



Association for the Pastoral Care of the Mentally Ill

An association which supports the mentally ill and their relatives

Newsletter No.1 December 1987

THE CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

I welcome this first number of the APCMI Newsletter and hope that there will be many to follow.

When the committee elected me to the chair I could not have been expected to foresee the intensity of activity reported in this bulletin nor could I have imagined that we would cover so much ground in so short a time. The achievements described were only possible because we have a hard working staff: Dennis, who has proved to be a model Development Officer and Jane, who devotes most of her time to the Association.

Your management committee has integrated very well. Meetings are constructive. Much ground is covered. Balance views are discussed and agreement reached. Raymond Finney does invaluable work as Treasurer. Doctor Gordon Conran is our first point of medical reference and our Vice-Chairman. Gwenna Howard brings her expertise from the Richmond Fellowship to advise us in our projects. The Reverend Vernon Muller contributes from his insight and knowledge as a C of E Hospital Chaplain. Valuable assistance has been given by the Rev. Father Kit Cunningham of St. Etheldreda's, Ely Place. Ruth MacCabe can speak from personal family knowledge of our field as well as from many years with Citizen's Advice Bureau. The Assistant Director of The National Schizophrenia Fellowship, Mr Fred Carney, brings his wide experience of field work. Les Champion's involvement with Mental Health issues is of great value as is his pastoral commitment.

Fund raising is my personal concern and I wish that I were able to devote my whole time to it. Any help you can offer will be welcomed as our need is pressing and urgent. We are now able to quote a Registered Charity Number. Members wishing to assist

APCMI OBJECTIVES

The object of the Association shall be to promote the relief of persons suffering from the problems of mental illness and their families by the provision of pastoral counselling and care appropriate to their individual needs to enable them so to develop their spiritual physical and mental capacities that they may realise their full potential as individuals and participating members of society and so that their condition of life may be improved.

WEDDING BELLS

Congratulations to Dennis Murray and Gail Myrddin-Evans on the occasion of their marriage in August. The sun shone on a very pretty wedding and Gail was enchanting in a beautiful Edwardian style gown of oyster satin. The garden reception was at the Bride's home and the Honeymoon was a tour of the USA. Dennis and Gail have set up home in the Fulham area of London. APCMI wish them every happiness for their future together.

in fund raising should contact me through the office.

Our grateful thanks to Mr Howard Hopkins for his remarkable half-marathon and to all of you who supported him. We raised over £800! And many other individuals and organisations have generously assisted in the establishment of our Association. Special thanks

THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

This has been a very busy and exciting year for me. The Association really got going back in February when we moved into our new office and took on Dennis Murray as our first salaried officer. I am pleased to report that Dennis has had a very warm welcome wherever he has gone. He has worked with dedication on many tasks, setting up support groups, designing a training programme, acting as our roving Ambassador and befriending his own group of beneficiaries. He also finds time to run the office very efficiently!

I address everything from envelopes to meetings, help plan the week's events and attend seminars, symposia and conferences as APCMI's representative. At present I seem to be writer-in-chief, whether it be projects, articles or letters to Bishops. However, we need more trained staff both at head office and in the field, which means more money - I hope we get both commodities soon!

My work for our Association is most rewarding and the future looks good. My thanks to you all for your support. We look forward to hearing from you so please send us your comments and suggestions so that we can continue to provide more service of the kind that you, the membership wants.

Jane London

are due to the National Schizophrenia Fellowship, the Cripplegate Foundation and Father David Wilson without whose help we could not have reached our present stage of development.

Austin R London

FROM THE DEVELOPMENT OFFICER

I do hope you like the first edition of our Newsletter. Since the Association was formed Jane and Austin Lindon and I have met with many different people from a wide variety of agencies-religious, professional and voluntary. We have established links with all of the National Voluntary groups who specialize in Mental Health issues, have visited and addressed staff at several Psychiatric Hospitals and raised the issue of Pastoral Care with senior personnel of major religious groups. At present we have a number of projects which are at different stages of development. These include: Support Groups development, the Befrienders Training Course, 'Think-In' Days, Community Pastoral Care, Education Programmes, Fund-raising and Research.

I include brief extracts from the office diary between February and July - please phone the office if you would like more details.

February

This month saw the opening of the Association's Central Office in St John's Lane, EC1. Much of our time during this month was spent introducing the Association to the local clergy and church representatives, the DHSS Social Services and other community groups which operate locally such as the Citizens' Advice Bureau, Family Welfare Groups and the Community Health Council. We also made our first visits to beneficiaries who live in this part of London. Initially these visits were made in the company of a local Anglican clergyman who has since become one of our members. He recognised that the Association was offering much needed support in his parish work. February, as many of you will remember, was the month of the British Telecom strike which meant that for the whole of the month we were without an office telephone - I now know all the phone boxes in the Cripplegate and Smithfield areas.

March

The Association produced its information leaflet which has been widely appreciated. Austin Lindon and I followed up Jane Lindon's application for funds from the Cripplegate Foundation and I am glad to report that we were successful. I continued to

develop contacts on a wider basis - Thursday 26th March saw Jane and I visiting a day centre for the mentally ill in Putney. On the same day we met some of the personnel from the Healing Centre at St Marylebone Church in London. This is an impressive pioneering development.

April

This month the APCMI extended its services outside the London area. On 6th we were invited by Vivienne Nash to speak at a meeting in High Wycombe at which the first APCMI support group was formed. Over 35 people were present: clergy, psychiatric nurses, social workers and members of the Society of St Vincent de Paul together with carers and others. Further contacts were made with the Westminster RC diocesan authorities and a meeting held with the secretary of the Social and Pastoral Action-Committee who was to report back to Cardinal Hume. Jane and I addressed the Westminster group of the National Schizophrenia Fellowship whose members meet to support one another on a monthly basis. During the month we also met Captain Joan Kirby of the Salvation Army and Rev Vernon Muller, Anglican Chaplain of Friern Psychiatric Hospital, North London, which serves Islington, Camden, Hampstead, Highgate and Haringay. Mr Muller was later co-opted onto the APCMI management committee. Austin Lindon continued to work on fund raising proposals whilst he arranged our registration with the Charity Commissioners. This involved only minor redrafting of the constitution we had presented in December 1986, but the process of charity registration is slow.

May

We made further visits to Friern Hospital meeting senior personnel including the Administrator, the Director of Nursing services, Ward and Occupational Therapy staff and later, consultant psychiatrist Dr Julian Leff who heads a unit researching in Community Care. Through the good offices of the Archdiocese of Westminster every RC parish priest was sent a copy of our leaflet. This was backed up by an article in the Westminster Recorder by the editor, Fr Kit Cunningham who is a member of our management committee. Mr Howard Hopkins our office neighbour, generously offered his run in the

St Albans half-marathon for our sponsorship. To date this has produced £828.09 for the Association.

June

Further meetings were held by Jane and I at Friern Hospital with hospital and local authority staff, including the General Manager Mr Colin Kirk. Plans were made to develop the work of APCMI in Oxford. Mr H P Mellor, Solicitor, kindly offered to act as an honorary legal adviser to the Association and undertook to form an advisory legal panel. Howard Hopkins completed his half-marathon in a personal best time of 1 hour 49 minutes and 21 seconds. Meetings were held with the Mental Health planning officer for Bloomsbury.

July

Rev Vernon Muller and I discussed the first stage of a joint APCMI/Friern Hospital plan to develop a pastoral awareness project benefitting those patients who are to be discharged into the community as Friern Hospital contracts. On Monday 6 Jane and I attended a 1 day conference, 'Mentally Ill People - Planning a Response to their Needs,' held in central London by NSF/NAHA. Jane had been invited by the Director of NSF to chair a workshop. Jane and I travelled to Oxford on July 13 to address a meeting we had convened to explain the work of the Association to Mental Health groups, both statutory and voluntary. Further meetings were planned for later in the year. The RC Bishop for Central London, The Right Rev. John Crowley graciously agreed to be our first patron and undertook to bring the Association to the attention of area Deans. A further contact was made with the Salvation Army when we attended a meeting with Major Olive Bottle at their international headquarters in the City of London. Major Bottle endorsed Captain Kirby's offer to publicise APCMI through the UK Army network. I continued to meet with the Social Services personnel from other London hospitals as well as other hospital Chaplains. We had meetings with senior officials from both WRVS and the League of Hospital Friends.

A diary up-date will be included in all future Newsletters.

Dennis Murray.

REGIONAL ROUND-UP

At present we have two voluntary Co-ordinators whose responsibilities include the development of local community based Support Groups. Vivienne Nash in High Wycombe and Tony Grundy in South London. New groups are planned or are in formation in Essex, Croydon, Dulwich and Bradford. Offers of help in the establishment of other local groups will be appreciated. In turn we will help with advice and visits from Head Office. We have organised a Support Group Co-ordinators and Leaders 'Think-In' Day for all London members on Saturday, November 28 at the National Schizophrenia Fellowship's London office, Kings Cross. Our grateful thanks to NSF for the accommodation. This will be our first 'Think-In' and a report of the day's proceedings will appear in our next issue.

APCMI membership now exceeds 120 distributed as follows:

London 54	Surrey 12
Bucks 10	Essex 6
Kent 4	E. Sussex 4
Doncaster 4	Scotland 3
Norfolk 3	Middlesex 3
Bristol 2	

and there are one each in Halifax, Liverpool, Oxford, Bradford, Leeds, Hants, Coventry Wolverhampton, Southampton, Isle of Wight, Wales and Canada.

Please contact this office if you wish to set up a local group. Suggested activities are, Befriending, Fund-raising, Support Group formation, Collation of useful local information, involvement of local churches and religious groups.

BEAR YE ONE ANOTHER'S BURDENS

Our son became mentally ill about nine years ago. One of our daughters is a GP married to a surgeon. When we realised that something was wrong, we consulted them and as a result his illness was diagnosed early. He spent some weeks in the Bethlem Royal Hospital. When he was discharged he returned to his work in Brussels. My wife and I agreed that I should go and be with him. At

first I found the burden of looking after him almost more than I could cope with. Like many others of you I wept many tears. What helped me was prayer and the memory of a sermon I had preached. There were three texts.

First: 'Every man shall bear his own burden.' Gal 6.6

There are burdens we cannot escape and one of them is to find that one of the family has developed Schizophrenia. No one can take away the pain and the suffering which is ours and ours alone.

Second: 'Bear ye one another's burdens and so fulfill the laws of Christ.' Gal 6.2

This is, of course, what we do in the National Schizophrenia Fellowship, the APCMI, MIND and the Association of Carers. In far too many cases the only help we receive is from one another, relative or carer, for each of us seems to have that wonderful gift of empathy gained through our own suffering and which enables us to feel another's pain.

Third: 'Cast thy burden upon the Lord and He shall sustain thee.' Psalm 55.22

This text is unquestionably the most important though it comes from the Old Testament. Perhaps you were not surprised to find that the source of this third text is the Psalms. The difficulties of the first days in Brussels overwhelmed me, but remembering this text I did what it said. I had realised my own helplessness at this point and in prayer cast my burden on the LORD. In the days, months and years which followed, I have been sustained. I have not only been sustained but have found the will and the energy to work many hours a week in support of Parents and Relatives. One somewhat unexpected effect of caring for other families has been the easing of our own burden. We see things more clearly and are, I am sure, the better for it.

My son is still on medication but has a flat of his own near our house. He is able to go out to work and at present has a full-time job.

I think these three texts could

well be adopted by the APCMI as they have a special relevance to our work.

Les Campion
(APCMI Management Committee)

VOLUNTEER BEFRIENDERS' TRAINING COURSE

The preparation of this course, to be held in January 1988, is now at the final stage. Guest lecturers will include:

Rev Dr Martin Israel
(Course Consultant)

Bonita Kyle
(Westminster Pastoral Foundation)

Rev Vernon Muller
(Hospital Chaplain)

and Senior Staff from the Social Services. The Richmond Fellowship, The National Schizophrenia Fellowship, The Association of Carers and the Samaritans. Details will be sent out in the near future.

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS

The subscription for 1988 is £5. (Joint for husband and wife). Subscriptions are due on:

January 1, 1988.

Cheques and PO's should be made payable to APCMI please.

Thank you for your generous financial support during our first year.

COPY DEADLINE

Deadline for copy for February Newsletter:

February 1, 1988

BOOK LIST

Therapy & Healing

Invitation to Healing - Ray Lawrence - Kingsway Publications

The Christian Healing Ministry - Morris Maddock - SPCK

Healing as a Sacrament - Dr Martin Israel - Dartington Longman & Todd (Dr Israel will be giving a lecture on Pastoral Care at the APCMI Befrienders Training Course in January 1988)

WE WISH YOU ALL A JOYFUL
CHRISTMAS AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR

Pastoral Care

Loss and Grief in Medicine - Peter Speck - SPCK
(Highly Recommended)

Still Small Voice - Michael Jacobs - SPCK

Learning to Care - Michael Taylor - SPCK

The Wounded Healer - Henri Nouwen - Image Books

Psychiatric Counselling

Meaning in Madness - John Foskett - SPCK

A Place Like This - Roger Grainger - Churchman Publications

STOP PRESS

There will be a meeting of the Association on Monday 7th December at 8pm at St Peter's Monastery, Dulwich to explore the possibility of setting up a Support Group in this area. All are welcome. Please contact Gail Cotton on 670 5822 or Valerie Onslow on 690 8799.

Bereavement

Letting Go - I Ainsworth-Smith & Peter Speck - SPCK

The Courage to Grieve - Judy Tatelbaum - Heinemann

Beyond all Pain - Cicely Saunders - SPCK

Many thanks to Gail and Nick Cotton for the production of this Newsletter.

Resource Books

Understanding Mental Health - Angela Gibbs - Consumer Association/Hodder & Staughton

Other relevant books can be obtained from:

Mind Publications, 155/157 Woodhouse Lane, Leeds LS2 3EF

NSF Publications, 78 Victoria Road, Surbiton, Surrey KT6 4NS