



Association for the Pastoral Care of the Mentally Ill

An association which supports the mentally ill and their relatives

NEWSLETTER NO.10 MAY 1990

THE CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

In our Newsletter NO.7 of June 1989 I announced that branch activity was developing to a point where we could anticipate an increasing commitment of space to regional news in our 1990 newsletters. This forecast was justified by subsequent developments so this tenth newsletter is largely devoted to reports from our branches. On behalf of the Association I would like to express our appreciation of their splendid achievements.

The deployment of a development worker for the regions, funded by SANE, is being organised currently.

The experimental holding of our Annual General Meeting during the Conference last June proved so successful that your National Committee has decided to repeat the process. This year's A.G.M. will be held at a "Think-In-Day" open to all members and hosted by Croydon Branch on July 14th. Members are free to attend the A.G.M. only. This is planned to take up forty minutes or so in the middle of the day, commencing at 1 p.m. Three of the National Committee members will be standing down in rotation as required by the Constitution. If you would like to play an active part in the national management of A.P.C.M.I. please write to our Secretary, Mr Roger Morton, at our new address (see below) or alternatively, make use of the nomination paper herewith.

This new Head Office address represents a great improvement in working conditions for staff and officers of the Association. The office is bright, cheerful, quiet, and in comparison with the cramped quarters of St John's Lane, positively spacious.

We have arranged a new insurance policy for the protection of those members involved in any form of voluntary work done in the name of the Association. A higher level of cover is now in force for a larger number of members, without cost to the individual. Branch Secretaries are being advised of details. Unattached members should apply to Head Office for information.

Our financial year ended on March 31st 1990. The books are in an excellent order due to attention given by Vice-Chairman Doctor David Cotton. May I, through these pages, invite application from a suitably qualified person to assume the position of Honorary Treasurer to A.P.C.M.I.? Please write to me if you would like to know more about this post.

Since our last newsletter we have received funding from a Post Office appeal and from the John Cross Trust sufficient to cover the cost of an inner city worker for deployment in the King's Cross area of London in association with Holy Cross Trust. We are very grateful to both parties for this valuable support.

I am sure you will all be delighted to know that Howard Hopkins completed his 1990 London Marathon in three hours twenty-one minutes - eight minutes less than his previous best - thus earning four figure sponsorship monies for A.P.C.M.I. Thank you Howard and hearty congratulations from us all.

AUSTIN LINDON
CHAIRMAN

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Registered Charity No. 327532

ARTS CONFERENCE : EXHIBITION OF ART

"We are pioneers working towards a greater awareness of the spiritual, psychological and creative needs of mental sufferers." - A.P.C.M.I. Information Leaflet.

With this Newsletter we have pleasure in enclosing an advanced poster publicising our APCMI/NSF jointly organised two week Exhibition of Art, executed by people who have experienced schizophrenia; and a two day Conference designed to promote the value of all the Arts in the lives of mentally ill people. Please put these dates in your diary. The programme and booking form will be available by July 1990.

From our beginnings, as our philosophy and part of our remit, APCMI has believed in and promoted the Arts : as a spiritual activity, and as a healing and unifying process for mentally ill people. The Conference will explore the place of creativity within therapeutic, holistic care; present lectures by experts in the field of community Arts provision; provide practical and experiential workshops; and in addition the Art Exhibition will act as an exciting, educational resource for delegates. We hope that a visual Arts display of arresting beauty, professionally mounted, will be a direct way of promoting informed interest in the provision of good Arts access for mentally ill sufferers in the community.

APCMI has attracted creative people and amongst our membership are artists, musicians, actors, writers, media people and so on. Artistic people are natural therapists and befrienders of the mentally ill and their creative gifts are much appreciated.

We expect that the Conference will attract the membership of both our Associations; Mental Health agencies; the Arts and Educational world; and the wider public; all of whom we believe will find the event an enjoyable, spiritually refreshing and learning experience.

JANE LINDON

Chair : Planning Committee.

NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING FOR THE TWELVE MONTH PERIOD ENDING 31st MARCH 1990, OF THE ASSOCIATION FOR THE PASTORAL CARE OF THE MENTALLY ILL, WILL BE HELD AT THE CONFERENCE CENTRE, SAINT MATTHEW'S HOUSE, 100 GEORGE STREET, CROYDON, SURREY, ON SATURDAY 14th JULY 1990 AT ONE O'CLOCK IN THE AFTERNOON.

ROGER MORTON, SECRETARY, APCMI.

PRISON

The Association for the Pastoral Care of the Mentally Ill is aware of the grave problems surrounding the sentencing and imprisonment of people suffering from mental illness and of the lack of suitable medical and rehabilitative care they receive whilst they are in prison.

The Association supports all those agencies and individuals who are striving to obtain justice and appropriate treatment for this group.

REGIONAL NEWS

KINGSTON AND ESHER

Following on a successful public meeting held in Kingston, Surrey last Autumn, APCMI Kingston and Esher Branch initiated its activities in the area in January 1990. The branch has already made contact with all the churches in the surrounding area, and has been working towards assessing what the local needs are concerning the support of the mentally ill and their relatives.

In connection with this the branch organised a Skills Day, held on 7th April 1990 at the United Reformed Church in Kingston. Forty people attended. The day consisted of lectures given by Dr.A.R.Holton, Consultant Psychiatrist, Kingston and Esher Health Authority entitled "Dispelling the Myths", and by the Rev. Gillian King, Mental Health Chaplain for the same Authority. Rev. King gave a run down of the closure of Long Grove Hospital over the next two years and set this into the Christian context by looking at the implications for "Community" in the light of Government proposals.

Discussion groups and Workshops (Befriending, Listening and Responding Skills, Advocacy, Supporting Relatives) were included in the programme.

Response on the day and afterwards has shown that people received a great deal, both practically and spiritually, from the day. the branch is offering a follow-up support meeting on Wednesday, 2nd May 1990 to all those who attended .

Future Plans - The branch intends to hold a Volunteer Befrienders' Training Course in the Autumn of this year, extending over a period of eleven weeks, from September to December. Subjects covered will be Mental Health/Illness and the Individual/Family/Community; Hospitalisation; Loss and Bereavement; Listening and Counselling Skills; Care in the Community (discussions around the White Paper).

It is also probable that in the near future we shall be providing a support group for people who are already befriending in the community.

JULIA HEAD
CHAIR

CROYDON

After several teething problems mainly concerning suitability of premises we opened our "Drop-In" on Monday 19th March from 7.00-9.00 p.m. at the United Reformed Church in Aberdeen Road, South Croydon. We have had a good response from local churches, clergy and volunteers. Several people have come along during the last few weeks and a support group for volunteers will be set up shortly.

On Sunday 8th April one of our members - Nora Croft - arranged a concert in the chapel at Warlingham Park Hospital. This was given by the Armida Trio - a very talented group well known in musical circles - with the proceeds to be divided between MIND and APCMI. The concert and supper afterwards were enjoyed by about sixty people. It was a joy to see one severely handicapped blind lady in a wheelchair beating time to the music. We hope to hold similar events in future.

The Croydon branch welcomes a new team member - Rev. Andrew Wilson, Community Chaplain for Mental health. Some of the committee attended his licensing service at Warlingham Park Hospital Chapel. He has been an invaluable help to us already and he has been in great demand as an enthusiastic speaker on behalf of APCMI.

Looking forward to the Autumn we hope to be running another training course on the lines of the successful one held last year. Some of our members are beginning to have more contact with hospital patients. They are befriending people who have few visitors or none at all. There is so much that could be done. We aim to develop awareness of APCMI in the Croydon area so that more people will come to share with us in our work. We have been greatly encouraged by the support shown to us by professionals, both hospital staff and clergy. We feel very hopeful for the future of APCMI both in our local area and in the country as a whole.

P. E. FREEMAN,
SECRETARY

DULWICH AND FOREST HILL

Since opening our Drop-in Centre with some trepidation two years ago we have successfully built up a team of volunteers from the local churches. They cover a wide age range from the early twenties upwards. During this time we have had over fifty different clients who between them have made about six hundred visits. Our numbers have risen significantly and we now have between twelve and fifteen visitors each week. Some people come to the centre once or twice but a number of regulars now come almost every week. We are not aiming to cure anyone though we have had our minor successes. When we first opened we only had a few visitors and we could relate one to one. Now with increasing numbers volunteers have to balance giving individual help with spreading their time round a larger group. Those who come to us also find it helpful to talk to each other. We are touched by the way they care for each other.

We recently held a meeting to give the clients an opportunity to say what they felt about the centre and its future. They were all well satisfied with what we provide. We do have a few table games. They thought that these helped shy people to relax but they appreciated most the opportunity to talk. Surprisingly they asked for an opportunity to learn more about mental health matters. They complained that they were given little time or information from their doctors. This leads us to think about an educational role. We have been asked to speak to various groups and church organisations. Care is not just something for the professionals. Ordinary people would like to help but are not sure how to do it.

Outside the centre some volunteers also provide support in an informal way.

We have regular support meetings. These are very important. We discuss difficulties and support one another.

We are supported by a number of local clergy, who come to the centre from time to time. We are fortunate in that there is a small chapel at the centre and this is frequently used by clients and volunteers.

We have received very generous financial support, notably from the Forest Hill and Sydenham Rotary Club who organised a giant firework display at Crystal Palace and gave us some of the proceeds. The London Musicals Company has organised two shows on our behalf and two carol singing evenings. Local churches and individuals have helped us. So apart from running a stall at Dulwich Fair and collecting on Mental Health Day we have fortunately been able to get on with our work without too much time spent on fund raising. We feel we are meeting a need. Some of the clients have said they would like to be more involved in the practical running of the group. We shall encourage this and we hope to help them to grow in understanding. They are people whom God loves.

EVELYN SUMPTION, CHAIR.

GUILDFORD

There are many good things going on in Guildford, and members of APCMI are prominent in establishing new projects.

A very lively mental health rehabilitation team is now in post, and the Senior Occupational Therapist has joined our Committee to ensure that the work of her team in promoting a variety of community-based support facilities makes good use of the resources of APCMI. It is hoped that there will be an Awareness Seminar in the autumn, and a second Training Course for Befrienders in the spring of 1991, and the intention is that APCMI will co-operate with the Rehabilitation Team in providing the spiritual and pastoral insights for the curriculum. There is also a project to start week-end and evening drop-in facilities, and APCMI should be able to catalyse local churches and individuals to take on this challenge.

The Guildford Diocesan Council for Social Responsibility has recently produced a video called "We're just people" to be available to local parishes and organisations, and our Branch is offering to provide speakers to go along and talk to groups, using the video. We have asked the Director of the Council for Social Responsibility to come along to our half-yearly open meeting in May and help APCMI members to become helpers in his cause.

At the moment there is almost a surfeit of enthusiasm for the task of raising public awareness of mental health problems. The Acorn Healing Trust, whose emphasis is more directly on 'healing prayer' (Bishop Maurice Maddocks is their founder and inspirer) have been asked to speak to churches in the Diocese; so, in order not to duplicate, our APCMI contribution is more practical, working alongside the mental health professional agencies in promoting direct supportive service. One of our members is the organiser of the Canterbury Centre, established in some church rooms in the town, and she has agreed to be our Befrienders' Co-ordinator, to whom we will direct new volunteer befrienders so that they can be introduced to people with problems slowly and under the supervision of an experienced person. Another advantage of this arrangement is that our befrienders will be automatically linked into an easily accessible point of contact, known to other agencies.

The need for a Relative Support Group becomes more and more obvious, and Margaret Norris, a Clinical Psychologist, has already established a telephone line, and is at present recruiting volunteers to man it. Once we know of a sufficient number of relatives, it should be possible to start a local Group, using the services of a retired psychiatrist as a consultant and guide.

The Cellar Drop-In in Godalming continues on Friday evenings, and it's success is due to the efforts of the leader, our Treasurer, in helping people to visit each other during the week. The Barnabas Centre, on Monday afternoons, caters for those who are not chronically ill, but who want friendship and a place to go for company after the weekend.

Those of us who attend the Branch Forum in London are inspired and encouraged by the exciting developments around the country.

JEREMY BOUTWOOD, SECRETARY

KENSINGTON AND CHELSEA

The Kensington and Chelsea Branch is now well established and we have publicised our work through the local press, posters, one to one meetings and talks to interested groups. We also contacted other agencies in the field. Last December 150

letters were sent to neighbourhood Churches, Hospitals, Health Centres and Social Services Depts. to report our progress and inform them of our plans to open a Drop-In Centre. We also asked for help in manpower and advertising. We organised carol singing in Kensington High Street and collected £140. Thank you to friends and colleagues at City and Guilds of London Institute for joining in and making this venture so successful and enjoyable.

The new year brought good news about our proposed Drop-In Centre. Our negotiations with the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea Social Services Dept. succeeded and we were offered well equipped day-centre premises for our special use. We are overjoyed to announce that the Friday evening Drop-In opened on 20th April and with sufficient volunteers to cover a monthly rota system. We should like to express our thanks to Mr Norman Nickolson, Director of Social Services; Mrs Jackie Levett, Mental Health Officer; and Mr Toby Dickenson, Day Centre Manager.

Local thespians, Allen's Angels, (a group of professional actors, singers and writers who give charity performances in their spare time) gave a show in our aid which raised £200. The company has just celebrated it's 16th birthday. Thanks to all the Angels and special thanks to Mary Allen who runs the group; to Frances Dennie and Edmond Dhem who organised the event and to Miss Stanikas who gave her interior design shop as the venue. Thanks also to all who attended and gave so generously.

On April 1st a talk was given after each Mass by the Chair at the Church of Our Lady of Victories, Kensington High Street, to explain the work of APCMI and to ask for help. The talks were very well received. Jane and Austin Lindon's presence at the 8.30 Mass was much appreciated, with thanks to Canon Arrowsmith for his continuous hospitality and support and to Mrs Kay Stone, the secretary, and to all who helped on the day. Other priests who have supported our work and whom we thank are Fr. Tony Skillen of More House Chaplaincy-who has joined our committee- Fr. Paul McPartland of Our Lady of Victories; and Fr. Michael Forrest of St. Phillip's Church, Earls Court. We were sorry to lose Gerard Robson, our secretary, whom we thank and wish well for the future.

Our relatives' support group continues to meet at Our Lady of Victories on the first Wednesday of each month, but we may combine this meeting with a support group for volunteers. Fr. Bernard Hughes, Chaplain at St Mary Abbot's Hospital has kindly agreed to facilitate the group. A talk was given by the Chair to a group of social workers and nurses at St Charles' Hospital, North Kensington. Great interest was shown in starting a local group.

We plan to extend our work into the field of one to one befriending and will encourage members to attend one of the Association's Training Courses. We appreciate the support and advice given to us by APCMI Development Officer Dennis Murray. We also hope to strengthen our Committee.

It is encouraging and comforting to know that the work of APCMI is being prayed for by the two Benedictine Communities of Prinknash and Torry Abbeys. Our final thanks go to the monks for their spiritual support.

STAN MCGOWAN
CHAIR

YORK

The first APCMI Group in the North of England was initiated by Desmond and Emmy Burdon after they had read Jane Lindon's article in SANE magazine and subsequently met her in London. They discussed the idea with a few friends and asked Father Geoffrey Lynch, Prior of St. Bede's Pastoral Centre for his advice.

He offered his support and the facilities of the Pastoral Centre. Invitations were sent out to the clergy, Health and Social Service representatives, and the leaders of existing support groups to an Open Meeting on October 6th 1989. Austin and Jane Lindon and Dennis Murray addressed the meeting and seventeen people signed up to express their concern and support.

From these beginnings a small interdenominational committee was formed to organise a Study Day on March 17th 1990, entitled "Mental Illness: A Caring Response." Austin, Jane and Dennis were able to be with us again.

In all, sixty people attended. In the morning Dr. Chris Simpson, Consultant Psychiatrist at the Rutson Hospital, Northallerton, spoke on "What is Mental Illness - a Christian Viewpoint." After time for questions four workshops were formed: "Day Care and Befriending" led by Noel Blythe, Mental Health Day Care Service Manager, NYCCSS; "Pastoral Care" led by Derek Guiton, Society of Friends; and two on "Listening and Responding" led by Sarrie Kennedy and Jean Miller - Counsellors, and Graham Dexter, formerly a psychiatric nurse and now a freelance Counsellor and Trainer.

After a 'Bring and Share' lunch APCMI member Professor Kathleen Jones from the Department of Social Policy and Social Work, University of York, spoke on "Pastoral and Social Responses to Mental Illness". She expressed her warm appreciation of the work of the Association.

Dennis gave a brief account of the work and aims of APCMI and suggested various ways in which it was possible for the Association to develop.

Our Chairman, Deborah Rolland, of the Society of Friends, who works at The Retreat Hospital, summed up the day and explained how we saw the York Branch as a befriending group, working in co-operation with the Churches and the Statutory Authorities, with whom we already have strong links through Father Geoffrey and Noel Blyth. We are also grateful to the Church of England for funding and practical support, and for the generous donations we have received from Rowntrees.

The Study day was followed by a Social Evening at St. Bede's in April.

We are starting training sessions to give volunteers confidence and we are having a Garden Party on June 2nd with tea and entertainment for all comers. We plan a Sunday Lunch Club and may send two people on one of the holidays organised by the Northern Schizophrenia Fellowship. We hope 'one-to-one' befriending will develop so that individuals will feel that they have friends of their own.

We are grateful for all the help we have received from many sources and hope that other branches will soon be formed in the North.
DEBORAH ROLLAND, CHAIR.

EASTBOURNE

The Eastbourne Branch aims to provide support to individuals, accepting them as they are whatever their mental state may be; and to provide a pastoral befriending service which is complementary to other mental health voluntary services in the Eastbourne community.

Introduction

As Chairman I am happy to report that we are doing exceptionally well. We are

beginning to become known and respected by both professional and voluntary agencies. We operate a structured referral system through the nomination of a Placement Co-ordinator who is responsible for ensuring that befrienders have an equal share of referrals. Each befriender has been asked to complete a personal profile which in turn enables the Co-ordinator to match the appropriate person to the referral. Thanks are due to Margaret Seed who has ensured that the system works successfully.

We currently have twenty-four befrienders, nineteen of whom attended our popular training course last Autumn; and they are befriending approximately forty to fifty mentally ill people in Eastbourne. The other five will be attending our next training course in Autumn 1990. We operate a mentor system whereby other befrienders are linked with someone with whom confidential issues can be discussed.

Meetings

The Branch Committee meets bi-monthly in an Eastbourne hospital. A befrienders' meeting takes place bi-monthly - usually before the committee meeting. These meetings are confidential and are designed to support the befrienders. It is hoped that Community Psychiatric Nurses will help to facilitate this group in future.

Social Evening

This informal event takes place on the third Thursday of each month. A rota of volunteers attends to support a group of mentally ill friends and their carers. We are very pleased that we have been able to extend this service to patients within the acute psychiatric unit of the hospital where we have our other meetings. The group is self determining and designs its own programme of events. They would like a variety of venues and plan to visit cinemas, theatres, and co.

Good Luck!

We were delighted to liaise with and share experiences with members of the proposed Hastings Branch. We extend our support and wish them every success.

The Future

We will continue to market our services in the Eastbourne community and endeavour to build up a strong network system. Two self-help groups have emerged from the training last Autumn and we hope to build on their success. We intend to have another Training Course this Autumn.

Thanks

Our sincere thanks to all those who have offered us pastoral support especially APCMI Development Officer Dennis Murray.

JANE LEWIS, CHAIR.

OUR SPECIAL THANKS ARE DUE TO....

Cripplegate Foundation for kindly meeting half our Development Officer's salary for the fourth successive year; The Post Office for a major contribution to an Inner City Worker's salary; The John Cross Trust for a donation of £4,000; The ladies of Friern W.R.V.S. for a donation of £2,000; An anonymous donor £250; Fred Greenwood £60; St Peter's Church, Watford £100; J.and R. Borgars £100; Christ Church, Addiscombe £120; Holy Cross P.C.C. King's Cross £50; ADLIB, Barbican £100; Hungerford Arms, Commercial Rd. £100; Christ Church, Esher £100 and H.H. Angus & Co. of Goswell Rd for the Cannon NP4035 Photocopier now producing this newsletter.

REGIONAL DEVELOPMENTS

HASTINGS

Following our October meeting in Hastings, The Development Officer addressed a multi-disciplinary group of mental health professionals, local church representatives

and other interested parties at a further meeting in March. It was decided that efforts should be made to establish a branch of APCMI in Hastings and that Hastings Branch would be committed to developing its services in line with the agreed joint D.H.A./L.A. Strategy for Mental Health Care now being implemented locally. A planning group will meet to take this initiative forward.

BOGNOR REGIS AND CHICHESTER DISTRICT BRANCH

Following a series of discussions with a group of interested people in the area, we are pleased to announce the formation of a new branch as named above. A committee has now set about the task of identifying local needs prior to establishing an appropriate pattern of Branch activities.

ESSEX

Plans are developing towards the presentation of Study Days next month at two Essex locations. Forest Branch have formed their local planning group, which is making good progress. We are hoping that the Chelmsford Study Day will encourage the establishment of a Chelmsford Branch. It is interesting to note that the two dioceses of Chelmsford and Brentwood have the same boundaries.

EAST LONDON

Building on the success of the East London Consultation Day, representatives from each of the three Districts: City and Hackney; Tower Hamlets and Islington have continued to meet in their own localities to further their separate plans for local action. City and Hackney have already shared specialist knowledge and expertise by holding a half day "Awareness" training session led by the mental health professionals of the group. Tower Hamlets' representatives intend to establish dialogue with those who are responsible for planning and implementing the "Care" programmes as outlined in the recent Government White Paper on Community Care - "Caring for People". APCMI is maintaining a high profile in these activities.

LIVERPOOL

As a result of a meeting between the Development Officer; a representative of the Liverpool R.C. Diocese Social Services Dept and the Director of Social Services in the Anglican Diocese of Liverpool, it has been agreed that APCMI will be establishing links with local Anglican representatives who are developing a pilot project in the Widness/Warrington/Winwick Deaneries. In conjunction with personnel attached to the R.C. Diocese it is hoped to make plans to start a Liverpool Branch. Interested Liverpoolians please get in touch with Head Office.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

BRANCH FORUM: Monday 21.5.90 7to9pm (Venue per Branch Secretaries)

STUDY DAYS and THINK-INS

CHELMSFORD: SATURDAY 16th JUNE. 10.am-4.pm Victoria Road South Baptist Church, Chelmsford.

FOREST: SATURDAY 30th JUNE. 10.30am-4pm Hermon Hill Methodist Church, Hermon Hill, Wanstead, London E11-Near Junction with Wellesley Rd

CROYDON: SATURDAY 14th JULY. 10.am.-4.30 St Matthews House, 100 George Street, Croydon.

BEXLEY: TUESDAY 16th OCTOBER 9.45am-4.30pm U.R.C. Church, Geddes Place, Bexley Heath, Kent.

Written in Northampton County Asylum *

I am! yet what I am who cares, or knows?
My friends forsake me like a memory lost.

I am the self-consumer of my woes;
They rise and vanish, an oblivious host,
Shadows of life, whose very soul is lost.
And yet I am--I live--though I am toss'd

Into the nothingness of scorn and noise,
Into the living sea of waking dream,
Where there is neither sense of life, nor joys,
But the huge shipwreck of my own esteem
And all that's dear. Even those I loved the best
Are strange--nay, they are stranger than the rest.

I long for scenes where man has never trod--
For scenes where woman never smiled or wept--
There to abide with my Creator, God,
And sleep as I in childhood sweetly slept,
Full of high thoughts, unborn. So let me lie,--
The grass below; above the vaulted sky.

JOHN CLARE 1793 - 1864

* The Asylum has become Saint Andrew's Psychiatric Hospital, which now provides Specialist Units servicing a very wide area of the U.K.

COPY DEADLINE FOR AUTUMN 1990 NEWSLETTER - 31st JULY 1990.

Edited by Jane Lindon ** Produced by Austin Lindon