



Access Points

A newsletter from **Deaf Access**,
Bromley Resource Centre for the Hearing impaired

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Access points is the newsletter of Deaf Access, The Bromley Resource Centre for the Hearing Impaired

Community House
South Street,
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See back page for contact details.

Friends!

Are you one of our friends? Friends get a coloured copy of our quarterly Newsletter and are invited to our AGM/special events.

Be the first to be informed of events, courses and new services locally!

It's still only £11.00 per year (21p a week! - £7.00 for OAP/unemployed. Email £5)



DEAF AWARENESS WEEK



Hearing is one of our most vital, but neglected senses. More than 9 million people in the UK suffer from some degree of hearing loss but only around 2 million seek professional advice.

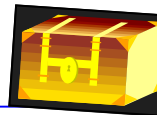
7th - 13th May 2007 is National **Deaf Awareness Week** - where organisations all over the county are working to raise awareness of deafness. The theme is **'Look at Me'** - emphasising the need to improve understanding of the range of deafness by highlighting the many different methods of communication used by Deaf, Deafened, Deafblind and Hard of Hearing people, such as sign language and lipreading.

On **Friday 11th May Deaf Access** is hosting **'A Window on Deafness'** day, which is entirely free of charge. We begin the morning at 10.30am - 11.30am with **'signing for fun'**, followed at 12.30pm - 1.30pm, by a **fun quiz** using simple BSL/Mime. (No BSL skills needed!) Then in the afternoon a basic Deaf Awareness course, including a talk entitled **'A Hearing Child Growing up with Deaf Parents in the 1950's'**.

So don't be shy, do come along and 'Look Through the Window'! For more information please contact **Mary Coleman** at Deaf Access, for details.



Sunday 6th May - 'Children of Deaf Parents UK' and Deaf Access are organising a **Family Fun Day**, including a Treasure Hunt at Swinley Forest in Bracknell. See their web site for full details: www.codpuk.org.uk



A company in Birmingham are organising a **'Deaf For A Day'** programme for selected members of the hearing public to experience the effects of what being severely deaf has on ones life. The ears will be blocked using a special putty through a painless, totally reversible procedure. Once done, the volunteer will then be taken out into the town to conduct day to day tasks, for a unique experience of what it can be like to become severely deaf.

Thoughts of a Deaf Child

My family knew I was deaf
When I was only three,
And since then fifteen years ago,
Have never signed to me.

I know when I'm around my house
I try and use my voice,
It makes them feel more comfortable
... For me, I have no choice.

I try to communicate their way
Uncomfortable for me,
My parents wouldn't learn to sign
- Ashamed or apathy?

I never cared about the sounds
Of radios or bands,
What hurts me is I never heard
My parent's signing hands.

Stephen





Manager's Report

Susan Craney

Dear Friends

We hope you are enjoying the spring weather and looking forward to the year ahead! Like the plants we too are working hard 'opening up' our services to neighbouring boroughs!

With limited funds and re-sources many charities are

now working in partnership to give better value - see page 6 for the news 'Hot off the press!' of a new NHS Battery & Tubing Clinic!

The staff have recently had a shuffle to focus on specific skills and services which we feel will make us more effective.

Jonny and new advocate Matty Powe will soon be starting projects for families and children. See next issue in July for details!

You are invited to have a Glance Around the Equipment Room Door – on page 5, Pam takes us through the changes!

Could you spare 2 - 4 hours minimum a week? As we are growing we need more Volunteers – do contact us if you are interested.

Now settle down and enjoy your latest newsletter - we look forward to seeing you soon!

Warm regards Sue

PAT ON THE BACK ? - or - COULD DO BETTER ?

As you know at **Deaf Access** we try to cater for the local Deaf and Hard of Hearing community, be it Awareness Courses, Clubs, Communication, and the like. Here are some of your views and comments. Please keep in touch!

Understanding Your Deafness - 2nd Course:

'The 2 hr. session was both enlightening and very helpful.' - **Ray Crampin**

'I feel I am being drawn into the deaf world when I want to stay in the hearing world.' - **Irene Geraldine**

'I had not realised before, that you can get help in so many different ways.' - **Muriel Hart**

Access Points:

"Congratulations on a good issue of 'Access Points!'"
Jenny Froude - Bromley Chain

'I have just received my copies of the current 'Access Points' and wish to congratulate you on an excellent Edition.' - **Alan Roberts**

Deaf Access Quiz Night:

'Thank you for making me feel so welcome last night I really enjoyed it. I found successfully communicating with you all, very satisfying.'

Jan Chart

Cochlear Implants* :

The debate about Cochlear Implants still continues:

In the last issue we had the views from two mothers, Kate Rowley & Sandra Niklaus. Sandra would just like to clarify that, '80% of young C.I.'s speech development were not up to expectations, rather than 80% C.I. operations fail.'

Further to this, **Kenneth Colpus** has this to say on the subject : 'I was very surprised to read that only 20% of children receiving implants make some improvement, as I understood that the success rate was well over 50% getting some improvement and 25% making big strides forward.'

* See Page 4 - Ed.

Although '**Access Points**' likes to encourage our readers to submit their views and opinions, we respectfully remind you, contributor's opinions and statements, made throughout the Newsletter, do not necessarily reflect our views, and therefore we cannot be held responsible.

STILL SMILING AFTER 26 YEARS !



Maria Carpenter Accepting her Long Service Award

Maria Carpenter must love her job as she only intended to try it out for a month but ended up staying for 26 years! Maria works here at Deaf Access for Social Services as a Technical Officer for the deaf and hard of hearing.

In February of this year she was invited along with other council workers to receive her long service award from the Mayor of Bromley, Cllr. Charles Joel. The head of Leisure Services,

Terry Rich, spoke very highly of her ability to get the job done with the least amount of bother.

She began her working life with the council as a telephonist, first based at the old Anerley Town Hall and later transferring to Bromley Civic

Centre. By 1989, after working in various departments within the council she came to social services, where she worked in the Finance Dept.

It was not until 2002 that Maria decided to change jobs and join everyone here at Deaf Access. She says 'I did wonder at my time of life whether a career change was a good idea, but with the support of my family and friends, it turned out the best thing I ever did. I never knew anything about the deaf world before, but can now communicate through sign, albeit somewhat slow, and really enjoy interacting and getting involved with the deaf community.'

Sue Craney, manager at Deaf Access said, 'Maria has been a wonderful asset to our team. Her level headed approach, enthusiasm and humour has enabled us to all work together for the benefit of the local Deaf and hard of hearing community – with laughter on the way!'

'Congratulations Maria - Well, with all those accolades, looks like you should get ready to stay on for another 26 years!!'

DIRTY DANCING - THE HOTTEST SHOW IN TOWN !

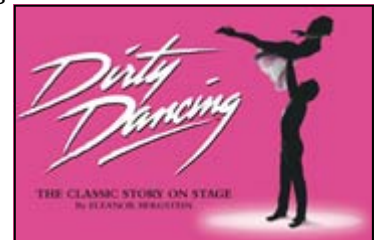


Dirty Dancing at the Aldwych Theatre in London's West End has a signed performance on Saturday 7th July at 2.30pm. Tickets are reduced to £45 (normally £60) So book early for this popular show as there are only a limited amount of tickets available.

Full details on:
www.theatresign.com

Or contact:

Terry Ruane: terry@theatresign.com Direct Line: 8002 020 8654
Minicom: 020 8654 2505 Fax: 020 8654 9282



DISABILITY VOICE

Disability Voice Bromley is an independent organisation. Its membership is open to people with physical disabilities or sensory impairment, their carers, representatives of voluntary organisations and individual professionals with an interest in its objectives. Its main role is to act as a link between its members, the voluntary sector and the statutory authorities. We aim to be a proactive and effective means of consultation for these organisations with people who use their services. This includes the planning, change and development of health and social care services, as well as matters involving transport, access, housing and employment within Bromley.

The Steering Committee would like Disability

Voice Bromley to reflect the issues that its current membership wants to be addressed and to raise matters of concern to them, not just respond to consultations generated by the statutory bodies. We are currently developing our web site and publishing a new information leaflet. We hope to increase our active membership so that people can become involved in the things that really matter to them.

You could influence the services provided on your behalf and make your views known simply by joining and becoming involved with Disability Voice Bromley. To find out more, or to join the organisation, contact our Secretary, **Colleen Melmore**:
e-mail: pdsiforum@aol.com.

SAVING SOMEONE'S LIFE

Whilst perusing my husband's fishing magazine I noticed this article concerning how to survive a heart attack when alone. Although fishing might not be your sport of choice this information might just be the catch of the day and save your life.

For one moment just imagine, you are all alone and suddenly start experiencing a severe pain in your chest that begins to radiate into your arm and up to your jaw. Even if you manage to ring 999, you don't know if

you'll be able to hang on before help arrives.....

Since many people are alone when they suffer a heart attack, without help, the person whose heart is beating improperly and who begins to feel faint, apparently has only about 10 seconds left before losing consciousness.

Do Not Panic - but start coughing repeatedly and very vigorously taking a deep breath before each cough; the cough must be deep and prolonged,

as when producing sputum from deep inside the chest. A breath and a cough must be repeated about every 2 seconds without let-up until help arrives, or until the heart is beating normally again.

Deep breathing gets oxygen into the lungs and coughing movements squeeze the heart and keep the blood circulating. The squeezing pressure on the heart also helps it to regain normal rhythm. In this way, heart attack victims can get to hospital. **Ed.**

ANOTHER VIEW ON COCHLEAR IMPLANTS

Margaret Hogarth is a Deaf Access Volunteer and was born with a progressive form of deafness. She learnt to speak very late (3 yrs. plus) and floundered in her early years at school. Following an audiogram at 7½ yrs of age, she was fitted with her first, of many, hearing aids. Finally, in her fifties she was fitted with a cochlear implant. This is what Margaret has to say:

'My hearing loss had been on a steady downward roll and by 2000 the loss was accelerating. Day to day life involved relentless lipreading and apologising for not hearing which was very tiring. Simple things like following conversation at family lunches had become very difficult. With aids, I could no longer hear the telephone ringing, smoke alarms or doorbells.

In 2003 I was referred to RNTNEH and had extensive testing. I was then offered an implant and joined the waiting list of one year. I found it a big decision as there was no certainty as to the outcome, except the confidence of the team that I would hear better.

The operation lasted 3 hours, some of this time was spent testing the implant. Afterwards I felt pretty much as if I had just had some lengthy dental treatment. Six weeks later, switch on took place – a very surreal and surprising experience! Initially the first of many tunings was done to program the speech processor for the ear. This involves listening to sounds on each channel followed by a calibration exercise; it took about an hour. Afterwards the days of the week and

'when's your birthday?' were spoken (no lipreading) so it was extraordinary to hear that!

Initially all voices including mine, sounded very hoarse, sibilant, and as if they coming from the other side of the room, but pitch became much more realistic over the next few weeks and distance less embodying. It was amazing that



Margaret Hogarth

first day to go on a London bus and hear the screech of brakes, bells and people talking - it was like a concert. I could hear birds in the garden, the first time for many years. Some sounds were new: a mobile phone ringing, and the screeching in the supermarket was not a housewife having a breakdown - it was the noise the trolleys made! The early weeks were tiring, getting used to all the new sounds, and it was wonderful to have the support of the team. They were unfailingly helpful, kind and patient.

The implant has surpassed my expectations. I can now use the phone with people I know, I don't often have to ask my family to repeat things and I have even bought my first radio! I have also managed at the theatre sitting at the front with a personal loop system. There are still areas of difficulty and these lie mainly with following-rapid speech, unfamiliar words and speech against background noise.

Margaret Hogarth

A GLANCE AROUND THE EQUIPMENT ROOM DOOR



The equipment room was refurbished last year (thanks to funding from the **Hayes (Kent) Trust!**) complete with a new television with an excellent sound quality, together with several pieces of new equipment as described

below.

DOORBELL

There are now 6 different types.



Libra + Flashing Door Chime

The Libra + flashing door chime (£43.13) has completely changed and at 89 decibels is probably the loudest. Another one of interest is the rechargeable door chime (£34.98). This can be taken from its cradle and carried about then put back to be recharged.

We also have a portable vibrating door chime (£28.20) which can be attached to a belt.

TELEPHONES

Most telephones now, besides being compatible with the "T" switch on the hearing aid, can be used "hands free". This means both ears can be used and I have found this is of great benefit to some people.

There are 3 new cordless phones on show BT610 (awaiting price details), BT650 (£42.54) and the BT6300 (£51.00).

Maybe the most exciting new product is the screen phone (£199.00) (see photo on the right). For a person who can speak, but not hear the incoming voice, it is ideal. A Typetalk operator relays the incoming caller's voice into text for you to read on a large screen. It is much easier to use than a Minicom and can be used as a normal phone by the rest of the family.

LISTENING AIDS

The pocket talker (£61.45 with headphones), (£81.95 with neckloop) and the minitech (£52.50) have now both been upgraded and Sarabec have introduced the crescendo 50 (£49.50).

All of these work with batteries so are completely portable. They need to be tried to find out which is the most suitable for your hearing loss. All can be used for conversation, or listening to TV and radio.

The Infralight (Infrared) (£89.00) and Radiolight (radio waves) (£109.00) systems are proving

popular. These can be used with neckloop or stetosets for listening to the TV, hi-fi and radio without worrying about trailing cables.



The Infralight Sys-

We now have two new, very keen volunteers working with me thus we hope to soon extend the times when demonstrations can be available. (So maybe I will have time to put my feet up and have a cup of tea !)

REMEMBER you are always welcome to come and try out the equipment and find out what is best for you, - as this often takes a long time, it is always best to make an appointment.

If you are house bound we can arrange for Social Services to visit, please remember

they can only carry a limited number of items for you to try. These appointments will take a little longer to organise as they are both very busy.



The Screen Phone

Just one more thing to bear in mind, if you do have a hearing loss and need an amplified phone, it is often best to buy from RNID as you do not have to pay the VAT.

Pam Rogers

Access Points

ANTIQUES HELP DEAF ACCESS

Another successful Antique & collectors Fair was held at Hayes Free Church on March 17th raising £1,400, which is shared jointly between the Rotary Club of Langley Park and Deaf Access. It was the fifteenth fair held raising over £17,400 over that period on a 50 /50 basis.

It is a very happy occasion when stallholders enjoy themselves as well as the public. It is only possible to hold this event due to the support given to me by members of the Rotary Club of Langley Park and some Deaf Access friends.



Please put in your diary the next fair at Hayes Free Church, Pickhurst Lane, Hayes, which is to be held on Saturday 3rd November 2007. Do come along, have lunch and browse around the forty stalls and tables and buy some Christmas presents. Entrance is £1 per head. If you require more information then please let me know:

David P. Connolly,

23 Pickhurst Rise , West Wickham,

Kent BR4 0AB

Deaf Access would like to thank the Rotary Club of Langley Park for their continual support.

HOT OFF THE PRESS !

Coming soon: NHS Battery & Tubing Clinic

Deaf Access in partnership with the Charity 'Hi Kent' hope to form a New NHS Battery & Tubing Clinic at Deaf Access. Manager Sue Craney said, "We are thrilled to join with 'Hi Kent' to provide this vital service for clients that find the journey to the Princess Royal Hospital difficult."

Jill Townsend of 'Hi Kent' will speak briefly about the plans for a new clinic to be based here at Deaf Access once a month at the next Tinnitus & hard of hearing group meeting on Monday 23rd April, 1.30 - 3.30pm - £1 donation covers talk, raffle, tea or coffee and social.

Deaf Access Summer Sale

On 14 July Deaf Access will be manning a Summer Sale in the United Reformed Church, Bromley, (next to Boots). Mary Coleman and her band of volunteers will be there from 11am - 3pm helping to raise funds for the centre. Lots to buy and see, so come along say 'Hi', and spend your pennies!

Deaf Access Would Like To Say Thank You To:

Our fund raisers & donors; London Borough of Bromley, Dept of Health OFV (UkCoD), City Parochial, West Wickham Rotary Club, Hayes (Kent) Trust, The City Bridge Trust, The Mayor of Bromley, Councillor Joel, clients, friends and family members who have made donations to enable us to continue to provide our vital services.

Bromley Chain, Churchill Theatre, Hi Kent and the many different organisations & individuals who work with us or support us, past and present.

Special thanks go to our team of Volunteers and Trustees. Without them we could not achieve as much as we do.

Thank you

Deaf Access

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Beryl Baxter

Susan Craney

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And Finally -
Something to think about:

**"A smile costs less than
electricity - and gives more light"**