

May 2010

## New member of the team!



We have been very fortunate to have David McGrath (pictured) join us for 6 months work experience as Web Master. We were inundated with many fantastic applications: Graham Jowett and I found it the most difficult decision to select just one. Read more about David and the work he is doing on page 3

NEW CENTRES AGREED	STOP PRESS																						
<p>We have had a bit of a rush on applications recently! The Trustees have agreed :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 2 centres at Lufton College, part of the MENCAP family</li> <li>- Elmwood College in Cupar, in collaboration with Fife Society for the Blind</li> <li>- NCYPE, a college for young people with epilepsy</li> <li>- East Sussex Disability Association in Eastbourne</li> <li>- An additional centre at Enham in Andover</li> <li>- Additional equipment for the current centre at Cantraybridge College near Inverness, plus a Print Enterprise and an Outreach Centre</li> </ul>	<p><b>CONFERENCE 2010 DATES AGREED</b></p> <p>BOOK MONDAY OCTOBER 25th IN YOUR DIARY</p>																						
<p>We now have 94 centres: 84 in the UK and Ireland, and 10 in Israel. So we have already met our target to have 90 centres by the time Ian reaches his 90th birthday!</p> <p>Catch up on how Ian is doing on page 2.</p>	<div style="background-color: #008000; color: white; text-align: center; padding: 5px;"><b>Inside this issue</b></div> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr><td>Update on Ian Karten</td><td style="text-align: right;">2</td></tr> <tr><td>Ability magazine</td><td style="text-align: right;">2</td></tr> <tr><td>Internship programme</td><td style="text-align: right;">3</td></tr> <tr><td>Conference 2010</td><td style="text-align: right;">4</td></tr> <tr><td>Update from SCOPE</td><td style="text-align: right;">5</td></tr> <tr><td>Special Friends</td><td style="text-align: right;">6</td></tr> <tr><td>Silver Surfer in Action</td><td style="text-align: right;">7</td></tr> <tr><td>Karten Corner in Ashdod</td><td style="text-align: right;">8</td></tr> <tr><td>SWANS clients have their say</td><td style="text-align: right;">9</td></tr> <tr><td>Meeting the Lord Mayor of London</td><td style="text-align: right;">10</td></tr> <tr><td>Contact us</td><td style="text-align: right;">12</td></tr> </table>	Update on Ian Karten	2	Ability magazine	2	Internship programme	3	Conference 2010	4	Update from SCOPE	5	Special Friends	6	Silver Surfer in Action	7	Karten Corner in Ashdod	8	SWANS clients have their say	9	Meeting the Lord Mayor of London	10	Contact us	12
Update on Ian Karten	2																						
Ability magazine	2																						
Internship programme	3																						
Conference 2010	4																						
Update from SCOPE	5																						
Special Friends	6																						
Silver Surfer in Action	7																						
Karten Corner in Ashdod	8																						
SWANS clients have their say	9																						
Meeting the Lord Mayor of London	10																						
Contact us	12																						

## UPDATE ON IAN

I'm pleased to tell you that Ian is now out of hospital, and making a steady recovery. I received many good wishes for Ian by email, so I copied them into a single document and printed them out—all 11 pages! These went inside a card, and were delivered to Ian. He was very touched to know that so many people were thinking of him and sending him good wishes. So on Ian's behalf, a very big THANK YOU!

We all send our regards to Ian and his wife Mildred.

## ABILITY MAGAZINE

Have you seen the latest edition of Ability magazine? Remember you can get it freely electronically.

Each edition has an interview with a person of distinction—and this time it is no other than Ian Karten MBE!

In the interview, Ian tells of his early life and education, and his time in the Royal Air Force. There is a lovely photo of Ian at this time (below). He then tells of the scholarship programme that he



set up, before moving on to establishing the CTEC Centres. The journalist also visited the CTEC Centres at Treloars in order to understand more about the network. Do try to get hold of a copy of the magazine. As well as the interview with Ian, there are always interesting articles on assistive technology.

To get more information on Ability Magazine, contact John Lamb on [john.lamb@abilitymagazine.org.uk](mailto:john.lamb@abilitymagazine.org.uk).

The full article can be read at

[www.abilitymagazine.org.uk/Articles/AltArticle-90-9.aspx](http://www.abilitymagazine.org.uk/Articles/AltArticle-90-9.aspx)

# WEB MASTER INTERNSHIP

In the last newsletter we advertised a Web Master internship. We had a wonderful response, and Graham Jowett (Chair of the Network) and I had the task of selecting the successful candidate. And what a task that was! The calibre of the applicants was amazing, and it was extremely difficult to have to turn people down. However, we have kept the applications on file to approach in the future.

The successful applicant is David McGrath from Belfast, who has taken the position on a work experience basis. David's take on the process is below. He has already proved himself to be invaluable—he has put information on the last conference on the website so check it out. More critically, when I managed to accidentally delete the majority of the website, it was David who worked out exactly what I had done! So if any of your organisations are considering introducing an internship programme, I can only say—do it! And if any of you are looking for a very talented Web Master, I know someone for whom I would write a very good reference.....

But the process has made us think more deeply about the position of so many talented clients of the Karten Centres who are unable to find employment. Graham and I spent a long time talking about whether there was anything that the Karten Network could do. What we are proposing is to have a Jobs section on the website. Here you will be able to place advertisements for vacancies in your organisation. Remember that the Network provides facilities for a very wide range of clients—and your perfect employee may be out there reading this newsletter right now! So whether the vacancy is full-time or part-time, an internship or work experience, please send the information through to me, and we'll get it on the website. Ian Karten's vision is that Karten CTEC Centres should enable disabled people to find employment or lead more independent lives, and this could be another way of making it happen.

So, please share this information with your HR department. Email any information to [ceri@karten-network.org.uk](mailto:ceri@karten-network.org.uk), and we'll let you know when it goes on the website.

But what has the experience been like for David? Here are his thoughts:

As the Karten Network's newest Intern I thought I would write a few short words about my experiences so far with Karten, what I hope to obtain from volunteering with them and my hopes for future employment.

So far I have been helping Ceri update the Karten Website. This takes at a maximum 6 hours a week and I have really enjoyed working on the website, learning some new skills and putting into practice the skills I have learned while studying for my degree. I do this work from home as I had a spinal injury a few years ago, and although I have made a good recovery (I just have a bit of a limp now), I still have nerve pain making it hard for me to sit for very long in an office. However I was very pleased to be given the chance to work from home for the Karten Network. I really find being a 'Virtual Assistant' suits my skills, I did quite a few assignments and projects from home when studying with the OU.

I studied at home with the Open University while recovering, it is something that I would recommend to anyone who finds themselves stuck in the house or wishing to improve their education. Their distance learning courses really gave me something to focus on while recovering from my Injury. Also they have some great grants available if you are on a low income. I completed my IT degree last year and was keen to try and get back to work on a part time basis.

I told the Cedar Foundation in Belfast that I would like to try some Volunteer Work. The Cedar Foundation help people with disabilities to retrain and find employment. My case worker at Cedar, Ciara, has been great in sorting things out for me. She found me a part time volunteer IT position in a small local company. Unfortunately I was not able to manage my pain effectively and had to stop doing this work. I was a little down in the dumps about this but then Ciara told me about the Intern Opportunity with Karten, it sounded perfect as I could volunteer from home helping out a Charity and gain valuable work experience. And I am pleased to say I have been really enjoying the Internship so far.

My goal now is to continue working with Karten for 4 more months and also help any other charities with their websites. I am also going to go on a Web Design Course this September and next year I would love to be in the position of working from home as a Freelance Web Designer. Though volunteering with Karten another Disability organisation heard about me and I have just started building another website for them - <http://equinoxdisabilityemployment.co.uk/>. If any other charities would like help updating or redesigning their website then please contact me on [davyjaz99@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:davyjaz99@yahoo.co.uk)

## CONFERENCE 2010

It doesn't seem 5 minutes since the conference at Edgbaston, but already the next one is being planned. So far we have a date: 25th October and a location: Queen Alexandra College in Birmingham. We are returning to QAC—but at half term, so we can have more space.

We want to repeat last year's formula of a large exhibition, but have facilities for PC based sessions.

As I visit the Centres, many of you talk about the challenges you are facing. So we felt that having a focus of 'Thriving In Challenging Times' would be appropriate. Many of you said you would like to find out more about what is happening in other centres, so we would like to enable this to happen. So if you would like to showcase your facilities and talents, please don't be modest—let me know!

Last year everyone enjoyed the Awards, so they will feature again. So get thinking now as to who you could nominate. The Awards will be:

- The Centre with most innovative practice
- The Centre most successful in enabling transition to employment or independence
- The most successful client

So get your place booked now! No charge to Karten Centres. Get your nominations to Ceri, along with suggestions for sessions and offers to participate. It's your conference—get involved!

## DEVELOPMENTS AT SCOPE

Last year, Scope applied for a £5.3 million loan and £600,000 grant from Futurebuilders (a government fund and the largest social investor in the UK, now Social Investment Business) to develop and diversify our Children and Young People's Services.



After a long wait, and plenty of discussion it was eventually confirmed that our application had been successful, which will enable us to accelerate the development of modern, high-quality services that are attractive to disabled children, young people and their families..

The funding will be used to build services that will support young disabled people through formative stages of their lives. We'll expand some of our inclusion teams, providing support for families in their communities. We'll develop move-on services to support people to make the transition into adult life and we'll also expand our fostering service and develop our pre-school services at our Ingfield Manor School in Sussex.

It's a big loan, but we have a strong business case that clearly sets out how it will be repaid and how over the course of the development programme we will see the new services grow to fully cover their costs. And these developments will transform lives.

We have also appointed a new Chief Executive who started at the beginning of the year. Richard Hawkes was previously International Programmes Director at VSO (Voluntary Service Overseas) and Director of Sense International. Richard has already demonstrated his enthusiasm by attending (but not taking part!) in the London Marathon last weekend, and supporting Scope's runners, and has been really active in getting around the country and visiting Scope's projects and services along the way.

If you want any more information on developments at SCOPE, please contact Amy Ingram on [amy.ingram@scope.org.uk](mailto:amy.ingram@scope.org.uk)

# SPECIAL FRIENDS

I saw Special Friends on DotComUnity, and thought it was worth sharing:

[www.specialfriendsonline.com](http://www.specialfriendsonline.com) is a **free** unique worldwide social networking website for people with Learning Disabilities and their parents, carers, volunteers, family members and professionals. We aim to open the world of the internet whilst communicating in a safe, fun and interactive way. Safety and security are our main priority and we want to create a safe haven for friendships to grow, chat, instant message and makes lots of friends all over the World. This will enable our members to keep in contact with old and existing friends and simply have fun online being safe in the knowledge that we are doing everything possible to protect our members

Parents, carers and volunteers will have the tool to contact other families that will enable them to take the unknown out of the challenges that they may meet on a daily basis. We will provide parents/carers and professionals with the opportunity to share their inspirational stories and experiences, find useful links and the opportunity to chat to other people. They can also discuss their concerns and goals and share their positive stories and rewards with others who would be grateful for their advice.



We aim to keep this site as safe and secure as possible whilst allowing the freedom that people with Learning Disabilities deserve. The following measures are just a few of the ways we can protect our Members:

- Moderators work 24/7
- Report buttons are visible throughout the Special Friends website.
- Moderators have the authority to suspend or cancel any membership instantly should they have a concern regarding their conduct
- Profanity Filters
- A message fly service will alert our main moderating team by text within 2 minutes as a back up should 'report button' be activated.
- Lock down the chat rooms, 1-2-1 chat and messages using our padlock facility

Extra care will be provided by monitoring new members with very close supervision.

# SILVER SURFER IN ACTION

## **Never too old to learn – the experience of a client at the Karten Centre at Cromford**

I would like to write about how I first became interested in learning how to use a computer. Phil and I haven't had a holiday for over 4 years now due to illness, my husband hasn't been able to travel and I needed something to occupy myself with. I have always wanted to learn how to use a computer but never had the nerve to pluck up the courage to do something about it.



One day we were shopping in Tesco's and all at once I said to Phil I'm going to buy a laptop, Phil said whatever for and I replied I'm going to have lessons and learn how to use a computer, so I bought one and took it home and I hadn't any idea what to do with it.

After trying for a while to get lessons I didn't have much success until someone gave me the telephone number for the Karten Centre which is based at Cromford and belongs to the University of Derby. I had to go for an interview which I was very nervous about but I needn't have worried because they were very nice people, and very easy to talk to.

In May 2010 I will have been attending lessons for 2 years, the time has passed really quickly and I have enjoyed going, if I had to leave now I would really miss it, and the old saying "You are never too old to learn" is very true because I am 76 years old and I have really loved learning.

**Margaret Owens**

**Silver Surfers' Day is on May 21st 2010**

## KARTEN CORNER IN ASHDOD

It is a pleasure to be able to update you regarding our Karten Corner in Ashdod, Israel. The Karten Corner was one of the first services offered in the Multi-service Center for the Blind and Visually Impaired in Ashdod. In fact, we began work there even before the building was officially and ceremoniously opened.

The grand opening finally took place on March 10<sup>th</sup>, in the presence of Mr. Yitzchak Herzog, Minister of Welfare and Yechiel Lasri, mayor of Ashdod. We are attaching here a couple of pictures from the opening. In them you can see us with students and a teacher (Yaakov) at the Karten corner. You can see, as well, the building and some of the new equipment they put in for the opening. Work at the corner continues apace and we hope to add more students and teachers.



Pictured from left to right: Ruthie (program coordinator), two students with deaf-blindness, Yaakov (teacher) and Chaim (CEO)



Yaakov (teacher) and a student with deaf-blindness

Thanks to Chaim for this update.

# SWANS CLIENTS HAVE THEIR SAY

Julia Wingfield, the Manager at SWANS in Maldon, asked some of their clients what they thought about the facilities they have in their new Karten Centre. This is what they said:

'I came to swans because I had become very solitary in my home and it was decided that I needed to interact with other people for my mental wellbeing. I am 54 years old and suffer from depression and various physical ailments which limit my mobility considerably. I started by coming to the coffee mornings then joined the computer class as a beginner.

I am slowly learning and will be able to practice on my own computer when it arrives. I find that the classes are enjoyable and the tutor is very informative, and helpful. I am finding that I am not only learning, but I am slowly finding that it is becoming easier for me to interact with other people. So thanks to Swans my life is becoming more rounder and fuller.'

'I come to swans to help with my computer skills. But most of all I come to meet people and make friends. I come to swans and it has helped me with my everyday skills.'



'My name is Phil, I am a 27 year old man. I am not currently working due to having a road traffic accident that happened in 2005, 5 years ago. I was a passenger with a friend on my way home from work when the vehicle lost control and hit a tree. I now suffer from a brain injury and this led me to swans.

Swans was recommended to me by my doctor, to support my rehabilitation and to help my recovery.

I found Swans to be supportive, caring and most of all understanding with my difficulties. I'm on a computer course as part of my re-training and the computers are great, they are adaptable to support my difficulties and learning challenges.

I enjoy coming to Swans because I meet people the same as myself, I come to computer class and boys club. We sometimes go out on various trips which I really enjoy. The new computers are very good. Many thanks'

'I am a SWANS user and a mature student attending classes twice a week in the IT suite. I am doing an ECDL (European Computer Driving Licence) and an IT course. The Tutor Donna Cooper has designed the classes around our pace, and with a class full of Silver Surfers this is often slow and steady. The classes are fun and I find I learn faster when I'm enjoying myself as do my fellow classmates. The ECDL course is more intense but there is always a helping hand and the new computers and all the new technology have given us a huge helping hand. I don't know what I would do without swans in my life they have been a lifesaver not only to me but to us all. Many thanks.'

'I come to Swans because I like to meet people and learn about computers. I really enjoy it.'

'I am just writing a few words to thank you for supplying the new computer suite at S.W.A.N.S.

I have been coming from home to Maldon for about ten years now. It might be a long drive, but I think it is worth the time it takes. I hadn't done much with computers before coming here, but now I feel quite confident with the new machines.'

I think it is well worth the travelling as I enjoy meeting the different people at S.W.A.N.S. This place has brought me out of my shell.

Many thanks from a disabled user '



## MEETING THE LORD MAYOR

On the 3rd of February Treloar College was visited by the Lord Mayor of London. The first task was to get ready. We were all wearing our TEPS (Treloar Enterprise Print Solutions) T-Shirts. It made me feel important. We filled a shopping trolley full of different products and wheeled it down to the training rooms. The tables were there now we needed to set the display and wait for the arrival of the visitors.



Waiting for the arrival of the Lord Mayor of London

Suddenly the room was full of people, it was really busy. People were asking questions, interested in what we were doing. They bought lots of items. I was a bit nervous of serving the customers but it got easier. They were all very friendly. It was almost 11.30 and we needed to be back in class for the visitors, so we sneaked out the back of the room while nobody was looking!



Some of the products made by the TEPS team using the EDUPrint system

In class we told them about the products and showed them the software. They seemed interested and impressed. It was a hectic morning and we were all very tired – in fact I fell asleep at lunchtime! It was worth it and I would do it again next year.

Reported by Serina Foley

## CONTACT US

Need to contact us?

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Please send any articles for the newsletter or website to Ceri at any time