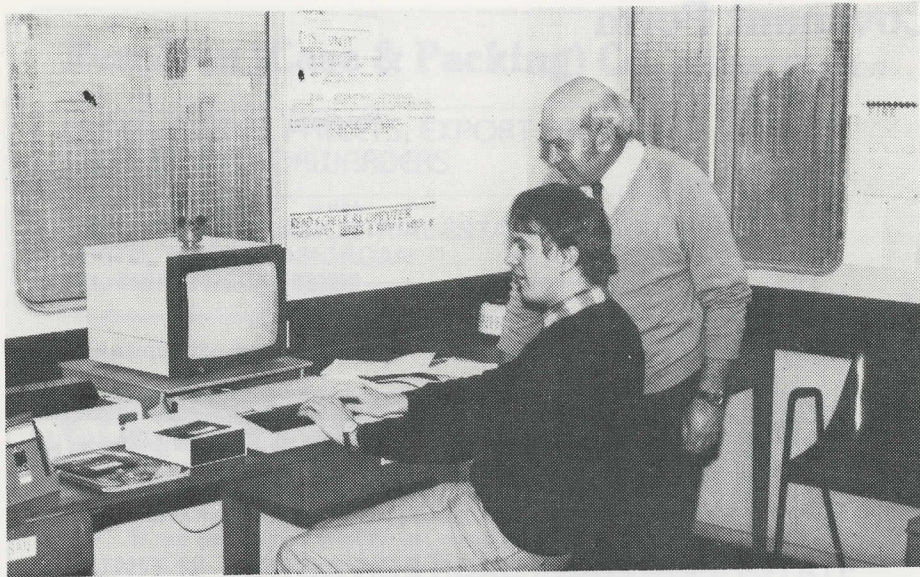
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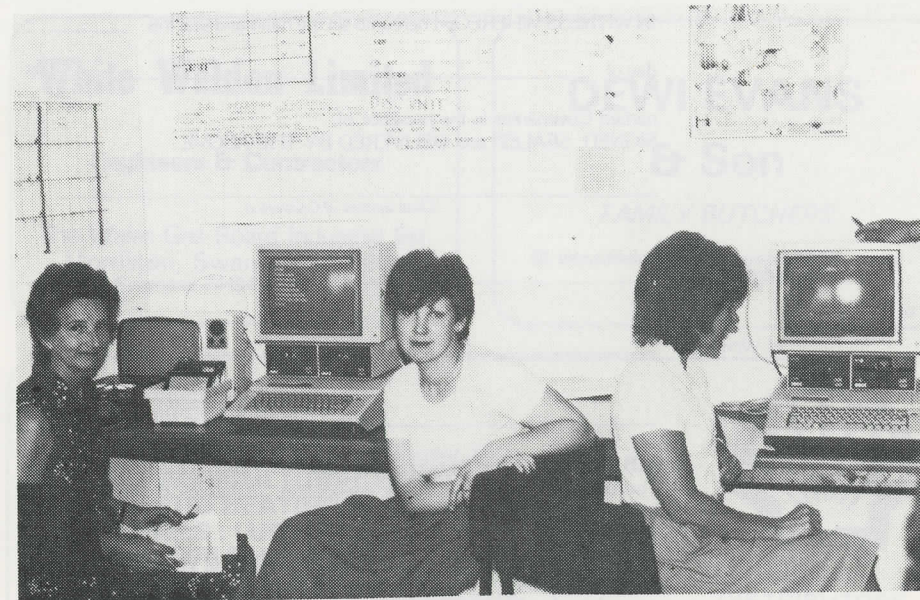
N.B. This form should be returned to Harold G. Austin, Honorary Treasurer,
The Swansea and District Spastic Association, 'Longfields', 6 Bethany Lane,
West Cross, Swansea SA3 5TL.

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year £7.14 (based on a basic rate of Income Tax of 30%).

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Beaufort Works - Computer Block



City of Swansea - Community Programmes

Computer Services - For Disabled

THE COMPUTER Service Project for Disabled has been in operation since June, 1983. It has two basic functions, one to employ disabled persons on micro-computers, and two, to give demonstrations to handicapped and disabled societies and institutions.

The demonstrations are two fold in that they enable organisers and management to appreciate the micro-computer as an aid to the disabled and, secondly, for the disabled to use games and educational programs, thereby gaining knowledge without strain or stress. In the past months we have visited The Adult Training Centre, the Spastics Work Centre at Longfields and the Mission for the Deaf and Dumb at St. James Crescent. These organisations have seen the potential of the micro-computer in aiding the handicapped in learning and occupying their time beneficially.

The first visit to Longfields was on 15th September, 1983, and this was also the first outside demonstration of the Computer Service. After this visit many new programs were obtained, more suitable to the needs of the trainees.

A further demonstration was arranged and occurred on the 24th January, 1984. The computer was set-up, and the session began with a small group seeing a selection of educational programs.

When the group had gained confidence in the computer, they individually operated the computer with programs appertaining to their skill levels. The afternoon passed quickly and all who participated from the various groups were enthusiastic and grateful.

It was obvious from the computer service point of view that such visits not

only helped the organisations and institutions to see future techniques in education by computers for the disabled, but also the computers occupational usage.

We, the Computer Service, are looking forward to further visits, in order that the maximum benefits can be obtained by the Swansea and District Spastic Association.

We have proven conclusively that our disabled staff can demonstrate the general application of the micro-computer, and can use the computer for data entry work. This definitely enhances their prospects of finding new employment. One of the previous group has succeeded in gaining a place on a systems analyst course, thus showing there are no real limitations to progress in the computer field.

There are many new applications for micro-computers, and these varied uses should provide more scope for handicapped people.

We have taken on a new group of disabled for our second year of operation and look forward to their progress to new permanent employment. Our existing staff are acquiring skills in operating micro-computers. We are located at the Beaufort Works, Morriston, and we are available to give demonstrations of micro-computers to voluntary organisations and institutions within the City limits.

It is also possible for us to give individuals (who are disabled) demonstrations to see if it would be of some benefit to them, either as a pleasant past-time or to help with minor educational programs.

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A Change in Emphasis

I WOULD LIKE TO THANK everyone at Longfields, staff and members of the Swansea and District Spastic Association for the warm welcome I have received during my first year with the Wales Region. I have a long way to go before I can help the Society match the kind of pioneering service provision for disabled people that members of the Swansea Association have worked so hard and so long for. It is for this reason that I am particularly grateful for the acceptance I have received and the chance to gain from their experience.

It is often difficult for young people to visualise the time, hard work **and** disappointments that make up what is called 'experience'. However, it is essential that good communication exists between people of all ages if cerebral palsied people in Swansea are to continue to benefit.

So, I am especially glad that young parents of cerebral palsied children are currently joining the Swansea Association.

They will soon find out how much they have to offer each other **and** the Association.

It is therefore, very appropriate that 1985, has been designated by the United Nations 'International Youth Year' (IYY). Throughout the world, nations will be highlighting the specific needs and aspirations of young people between the ages of fifteen and twenty-five. I hope that in Wales, the Spastics Society can use the philosophy of IYY to encourage many young disabled people to get involved in the decision-making processes around them - the emphasis upon their youth rather than their disability.

I am looking forward to working with the Swansea Association and young disabled people in Swansea to further the aims of what is their year - 1985. Here's to success!

ANNA HIAM
Regional Officer, Wales

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Focal Point

IT IS WITH GREAT PLEASURE that I take this opportunity in contributing to the 84/85 Year Book. Over the past two years I have been the Region's Appeals Officer in Mid and South Glamorgan and it is now with great anticipation that I look forward to the challenge of fund-raising in Dyfed and West Glamorgan, as well as my old area of Mid Glamorgan.

Longfields provides a wonderful focal point for fund-raising and I hope that over the forthcoming period, with a door knock and a number of projects planned that I will be able to provide as much support as possible to the centre.

Many thanks to everyone at Longfields who have given me such a warm welcome and to all those who have given me so much advice and support since I joined the Society.

NIGEL C. BOSANKO
Appeals Officer, Wales

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Waiting for Lunch with Care Assistant Miss Guenno Rees.



Activity Unit, Percussion Band.



Mrs. Daisy Hughes and Jackie with Ann, Dennis and Malcolm in the Care Unit.



Activity Unit, with Cheryl Wendy, Peter, Menna and Sandra supervised by Melaie - Relief Teacher.

M. S. C. Community Theatre Project

THE M. S. C. Community Theatre project began at the Dylan Thomas Theatre in September, 1983, one of the aims being to integrate the handicapped and non-handicapped in workshops and productions.

Our first production in November of that year was on the theme of imprisonment, and included members of Fforestfach A.T.C., and Brondeg House. Since then, we have staged productions of 'Captain Noah and His Floating Zoo' (Flanders' and Horivitz's musical rendition of the Biblical story, mimed to by members of the A.T.C. group) and 'Prize Onions' by Eynon Evans, performed by a cast of project members and volunteers from Brondeg House, where the play was staged.

Throughout our preparation of these productions, we have also been running workshops with Fforestfach A.T.C.; Cwmbra Day Centre; Brondeg House; the Chest, Heart and Stroke Association; and Longfields Spastic Centre.

In March of this year a group from Longfields began attending workshops; these included a warm-up, vocal exercises, theatre games, and acting improvisations. Although the Longfields group have not as yet taken part in a production, they have gained in confidence over the past four months and enjoy their fortnightly visits to the theatre.

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I enclose a donation of £ _____
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Address: _____

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Form of Bequest

To: _____
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proper officer for the time being of the Association be sufficient discharge of the
same.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Signed: _____ Date _____

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Longfields Leisurecrafts

IN JANUARY, we paid another visit to the Glynn Vivian Art Gallery, this time to see the Gerald Scarfe exhibition - his models of Prince Andrew, Mrs. Thatcher and General Montgomery, etc., caused some amusement. Also in the Gallery was a much enjoyed exhibition of paintings by Ray Howard Jones, the Pembrokeshire artist - we have one of her paintings - and she told us how well she remembered painting it for the opening of Longfields many years ago.

Brian Nicholls enjoys working with porcelain and stoneware. He is producing some very pleasing plaques, etc., as seen in the accompanying photograph. We also do some painting now and then.

The snooker table, although small, is well used and is a favourite with Vivian.

MARJORIE K. WILLIAMS



Brian Nicholls displays some of his pottery.

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.

Best wishes from

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What's in a Name . . .

by Owen Davies

THE NEWLY APPOINTED Director of The Spastics Society, Sir John Cox, recently stated that the name 'Spastic' filled him with horror and it should be replaced by the correct medical name 'Cerebral Palsy'.

Furthermore, in an effort to add validity to this stupid idea, Sir John added that most of the Spastic people he had spoken to, also hated the name 'Spastic'.

However, in response, I would like to ask the question WHY? Surely it is far more beneficial to let able-bodied people know WHO you are, rather than spend abortive hours worrying about WHAT you are.

Obviously it doesn't take much thought to realise how this superfluous hatred has reached fruition. I'm reasonably sure that this is purely a psychological problem, created by Spastic people being grouped together for unhealthy long periods of time.

The other main contributing factor is environmental. Just think what exactly happens to a Spastic person from the moment he or she leaves their mother's womb, for the initial eighteen years of life you are systematically processed and graded, like Frozen Peas, by the Medical and Educational Professions.

This 'processing' environment is created for convenience sake. Unfortunately it has to be this way, otherwise if Surgeons and Teachers had to assess the true potential of each Spastic Child, it would take longer than eighteen years and its highly possible that they would still reach the wrong conclusions.

Having reached eighteen, you are then passed on because even now you're not an individual, more the 'booby' prize in an endless game of 'Pass The Parcel', and the music is playing so fast that no-one has time to find out what you can do, so you are 'plonked' in a Work Centre with yet another group of Spastic people.

After a while the next stage of 'processing' will take place, an offer of a vacancy in that nice Residential Home, just around the corner from the Work Centre.

Thus the circle of conformity is complete, you are now living and working with the same Spastic people which you went to school with, therefore it is natural that a feeling of 'hate' should build up.

But is it a hatred of the name 'Spastic?' I suggest it's far more likely to be a form of rebellious boredom and social frustration, caused by being in the company of the same type of people as yourself, which in turn makes you obsessed by our disability and unaware of your individuality.

This basic environmental situation cannot be corrected merely by changing the name of the disability, that is purely cosmetic nonsense, dreamed up by Sir John just to make an impression on gullible parents.

As for the parents, its high time they stopped taking soft options and began demanding that the full potential of their son or daughter should be uncovered, instead of allowing other people to load them on to a carriage of convenience which leads nowhere.

On a more personal, self indulgent level, I'm not suggesting that being a 'Spastic' in today's society is a ball of fun, on the other hand, I cannot see anything positive in being miserable, or accepting hollow advice from people more interested in their professional reputation than in my future.

Naturally I am fortunate not to be as heavily disabled as some and I have this 'time share' agreement with my brain, which comes into operation several times a year bearing a selection of ideas ranging from quite logical to extremely daft, plus I have this strange, almost obsessive desire to do things well, therefore I regard failure with gross annoyance.

At one stage of my life I had a long list of regrets and disappointments which were created by my spasticity. However, now my sole regret is that this disability places a huge anchor on my sex life, which is rather unfortunate at a time when 'sleeping around' is increasing in popularity.

For some strange reason I constantly find myself in the company of ladies of my mother's age group, there's nothing wrong with that, its just that these ladies cannot refresh the parts that younger ones can!!

Added to this is the occasional sprinkling of Social Workers, these fall into two categories, the D.H.S.S. type have a basic approach, providing you have a Pension Book and an Orange Badge on your car - then the world's your oyster.

Whereas Social Workers employed by The Spastic Society, adopt the horticultural approach, they appear to see a strong similarity between Spastic people and Rubber Plants, providing you are fed and watered regularly, you will reach maturity and complete contentment.

They always hope that any human emotions or sexual aspirations will wear off given time, I wouldn't like to say Social Workers are sexually bashful, but I've a feeling that they think 'fornication' is a new shade of Emulsion Paint.

Doubtless if Sir John Cox could change these attitudes it would be of far greater assistance than changing the name of the disability.

Another major problem would arise from Sir John's idea, namely Fund-Raising, living as we do in an age of ever increasing costs, it would be an act of financial suicide to confuse the general public, who have supported the Association during the past thirty or more years.

Throughout this time, most members have played a dual role, firstly in educating the public as to what exactly a 'Spastic' is, then trying to persuade them that financial support will be of greater short and long-term benefit.

Being in the company of able-bodied people most of the time, I can certainly verify that this tactic has paid off, no longer do people stand and stare, instead they just accept me for what I am, a person with a disability.

In these circumstances, it is quite easy to see what would happen if you began throwing 'Cerebral Palsy' at them, or even worse, if you stated that this was merely another name for 'Spastic' Mr. and Mrs. Average would become totally bewildered and would return to the psychological dark ages, when every disabled person was referred to as 'you poor sole'.

In conclusion, I feel that for anyone to openly state that they hate the word 'Spastic' is an act of outrageous ungratefulness towards parents, who in general, have come to terms with the numerous

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problems associated with having a disabled child, in a courageous and dedicated manner.

It hurts me deeply to realise that I will never be able to thank my parents, in a materialistic way, for all the love and help they have so willingly given, all I can do is to try and make the most of my

WE ARE DELIGHTED TO REPORT that Owen Davies, won First Prize in the General Interests Section of the 1983, National Literary Contest for the Handicapped for a 2,000 word article on learning to drive entitled 'Oh! L it's Owen' which was described by the judge as "very funny, defiant and highly entertaining." This is the fifth time that Owen has won an award in the last eleven years.

Mrs. Gwen Davies and Owen went off to London on Thursday, 20th October, for a reception at Fitzroy Square when Owen was presented with his award.

Owen's article appeared in last year's Year Book. On behalf of everyone in the Association, we congratulate Owen on his fine achievement.

limitations, thus showing my parents that their efforts were not exactly abortive.

Obviously this life-style is far from easy, in fact I often see myself as an idiot — who dives into life's swimming pool — hoping to come to the surface, but at least its more productive than worrying about a Name.

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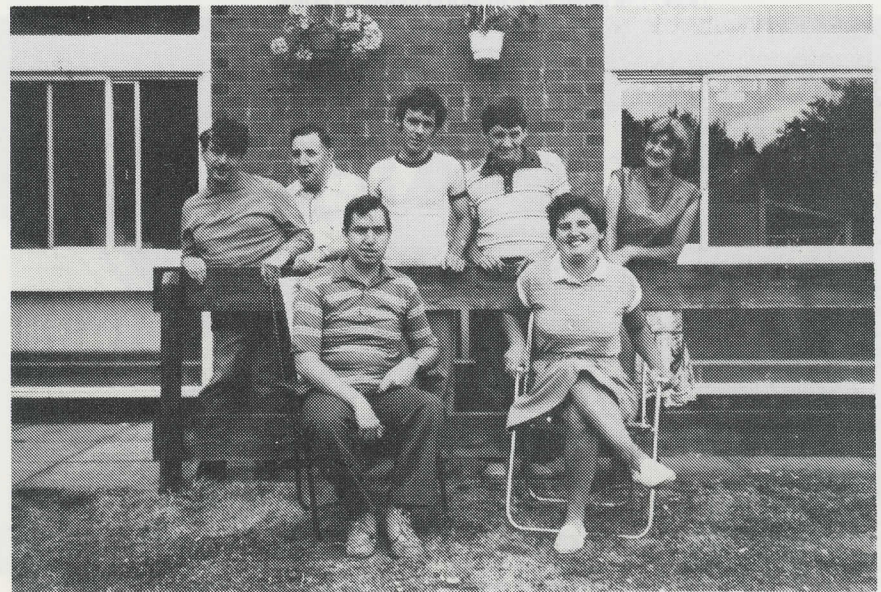
Mr. O. J. Lewis, Chairman, with Mr. & Mrs. George Owens and Mr. Terence Powell, admire the garden with Mr. & Mrs. Emrys Williams.



Some of the staff outside the house - Longfields.



Trainees relax outside the Work Centre.



More trainees relax outside the Work Centre.

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Swansea Spastics Ladies' Guild

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Councillor John Allison, leader of West Glamorgan County Council, who officially opened Swansea and District Spastics Association Christmas Fayre at the Patti Pavillion, is shown one of the seasonal gifts by Mrs. Gloria Watts, matron of Longfields Spastics' centre, West Cross. Looking on are Mrs. Allison, Mrs Gwen Davies, chairman of the Ladies' Guild which organised the event, and Mrs. Nesta Moore, vice-chairman.

The Ladies' Guild

EACH YEAR, when the time comes to prepare for the Year Book an item about the Ladies' Guild, I wonder how to begin. This year is no exception.

The balance sheet for the year 1983/84 shows that the proceeds for the year were £4,419.98, and to have made that amount of money must have entailed a degree of work on the part of all our members. However, looking back through the year, I can only remember a series of very pleasant occasions when we were all together.

It is good to be able to combine work with pleasure and this is a hallmark of our Guild.

Our Christmas Fayre this year was opened by Councillor John Allison, leader of West Glamorgan County Council and Mrs. Allison, and was again very successful, raising £1,282.40. There were problems at the Patti Pavilion, but our stalwart catering officers overcame these and presented their usual excellent teas. This year we had our most successful ever Pancake Day coffee morning, which raised £236.77, and a slightly larger sum was the result of a Variety Concert held at the Dyffryn Club, Morriston, with the help of Mrs. Gwyneth Llewlyn. Two of our members held their annual coffee mornings in their homes to swell our funds, and to them, and to all who have helped with our fundraising during the year we extend our thanks.

Tribute must be paid to Evan Michael, whose death in May came as a shock to us all. Evan was a loyal supporter of the Guild and was very appreciative of our work. He was always ready with advice of a practical nature, particularly during the purchase of the two ambulances, and



Denise Lucas (Secretary) using the photocopier machine, presented by the Ladies' Guild.

for some years past he and Elaine have run the Mail Order project for the Guild, making a great deal of money. Over Christmas 1983 alone the commission amounted to more than £800. We shall all miss Evan. For a few years we have been an officer short in the Guild, and we were therefore, most pleased, at the annual general meeting in June, to welcome Jean Powell as our new Treasurer. Jean is a long standing member of the Guild and has been helping Longfields for many years in support of her sister Wendy, whose son Lawrence was at Longfields before moving to Dyfatty Special School. We are grateful to Jean for her past help, and for taking on this office, which will, I am sure, contribute towards the more efficient running of the Guild.

During the Year we were able to make the final payment for the Mercedes Benz ambulance, and to purchase a photocopying machine for the use of the Association. In addition to these two donations we have also purchased replacement equipment for the residential unit to the value of £200.

In achieving these aims there has been complete co-operation between officers and members of the Guild, and a considerable amount of assistance from the general public, particularly from other women's groups. Practical help is always freely given by Mr. Austin, Denise and Matron, and to all these friends we extend our gratitude.

Plans are already laid for the fundraising events in the autumn, and hopefully these will bring some more much needed money for Longfields.

Recently we have made contacts which we hope will result in new members for the Guild.

To anyone who would like to consider joining us I should like to welcome them to our meetings which are held on the second Tuesday of each month (except August) in the Friend's Meeting Hall Annexe in Page Street at 10.30a.m.

JOAN OWEN
Hon. Secretary



Mrs. Joan Owen, Secretary of the Ladies Guild, with Mrs. Daisy Hughes, in the Care Unit with Malcolm.

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Self-Advocacy for Handicapped People

SELF-ADVOCACY for people who are called 'handicapped' is the fundamental right to express themselves to others in whatever way they find most effective. This may involve acquiring the skills of speaking for themselves in discussion groups, or committees or at conferences, or it may occur in the creative arts (painting a picture, composing or performing a piece of music, writing a poem or working out a dance), or it may simply involve having a casual conversation with someone.

However it manifests itself, the essential truth is the individual's assertion of **their** identity, their voice. They are asking to be taken seriously and treated as equals in any communication that occurs. When this happens, they learn to make choices and decisions, to understand commitment and to relate to other people.

Clearly, 'speaking for yourself' will mean different things for different people. Some people may not have the language to verbalise their thoughts and feelings in the manner to which society is accustomed. This does not mean that they are incapable of expressing themselves **at all**; it does however place an even greater onus on the people in their lives, to work out what they are trying to communicate. This is a challenge, and can at times be frustrating, but it is exciting when the connection is made.

Professionals working in this area have a special responsibility to their 'charges'. Facilitating people to speak for themselves can lay oneself open to charges of manipulation (in terms of choice of subject, and influencing discussion). Therefore, it is particularly important to clarify your aims and objectives before you start. It is quite reasonable to have strong views about the way handicapped people are treated, and to express your opinions where and when it is appropriate, but in self-advocacy work one needs to try and 'stand back' a bit, so that what emerges is truly representative of the individuals and the group concerned. In this way other people's pre-conceptions will be challenged; it then becomes harder to explain away the achievement of the handicapped people in question.

Self-advocacy work is currently developing at a fair pace in Britain. It is very encouraging to know this, and it would undoubtedly benefit groups to be in contact with one another. Hopefully, some sort of network can be established, so all of us can gain.

— Adapted from an article by
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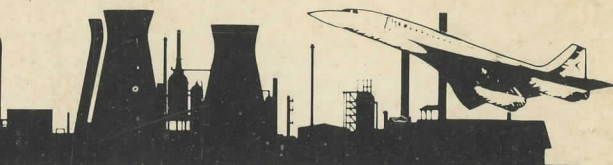
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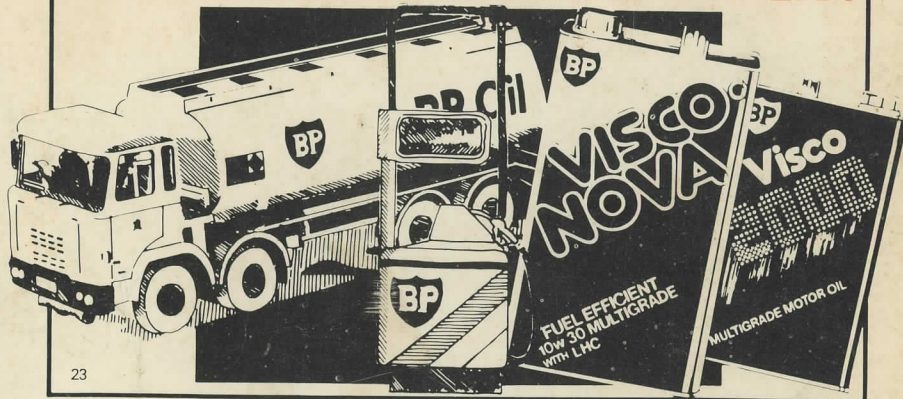
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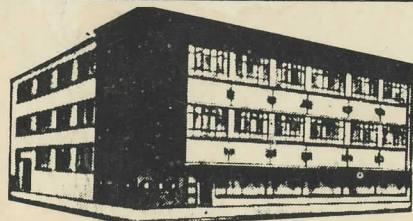
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