

# LEAVESCENE

Journal of the  
LEAVESDEN HOSPITAL FRIENDS AND  
RELATIVES GROUP

Number 16

JULY 1992



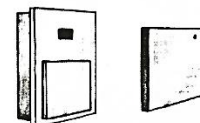
**BOB HOLNESS and Members of the Committee at  
the Opening of the New Friendly Leaves**

(see page 3)

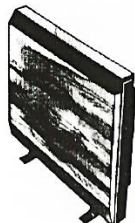
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## LEAVESCENE Journal of the LEAVESDEN HOSPITAL FRIENDS' AND RELATIVES' GROUP

*Affiliated to the Royal Society for Mentally Handicapped Children and Adults and to the National Society for Mentally Handicapped People in Residential Care*

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## OPENING OF THE NEW CLUBHOUSE

With the closure of most of the buildings on the Annexe site, the old "Friendly Leaves" - the Residents' Clubhouse provided many years ago by the Hospital Friends - has been re-sited in the old "Firs" building on the main hospital site, adjoining the Sports Field.

The official opening of the new centre was performed on Sunday March 29th, by our old friend, Mr Bob Holness, popular Host of the Blockbusters TV programme, who has given his services on numerous occasions previously.

A large crowd of parents, friends and residents attended, and presentations were made to Bob and his wife Margaret. Flowers were also presented to Sister Bridget Flaherty, who has for many years been in charge of the counter services at the Clubhouse, to whom all the regular residents and visitors are exceedingly grateful, as also to the other members of the team, who provided refreshments on this occasion.



*Mrs Margaret Redrup, wife of the Chairman,  
received a bouquet.*

## COMING EVENTS

The 1992 GALA DAY will be 28th June, at 2.00 pm. It was hoped that entertainment would include a display by the "RED DEVILS".

A Service marking the end of use of the Annexe Site, will be held on July 3rd at 2.30 pm. The Rev. Robert Runcie, former Archbishop of Canterbury, has been invited to lead the services.

Future meetings of the Friends' Committee will be held on 5th July, 27th September, 29th November, 28th March and 25th April 1993 (the AGM).

## THE FUTURE OF LEAVESDEN

The target date for the Closure of Leavesden Hospital is said to be 1998. The land will be sold by the Regional Hospital Board, but it is "firmly agreed" to spend the proceeds on mentally handicapped people in the Region.

Harperbury is to have a new 40-bedded admissions Department taking people for assessment and treatment from the whole catchment area. Problems are likely to develop in small homes after a running-in period. There is also the "time-bomb" of ageing parents looking after a mentally-handicapped person in the community.

Residents would go on visits, then overnight stays. Day services and education will be replicated in Harperbury. There will be full integration of residents with Harperbury residents. They will be transferred to 12-bedded "upgraded" wards with individual bedrooms. Some will be moving from late 1993 onwards. Leavesden is committed to ensuring a "better quality of life".



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## THE HORIZON TRUST

The North West Herts. Mental Handicap Services Unit, following the issue of a Consultation Document, (to which the Friends' Chairman, Mr Brian Redrup responded with the views of the Friends' Committee), has now become inaugurated as the HORIZON TRUST.

The Secretary of State for Health and Social Services appointed a Chairman, joined on a Board of Directors by FIVE NON-EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS and FIVE EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS, including the Chief Executive (appointed by the Chairman) the Director of Finance, the Medical Director, the Director of Nursing Development and the Director of Corporate Development (all appointed by the Chairman and the Chief Executive).

The five Non-Executive Directors are as follows:-

Mr Ken Lewis	currently Chairman of the Health Authority
Mr Jim Gardner	Deputy Chairman of the Health Authority and formerly Associate Director, National Development Team for people with Mental Handicap
Mrs Sue Montague	Senior Lecturer in Health Studies in the Division of Health and Social Work Hatfield Polytechnic
Mrs Pam Handley	Homes Manager for Watford & District MENCAP Society and Vice-Chairman of Watford Council for Voluntary Services
Mr John Farrell	Chartered Accountant retired Joint Managing Director of a large industrial group
Mr David Wright	A Director of Johnson Matthey plc and a Freeman of the City of London

The five members of the Trust Board attended the Committee Meeting of the Friends and Relatives Group on 26th January, and explained the financial arrangements. Funding would arise from contracts negotiated with the Districts of origin of the individual residents - at present linked to Wards but eventually to be based on the Individual Care Plans of residents (all should be completed by the end of March).

It was hoped to make 70 - 80 resettlements per year, and also to transfer some services to Harperbury Hospital. Concern was expressed about transport, for staff and visitors.

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## ANNUAL MEETING REPORT

There was a good attendance at the Annual Meeting of the Friends and Relatives on 26 April 1992. Among those present were Miss Jane Reynolds (Mrs Hall) former Hospital Manager, and Mr and Mrs Boxer (Chairman of the Friends of Harperbury Hospital) - to which numbers of Leavesden residents are likely to be transferred as part of the resettlement process during the next six years.

The election of officers took place (details of the officers and committee members appear on page 1). The Chairman welcomed new members, David Hobbs (representing the Self-Advocacy Group) and Mr Alan Sainer (son of our previous Chairman, Henry Sainer). Mr Redrup continued by saying he had grave doubts whether sufficient Day Services would be in place when our Residents had been settled in the Community. He advised any members who found their relatives in difficulty to get in touch with their Local Mencap Society, with a view to getting their support for the campaign to obtain more Day Services, Job Opportunities, Leisure activities etc.

### New Plans for Schools

He mentioned that "things were happening with the schools".

The Springfield Schools at Leavesden and Cell Barnes, and the Harperbury Hospital School, were being transferred to the Management of the Oaklands College. There was to be a meeting on Sunday 3 May, at 3.30pm at Leavesden - called by Mrs Woods, Head Teacher of Springfield - and any members with an interest in the schools were urged to attend if possible.

The Chairman concluded by thanking all the Committee Members who had sat through all the discussions regarding the formation of the Hospital Trust etc and expressed their views regarding the welfare of the Residents.

### Treasurer's Report

The Treasurer, Mr Austin Bladon, reported that the funds in hand totalled £26,005, including £8,000 being held for items of expenditure already agreed. Donations during the year included a substantial sum from the Leonard Sainer Trust, and from the RACAL Electrical firm, Harrow. Gifts made to the Hospital - totalling £2,733 - included donations to Wards and Gardens; visits of the Residents to Lourdes; help to the Sports Association for participation on the Special Olympics etc.

The members' subscription would continue to be £3.00 per annum.

### Resettlement Plans

Mr John Gallagher, Hospital Manager, reported that there were at present 620 residents. Plans continued to move people out of the hospital into the community in accordance with the Care in the Community Policy. Three Wards would close in the coming year - Godetia, Magpie and Mallard. There would be three bungalows provided in the grounds for elderly people - subject to Planning Permission from the authorities. There were now two Resettlement Officers, a new appointment being Kathy Kerr from Cell Barnes. New Day Care services would include buildings for the elderly at Brambles and Jasmine Day Centres.

We were moving towards identifying those residents who were likely to be moved to Harperbury. Friends and Relatives would be consulted. New admissions would be entering Harperbury between April and June next year. Some facilities were being retained at Leavesden for those residents who were not successfully resettled.

### The Horizon Trust

Mr Tom Freeman, Executive Director of the new HORIZON TRUST - which would take over the North West Herts Mental Handicap Services for the three hospitals - stressed that the Trust was not moving out of the National Health Service. It would be accountable to the Secretary of State. But there would be more autonomy, less bureaucracy and more control and decisions delegated "close to the Doctors, Residents and Relatives".

They were determined to continue resettling the 1,600 people at present in the three hospitals. Already over 500 had been transferred to new homes, and almost without exception they had benefited. They were working towards good quality services, more flexibility over finance, staff pay and conditions. They were about to publish plans for the coming year, following on to a patients' charter, which would be made widely available. The Trust would develop expertise in handling problems of those not ready, or needing special care for behaviour problems etc. They were starting on development of Specialist Health Care, primarily at Harperbury. They would be resettling about 80 people a year, and about 120 would go to Harperbury over a period of years up to 1998 when it was planned to close Leavesden.

Mr Freeman was warmly thanked for his address and for answering questions from the floor.

The Chairman announced that the next meeting would be on Sunday 5 July but he urged members to attend the GALA DAY which would be on 28 June, from 12 noon onwards.

## NEW GOVERNMENT MINISTERS

FOLLOWING THE General Election in April 1992, the Secretaries of State for Health, Social Security and Education have been replaced by the following:-

Health: Mrs Virginia Bottomley (former Minister of State)

Education: Mr John Patten (not Christopher!)

Social Security: Mr Peter Lilley (MP for St. Albans).

## **JANE REYNOLDS**

Many members will be sorry to learn that Miss Reynolds (Mrs Jane Hall) resigned as Hospital Manager of Leavesden at the end of October last.

We have missed Jane's helpful presence at our Committee Meetings. She attended on Sunday 13th October and gave her report on closures of a number of Wards, and the putting up of extra beds elsewhere. Crossways was being kept open for Parkside Health Authority and it was hoped to reopen it as a Training House.

An edict had gone out for NO SMOKING in common areas - corridors and stairways. (We still notice stubbed fag-ends littering some of the stairways!). An attempt would be made to get the last meal of the day delayed until 5.00 pm.

A "Life Opportunity Trust" (in which Jane Reynolds would continue to be involved) was being set up to provide housing in the community for Leavesden Residents. They expected to have 15 projects going in London and Hertfordshire over the following ten months, with an average of 6 beds each. They would also provide for people from the Eric Shepherd Unit.

## **JOHN EDWARDS**

We also had to say "goodbye" to John Edwards, and the Chairman expressed on our behalf heartfelt thanks for all his work. The Sports Association would be run by Dave Lewis and the Drama Group by "Shan". The photographic Group had fallen through, mainly because the more able people who belonged to it had left. Sister Bridget Flaherty and staff would continue to work in the Clubhouse.

## **FUNDING CRISIS FOR SOCIAL SERVICES**

SOCIAL SERVICES face a funding crisis next year, according to the Government's former senior social services adviser.

The breaking of ranks by Sir William Utting, who retired in the autumn after 15 years as Chief Inspector of Social Services, will embarrass the Government, which says funding is generous.

Sir William, now chairman of the National Institute for Social Work, said that the Government's aims for community care could not be achieved without more cash. He said transferring social security cash in April 1993 for funding of community care would not in itself provide enough money to fund all the home care required by the legislation.

Sir William chaired the launch of a damning report on cuts, which warned that social workers might be too short of cash to meet statutory requirements.

The report launched yesterday was the first from the Policy Forum, a think-tank of six social services organisations, designed to give professionals the weight doctors have in the National Health Service. The forum demands a charter with minimum standards of support for the needy.

The report said that half of all authorities have either cut spending or failed to increase it during this crucial year for social services. Departments have extra commitments from the Children Act and community care legislation.

It accused the NHS of dumping its work on cash-starved social services. Patients were being discharged more quickly and beds closed with no compensating increase in spending on home care in the community.

He said: "The key to community care is housing. If we do not have good adaptable housing available, community care will not work. If we do not have a social security policy which takes up discriminately the needs of minority groups, community care will not work. The message to Whitehall is that all departments must work together."

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## **THE OCTOBER 16TH MEETING AT ST. ALBANS**

THERE is a scandalous lack of resources for mentally handicapped people in the St. Albans area, a public meeting heard last Wednesday.

Professor Richard Farmer, co-author of a report, Dimensions of Mental Handicap, was the principal speaker at the meeting in Trinity Church, Beaconsfield Road/Victoria Street, St. Albans.

The professor's team from Westminster and Charing Cross Hospitals had carried out a survey of all mentally handicapped people living in the North West Thames Health region.

Professor Farmer said that 60 per cent of parents caring for their mentally handicapped son or daughter in the family home are over 55 years old and 11 per cent are over 70.

As these parents grow older and no longer able to care for their offspring, there will be several hundred mentally handicapped adults requiring supported residential care, he said.

And with the closure of mental hospitals and the lack of funding of local authorities to cope with this problem, there is an urgent need for better advance planning and more resources, he added.

The professor continued, saying that mentally handicapped people do not form a homogeneous group - their needs vary considerably depending on their degree of handicap and associated physical or behavioural difficulties.

There should be more flexibility in devising systems of care, said the professor, and he suggested learning from European neighbours like Holland and Denmark.

Many speakers from the floor supported the idea of Village Communities, which was proposed by the Friends of Cell Barnes Hospital as one way of caring.

A speaker from the Friends of Cell Barnes described the present conditions at the hospital as "demoralising".

And, they said, a lot of the financial problems faced by the management stem from the speed with which resettlement is being carried out.

These problems would be eased in the short term if resettlement was frozen until there were adequate resources available, they said.

This suggestion was rejected by Tom Freeman, director of mental handicap services for the district health authority.

And Mr Freeman added that his unit, which had just acquired self-governing trust status, will not consider the possibility of a village community, which he said was unsuitable for any Cell Barnes residents.

The meeting was organised by the Friends of Cell Barnes Hospital, North West Herts Coalition for Mental Handicap and St. Albans Mencap.

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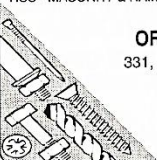


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## RESCARE

**THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING** took place on Saturday 2nd May 1992 at Stockport Town Hall and following the formal business we have as our speaker Mr Anthony Quinn of our Legal Advisers. As author of the free booklet "A Guide to Families Wishing to Make Legal Provision for a Mentally Handicapped Member" and a parent himself, Mr Quinn's talk should be of interest to us all. Mr Quinn is also Chairman of the Law Society's Group for the Welfare of People with a Mental Handicap, being very much involved in examining the law in respect of such disabled people.

Retiring Officers at the A.G.M. are Mr Richard S Jackson (Chairman), Mr John Smith (Treasurer), Mrs Betty Fone and Dr. David Livingstone. Mr Jackson, Mr Smith and Mrs Fone are standing for re-election but not Dr. Livingstone.

**NO TRIVIALISING OF NEEDS BY INCORRECT DESCRIPTIVE TERMINOLOGY** is the verdict of our members as over 1000 respond to our survey on the use of terms 'people with a learning disabilities' or 'people with a mental handicap'.

To date 1012 replies produced:-

For people with a mental handicap	916 = 90.5%
For people with learning disabilities	94 = 9.3%
The use of both	2 = 0.2%

Bearing in mind that a single or committee vote from some of our affiliated groups could cover hundreds of members this is a significant response. As in law, and the many areas where specific terminology is essential, including assessment for allowances, grants and subsidies etc., RESCARE will, a per its members' wishes, continue to use the description 'people with a mental handicap' and not bow to the introduction of fashionable but meaningless phraseology.

While possibly well meaning, it minimises to their disadvantage the often substantial help and support which is necessary to both them and their families. Already some service chiefs starved of funds are refusing to provide day and other services unless paid for by the mentally handicapped recipients or their families - is this worthy of a civilised society about to enter the 21st Century?

**A GREAT INTEGRATION DEBATE** is to be a one day event in Granda's magnificent reproduction of the House of Commons and will form the basis of TV documentary. The motion to be debated is "Special Schools should be abolished" and will be recorded on Monday 11th May 1992. The speaker's Chair will be occupied by Baroness Mary Warnock of Weeke, and for the motion will be Ken Jupp and Alan Tyne. Opposing it will be Prof. Stanley S Segal OBE supported by Carol Ouvry. Arranged by the British Institute of Mental Handicap, it will explore the arguments for and against inclusive education for children who have special needs. The resulting documentary should be of interest particularly to parents of such children and should be looked out for. We contend that necessity dictates an education system for children with a mental handicap which includes special day and residential schools. We certainly support Prof. Segal in opposing a motion which reduces that essential ingredient - a real and meaningful choice commensurate with multiplicity of educational needs.

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**NOTES**

**MEMBERSHIP FORM**

The Friends and Relatives Group exist to care for the interests of residents in Leavesden Hospital and their families.

By raising funds it has provided and maintained the residents' Club house, FRIENDLY LEAVES, and will do so for the NEW FRIENDLY LEAVES. Equipment and amenities have been provided for wards and gardens.

At its committee meetings on the last Sunday bi-monthly, it seeks to promote policies and activities which give the residents, their families or advocates, opportunities to participate in all matters affecting the residents in the hospital.

By joining the group your support will help achieve its aims. Increased funds will contribute to additional amenities and encourage new initiatives. You will be kept up-to-date with developments in the hospital by regular meetings with the Management Team.

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(2) I have completed a direct debit mandate at my bank, in favour of Leavesden Hospital Friends' & Relatives' Group, National Westminster Bank, Account No: 38147998, 289 Finchley Road, London NW3 7AB.

This represents ..... donation, ..... subscription.

If you are related to a resident, the Committee would be grateful if you would also provide the following information:

Resident..... Ward .....

NAME (Block letters please) .....

ADDRESS .....

.....

.....

TELEPHONE NUMBER .....

NOTES



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**ABBOT'S HILL SCHOOL**

and  
**ST. NICHOLAS HOUSE SCHOOL**

BUNKERS LANE, HEMEL HEMPSTEAD HP3 8RP

Abbot's Hill and its Junior Department, St. Nicholas House, are Independent Schools standing in 70 acres of grounds between Hemel Hempstead and Kings Langley.

The Senior School has some 100 boarders and 60 day girls aged 11 to 16 years, who are taught in small classes for a wide range of GCSE examinations; there are many extra curricular activities.

St. Nicholas House is a Day School for girls aged 4 to 11 and for Boys aged 4 to 7 years.

The School makes use of the gymnasium, swimming pool, sports and other facilities of the Senior School.

Prospectus with full details from:  
The Headmistress, Abbot's Hill:  
Mrs J.S. Kingsley, MA (Cantab)  
Tel: Hemel Hempstead (0442) 240333  
The Headmistress, St. Nicholas House  
Mrs D.A. Harrison BA  
Tel: Hemel Hempstead (0442) 211156

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