



SRSB

Sheffield Royal Society for the Blind

INSIGHT

Autumn 2013

MAKING A DIFFERENCE IN SHEFFIELD

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to our latest newsletter with the weather in recent weeks at last giving us a decent summer. We would really like to hear from you on the type of articles you enjoy reading in this newsletter. Please give us a call to let us know.

NEWS AND NOTICES

Summer Raffle

As always you responded well to our appeal to sell raffle tickets resulting in us raising £3055 – A really big thank you and Well Done!

When we sent out the last newsletter with the raffle tickets we are aware that a significant number of the newsletters did not include an envelope for you to return the counterfoils and money to us. Please accept our apologies for this omission and a big thank you to everybody who still returned the counterfoils and money, using your own envelope. We will endeavour to ensure that future newsletters always have the correct enclosures.

And today Matthew.....

Matthew Kelly, who was appearing in “History Boys” at the theatre, visited our Mappin Street Centre on 6th June to hear Julie Smith say, “Today Matthew I am going to be 50 and bald.” Having joined us in April as a Minibus Driver Julie decided to celebrate her 50th birthday by having her head shaved to raise money for SRSB because “I have met some very special people whilst working at SRSB and the least I can do is to help them. My hair will grow back but the clients that I meet will never get their sight back.”

Matthew Kelly started the head shave

and then handed over to Linda, our hair dresser. He had a great time meeting and talking with all our clients in the centre.

Julie raised £269 so well done and thank you to everybody that sponsored her.

Sky Dive

Whilst I am involved in the production of every newsletter I very rarely actually write an article of my own for the newsletter but having just completed a sky dive to raise money for **SRSB** I thought I would tell you a bit about what was such an amazing experience for me.

Firstly, just to explain that a sky dive is a parachute jump from a plane at 15,000 feet high, that’s 3 miles up! You are strapped to an experienced parachutist and the first minute of the jump is free-fall at 120mph before the parachute opens and you float down to the ground.

Why did I do what so many people told me was such a crazy idea? Well, last year Sue and Jane our Fundraising Team organised a Sky Dive as a fundraising event and we had numerous people doing it, including a number of blind people. I went along on the day of the jump to support everybody and I was so humbled by the people who were raising money for **SRSB**, especially Hayley who raised so much money and had so many

challenges of her own to overcome including her loss of sight, that I felt embarrassed that I wasn't jumping with them. Now I am no hero or "he man" and apart from walking barefoot on broken glass followed by burning embers last November, again to raise money for **SRSB**, I don't think I have done anything particularly dangerous or daring in my whole life but I was determined to do the sky dive when the opportunity arose.

On the day of the jump at the end of July I was nervous to say the least although everybody tells me I appeared really calm but at the point that we had to get into the plane I wasn't even sure I could go through with it. When the plane had reached 15,000 feet they opened the door and looking down was scary. Debbie from our Activities Centre was also doing the jump and she went first - I had seen all day how petrified Debbie was so there was definitely no going back for me at that point.

I'm so pleased I did manage to jump because apart from the great sense of achievement overcoming my fears, the actual experience of rushing through the air and then floating down on the parachute was exhilarating.

I've managed to raise about £1,000 up to now and sponsorship is still coming in for the 3 of us who did the sky dive for **SRSB** – Debbie, Ellen, the granddaughter of Ivy Brown, one of our clients and myself. In total we hope to have raised £2,500. A really big thank you to everybody that has sponsored and supported us, especially the

anonymous donor who gave £500 to ensure that Debbie had raised the minimum sponsorship. Enormous thanks also to the Friday people in the Activity Centre who raised £95 on the day before the jump to ensure that there was a DVD of Debbie doing the skydive so that they could watch it. Ellen and myself also paid for a DVD of the skydive – if anybody wants to watch the 3 DVD's they can be viewed online at youtube.com/srsbcharity. Alternatively, if you don't have access to the internet then please ask to view them when you are in our Mappin Street Centre. The DVD's have proved very popular with everybody in the Activity Centre every day this last week.

I would encourage anybody to have a go at this incredible experience and if anybody wants to have a go next year I'll be with you – can't wait!

Steve Hambleton, General Manager
PS: There are no age restrictions!

Fire Service – Bogus Callers

South Yorkshire Fire Service call at people's homes to offer advice on safety in the home and fit smoke detectors but they are also aware that there can be bogus callers who pretend to be from the Fire Service. In order to give people confidence that a caller is genuine all Fire Service personnel carry identity cards but of course for people with sight problems these are so small that they are of little use.

South Yorkshire Fire Service contacted SRSB for advice about how to tackle this problem and the result is

that the staff will now carry a large plastic card (half the size of an A4 sheet of paper) which has very large, raised print as well as braille which says "South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue" on one side and on the other side it says "Community Safety Freephone 0800 917 6119" which is a number you can call to verify that the caller is genuine.

We have one of these cards available on Reception at our Mappin Street Centre if you would like to find out what they are like.

Cairn Home

Cairn Home was recently inspected by the Care Quality Commission and yet again the report was very complimentary with no shortcomings in the care standards being identified. If you are considering residential care or this is something that you might require in the future and would like a look around then please contact the manager, Kevin McGrath, on **0114 266 1536**.

100th Birthdays Congratulations

Many congratulations to Joseph Bothamley, Ellis Rippon, and Fred May who all celebrated their 100th birthdays recently.

New Minibus

In July we took delivery of a new minibus to replace one of our aging buses so we now have 2 minibuses in our smart black livery. We now just need to raise another £40,000 to replace the last of the old minibuses, which we hope to do next year.

Audio Described Performances at Sheffield Theatres.

If you would like further information on audio described performances listed below or to make a booking, please contact the Ticket Office or call **0114 249 6000**.

More information about access performances can be found at <http://digbig.com/5bhemr>

October	Daytona The Winter's Tale Priscilla Queen of the Desert
November	Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat
January	Jack and the Beanstalk Oliver! The Comedy of Errors
March	Fiddler On The Roof
April	Dirty Dancing

Do bear in mind that our Culture Club is organising trips to some of these – further information later in the newsletter.

Calibre Audio Library

Calibre's Audio Library has launched its streaming service with all 6,700 digital books available online. Streaming is a service where Calibre audio books are delivered to you live as you listen using the internet, as opposed to downloads where the complete book is delivered before you start listening. You can listen to them on internet enabled devices, which includes computers, tablets and, of course, smart phones. Calibre continues to offer their popular postal

service with MP3 CDs and USB memory sticks.

There are two membership options. For a single payment of £35 you can enjoy great books (including streaming) with no annual subscription. Once you join, it's free to use for as long as you like!

If you would like a player there are two packages that include the joining fee, a choice of players posted to you and free books for life. For £65 or £67 there is a choice of two USB memory stick players: either Laplock Technology's Boombox Plus, or the Kings Audio Sovereign.

Alternatively for £70 you can have a Denver CD player.

If you enjoy reading, but have never tried audio books before, Calibre offers a three month free trial period. You can borrow a single book at a time (and/or listen to multiple titles via streaming) and at the end of the twelve weeks you can join the Calibre library with the membership option that suits you.

For more information call Calibre's Membership Services Team on **01296 432 339** or visit www.calibre.org.uk

A GPS walk

To be held by EYECAN

We are proposing a GPS walk around Sheffield city centre, for people that have a GPS and can walk about the city centre independently. You can bring a guide if you like.

The aim of the walk is to allow the users of a talking GPS to talk with

other users and compare the information and directions given on a range of devices.

The walk will include some interesting landmarks and historical information.

Your help with any interesting places to visit as well as any interesting information is very welcome,

This walk will be held on a Sunday afternoon perhaps in September or October where we hope that the city centre will be quieter than other days in the week.

For more information and to book a place, either email alan@eyecan.org.uk or telephone **07961 406739**

Please note that you will need good walking shoes as we will be walking over grass and cobbles.

Business/Social Enterprise

I am starting out with a new business/social enterprise.

A social enterprise is a cross between a business and a charity, thus doing work to benefit the community within a not-for-profit capacity, yet still generating a modest income for those delivering the services.

The aim of a social enterprise is to earn its own money not to be asking for donations and shake collecting boxes. Below is my story as to why I am doing this.

I have a lifetime's experience of advocating for myself as I am a single mum with a severe visual impairment. Additionally, I've also been advocating on behalf of my son for the last sixteen years as he is both hearing impaired

and partially sighted. It's been a long, hard road on both fronts, with many ups, downs and steep learning curves. As we live in a culture that likes to put people with any disadvantage "in their place," I've turned this plight, more positively, into a fight for Equality and Respect.

I am a left-wing political activist and 'passionate' about representing those who have faced the same or similar situations as myself - such as being bullied by local authorities, consistent discrimination when looking for work, hate crime, or small town ostracism.

Growing up in a strong matriarchal family, I learnt from an early age that whatever happens, I'm 'not a victim' but a survivor!

The idea to become an independent advocate is a result of my life experience, coupled with immigrating to the UK, travelling extensively and completing an International politics degree.

So I started "barriers 2 bridges" to help others and to pass on my wealth of knowledge and experience.

Through the business I will be offering:
- an advocacy service; equality and self-development training; talks and workshops; and access to alternative therapies

So if you would like to find out more or take advantage of these services please contact me: - Dawn Sanders,
Mobile: **07854 986 573**
e-mail: info@barrierstobridges.co.uk
website: www.barrierstobridges.co.uk

TV reception on Freeview

We understand that some people may have slight problems with TV reception on Freeview as the new 4G mobile phone services become active. If you have problems with loss of sound, blocky images, or loss of channels then you can get a simple free gadget to solve the problem. All you need to do is call **0333 31 31 800** or visit www.at800.tv You are unlikely to be affected if you use cable TV or satellite.

Add-Venture in Learning

This is a membership organisation which provides courses giving access to life-long learning for visually impaired people. We hope you will join us. To get a taste of what a course is like have a peek at a video of a recent course about bats and read about another one on our website.

Your annual membership fee of £12 gives you regular news updates, information about planned courses, and priority booking. All students are assisted by trained sighted guides throughout every course.

Information about future courses can also be found on our website www.add-ventureinlearning.org.uk or telephone **01244 544749**

TRANSPORT

On the Buses – First and Stagecoach

A good bus service is very important for people with sight problems but a good bus service extends far beyond the frequency and timetable reliability of buses. Blind and partially sighted

people need to know that a bus will stop for them if they are stood at a bus stop, when they get on the bus they need good communication from the driver and for many people, they may need a bit more time to find a seat. They may also need the driver to tell them when they are at the stop where they want to get off.

Whilst the vast majority of bus drivers give an excellent service there are levels of inconsistency which cause blind and partially sighted bus travellers to be unsure what level of service they will experience when they use buses. After engaging with both Stagecoach and First at regional director level in conjunction with Tracy Dearing, RNIB's Regional Campaigns Co-ordinator, at the end of June "Stop for Me, Speak to Me" events were organised at the Sheffield depots of both Stagecoach and First. At these events staff from the bus operators across South Yorkshire, which included regional directors, depot managers, training managers, mentors, drivers and trainee drivers, had the opportunity to meet with blind and partially sighted people who explained the challenges they face when using buses. The bus staff also wore simulation spectacles to give an idea of the effect of different eye conditions. The blind and partially sighted people had the opportunity to sit in the driver's cab where drivers explained their responsibilities and the challenges they face when driving the bus, taking passengers on board, checking passes etc.

One of the things that the drivers told us was that they are trained to look for the orange wallet that mobility passes are issued in – more on this following this article.

Both events were a great success with bus staff and blind/partially sighted people learning a lot from each other, as well as having some fun. The only disappointment for a few blind and partially sighted people was that they weren't allowed to drive the bus!

Thanks to both Stagecoach and First for holding these events and joining in with such enthusiasm.

SRSB now has better contacts with Depot Managers to feedback compliments and any complaints to the bus operators in a timely manner.

Anybody with feedback from around Sheffield should telephone Patrick at SRSB.

Bus passes – Orange wallets

Orange wallets for bus passes are issued to people who are registered visually impaired. Drivers are all trained to be aware that the orange wallet is a sign that the person is visually impaired.

If you have a mobility special bus pass with the eye symbol please make sure you keep it in an orange wallet and that the wallet is clearly visible to the driver – this will help the driver to help you.

Supertram Works and tickets

Just to keep you up to date on developments relating to Supertram... For a further eight weeks or so rail replacements continue on the

Supertram lines affecting journeys between Spring Lane and Park Grange Croft. Other parts of the network will be replaced gradually over the next five years. While the work is in progress there will be a replacement bus service.

We hear that the conductors are being very vigilant in rounding people up at present.

More details are available at www.travelsouthyorkshire.com/ or Travel Line on **01709 51 51 51**.

The new ticket machine machines are now in use on Supertram and reports suggest there have been no problems so far for people with mobility special bus passes with the eye symbol – the conductors may press a button on the machine, or they may bring the machine to the pass, or they may take the pass and scan it before returning it.

We have also heard that the new ticket machines will detect if a pass has expired. We would reiterate the advice that we normally give – please destroy all old passes which have expired, or been reported lost and subsequently found, as well as destroying senior ones which have been replaced by mobility passes.

Cars parked on pavements

Please see below for details of research being conducted about the problems caused by vehicles parking on pavements to inform a Parking on Pavements Scrutiny Committee, Councillor and Council Officer Working Group. More details are copied below from Simon Ovenden who is

conducting the research on behalf of the Working Group. We are aware that this is a particular problem for visually impaired people as well as various other groups of people. The more information the Working Group has the better informed their decision making will be. We would encourage everyone to support this research by providing as much evidence as possible for their report, although at this point in time they will not be able to take action in respect of any problems raised. The details of who to contact with evidence are contained in the message below.

Dear all,

I am gathering evidence to support a Sheffield City Councillor Scrutiny Meeting looking at vehicles being parked on pavements and your help would be welcome.

Over the next few months, until October, as you go out and about your daily business could you please keep a record of where you come across the pavement being parked on where the width of the pavement for people is significantly reduced to approximately 1 metre or less (this is about the length of a large single step taken by a typical adult). Having 1 metre would mean two adults could not walk side-by-side, a wheelchair user would need to push in a straight line to avoid their arms from touching the vehicle and the building line.

Could you please provide me with the following information:

1. The street name where the vehicle was obstructing the pavement

or if at a junction the name of the streets. If you are unable to identify the street name please be as specific as you can about the location.

2. The date and time you came across the obstruction

3. A short description of the incident e.g. "a car parked half across the pavement", "a delivery vehicle waiting" etc.

4. Ideally if you could supply a photo that would be great.

5. And please tell me your name and if you are a member of a Group such as Sheffield Royal Society for the Blind (SRSB), Transport 4 All (T4All) or Access Liaison Group (ALG). Please be aware that you are unlikely to be contacted regarding this, it is just to prove the observations are genuine. You can email me this information, let me know by telephone or bring the information to Howden House.

Thank you for your support, the more evidence you provided the better informed the Working Group will be.

Simon Ovenden MRTPI, Access Officer, Urban and Environmental Design, Sheffield City Council

Howden House, 1 Union Street, Sheffield I S1 2SH

Tel: **0114 273 4197**

or simon.ovenden@sheffield.gov.uk

SUPPORT GROUPS

Glaucoma Support Group

At our next meeting on 18th September we have booked a specialist in Glaucoma research to speak to us. The guest speaker will

be Dr Graham Auger from the Royal Hallamshire Hospital

Please call **SRSB** to book your place at the meeting or for further information please contact Joanne at **SRSB**.

Mappin Writers

The Mappin Writers will hold the annual presentation of their work as part of Sheffield's prestigious literary festival, "Off the Shelf" at our Mappin Street Centre on Saturday 2nd November from 2pm to 4pm. Please come along and join us – admission is free and refreshments will be served.

As an example of their work here is a piece by Arthur Morley, one of the members of the group.

"Make Merry Mappin Writers"

We happy band of scribblers,
Get paper, card or board,
Or even scraps of toilet stuff,
If that's all you can afford,

Each man or woman, young or old,
Put on your thinking caps,
Use pencil, ink, or slate and scribe
Show 'em we're clever chaps,

We only need a word or two,
Not a sentence or a verse,
To set us all a thinkin',
For better, or for worse.

We've clever clogs and tryers,
Among our happy band,
So try not to deny us,
And we hope you'll understand?

It isn't for the kudos,
And we don't give or win prizes,
A smile, a chuckle, even a groan,
Each one can still delight us.

So every week we travel in,
To good old Mappin Street,
To ply our trade as usual,
For us it's quite a treat.

To hear our work read out for us,
It's lovely when we meet,
Before we all go home again,
To sit and rest our feet.

No matter what we write about,
No one gets in a huff,
Because we know that everyone,
Will always do their stuff.

Then back we'll come to Mappin
Street,
For tea and lunch, with sweet,
O fortify us 'till next week,
In dear old Mappin Street.

Arthur Morley

RP Support and Information Group

We had a really successful meeting last month. Some researchers came along from Cambridge University and whilst the meeting ran they did some one-to-one sessions with the clients.

The feedback was so positive that we arranged a separate research session for people unable to take part at the meeting. The researchers came up again with their equipment and we had 14 clients to take part in the project. We have a further session booked in for this week as we go to press. But if anyone is interested in taking future meetings please contact Joanne on **0114 272 2757**. The research involves some data collection and various tests and exercises, each session lasts 30 minutes. As a follow up to the research we have arranged a trip down to the university in

Cambridge on September 12th. We will have a tour around the labs and a lecture about the research. We will then have time to have a tour around Cambridge, one of the researches has kindly agreed to be our tour guide for the day! There is a small charge of £5 per person for the day. Places are limited so please book early.

RECYCLING

Did you know that **SRSB** collect your old mobile phones (with chargers where possible), used printer cartridges, stamps and jewellery for recycling? So if you have got a new phone and don't know what to do with your old one then please drop it in to our centre at Mappin Street. Also if you are having a spring clean and have any unwanted or broken jewellery then we can use that to raise funds for **SRSB**. To date we have raised over £1,700 from clients donating jewellery and £1,500 from stamps, phones and cartridges.

Every penny makes a difference and helps the environment as well. Thank you for your support.

Bras for Africa

Many thanks to all of you who donated bras for Africa. We are told by Karen Dolling at the Eye Department that they have collected enough. So for now no more are needed.

WELFARE REFORM

As part of the government's welfare reforms there are various benefit changes being phased in over the next few years. We would advise you to contact us if you receive any letters

about benefits from DWP, Jobcentre Plus, Pensions Service, Sheffield City Council or any other organisation. Please do not ignore any letters you receive.

It is always better if you seek advice straight away and do not complete any forms or make appointments with any of the benefits agencies until you have discussed your situation with one of our Community Advice Officers.

Prescription charge exemption

A big 'thank you' to one of our clients who recently reminded us about a little known route to claiming free NHS prescriptions, and hence we thought we would detail it in this newsletter.

If a person suffers from certain medical conditions for example epilepsy and diabetes then prescriptions are free, but a further category of illness attracting free prescriptions exists and it is 'a continuing physical disability which means I cannot go out without the help of another person...' Sight loss has been deemed appropriate if it is sufficiently severe.

If you suffer from one of the specified conditions ask for an application form FP92A, available from your doctor's surgery. You need to fill in parts 1 and 2 and your doctor (or an authorised member of the practice staff) will sign to confirm the information you've given is correct.

CHILDREN'S ACTIVITIES

In May we attended the Children's Art Festival, we had work from 12 children on display with ages ranging from 3 to

16. One of the pieces by Harry Ellis was also chosen to be displayed later in the year at "Art in the Gardens".

In June we held a Parent's Information Meeting in conjunction with Education's Visual Impairment Team, Low Vision Services, Children's Hospital and Actionnaires. We had a number of families attend and feedback has been very positive.

We had a lovely day at the seaside last month, what a brilliant way to start the Summer holidays. The sun shone all day, most of the families that came along spent the whole day lazing on the beach, Lucy, Amy and Sophie enjoyed paddling in the sea, Kai enjoyed his ride on the donkeys, Lilli-Mae, Jacob and Chelsea enjoyed the rides in the fair, Nyah proudly showed off her colourful windmill blowing in the breeze and Scarlet had lots of fun building sandcastles on the beach. A good time was had by all and as we got off the coach Brandon put his request in for Bridlington next year!!

We are also running a couple of weekend activities during the summer holidays with the children from Actionnaires cycling to Rother Valley and a day at Cleethorpes.

Little Sparklers still meet each week though we break for the holidays. We finished with our last session going on a fantastic trip to Butterfly World.

Actionnaires

Sheffield Actionnaires continues to be popular. It is a free multi-sports club for visually impaired children aged 4 to 16.

Each session includes 2 hours 'dry' sport/activity followed by swimming.

SRSB staff are actively involved with Sheffield Actionnaires linking in some of our Activity Days with their parents' meetings. Further information from Joanne Ardern at **SRSB**.

CULTURE CLUB

In May we had a couple of trips to the theatre to see 9 to 5 The Musical and History Boys. We also attended the Musical Spectacular at the City Hall which was a resounding success.

June saw us enjoying the sun on a trip to Chatsworth. We had a fantastic touch tour of the house and enjoyed a leisurely stroll round the beautiful gardens.

We had one of our hottest days at Tatton Park this year. Everyone had a great time. The heat didn't hinder our clients' shopping abilities and we came home with a minibus full of plants! As ever the gardens were amazing and inspiring and we all came home ready to get out in our own little patches!

In September we're off Shugborough Estate followed by Hardwick Hall in October. We have a number of forthcoming theatre trips booked including Dirty Dancing, Oliver, Thriller Live, Priscilla Queen of the Desert and Fiddler on the Roof – sadly A Passionate Woman has been cancelled due to illness.

If you are interested in any of these events or wish to put your name on the Culture Club mailing list to ensure you don't miss out on future events please contact us at **SRSB**.

Book Group

We continue to run our monthly book club, which always gets positive feedback from all those who attend.

This is a group that meets monthly with people who really enjoy coming along to discuss the monthly book and much, much more! Everybody reads the same book in either print or audio format. For further information please contact Joanne at **SRSB**.

HOLIDAYS, TRIPS AND OUTINGS

Day Trip to Skegness

Our day trip to Skegness

My friend Steph, our two guides plus our guide dogs Barley and Hatty travelled by coach to Skegness on Monday 1 July for a days outing at the seaside, courtesy of **SRSB**.

We left the interchange around 8:45 arriving in the centre of Skegness at approximately 11am.

Initially on leaving the coach we proceeded across the road to a local park to give the dogs some exercise including a spend and an unplanned dip in the duck pond.

Following this and a quick coffee, we made our way to the beach. Our guides couldn't see any notices prohibiting dog access so they were able to engage on a free run along the sands plus a paddle in the sea.

A chap lounging on the sands resting his head on a rock was startled when Hatty jumped over him covering the unfortunate person with sand. His expression plus how he jumped up tickled our guides.

Following this we walked back into the centre of Skegness where we trundled around the pleasure beach. Although most of the rides were still closed until around 2 pm, we found a 10 pin mini bowling alley where we spent around half an hour trying to outscore each other.

Around 1:30 we walked past the well known clock tower and decided to try a nearby restaurant come public house where we ordered 3 fish and chips and one scampi and chip meal which were acceptable but nothing to write home about.

By the time we had finished our meal and left the restaurant, the sun had broken through the clouds so it was agreed that we should once more make our way to the promenade where we sat on the steps and conversed with some of our friends who we know through other activities. The dogs again had a walk to the edge of the sea embarking in a little paddle plus a dig in the sands which they thoroughly enjoyed.

We then walked along the full length of the pier returning through the amusement arcade and back into the pleasure beach which was in full swing now.

Steph and I decided we would try a ride on the log flume. Surprisingly the attendant allowed us to enter the carriage without sighted assistance. We both came off the ride soaked to the skin as expected but nevertheless enjoyed the experience.

There was just sufficient time to have a quick burst around the arcade

including a go on a different mini 10 pin bowling machine before we reluctantly had to return to our coach courtesy of a quick walk through the park for the dogs to spend.

We arrived back at Sheffield's interchange at approximately 7pm having experienced a very enjoyable outing. Thank you, Ken Bower.

Holidays

Our Teignmouth Holiday

16th to 21st June 2013

Once again a group from **SRSB** have had an enjoyable holiday, this time in glorious Devon. The Cliffden Hotel was set in beautiful gardens, the rooms were spacious and clean, the staff friendly and helpful, and the food good and plentiful. On top of all that the weather was good, warm but not hot with most of the rain overnight. It was misty with some drizzle on Thursday when we went to Dartmouth, but we did not get too wet, the biggest disappointment of the day being that the boat trip we were hoping to take was fully booked. Other trips had taken us to Exmouth where there are Volley Ball nets on the beach, Sidmouth where the locally made ice creams topped with clotted cream eaten on the sea front were a good alternative to lunch. No point in trying to lose weight on holiday!! The Rhododendrons were in flower and on most days we would see some as we drove around the countryside. We admired the skill of our driver as he took us along lanes only a few inches wider than the coach giving us a good idea of the beauty of the area many

tourists would not see. We had a ride on the South Devon Railway and a drive across Dartmoor calling at Widecombe in the Moor and Buckfast Abbey. As usual there was a day when we all went our separate ways, but there was such a lot to do in the area everybody found something of interest. As we journeyed home we were all in agreement that we had had a good time and can't wait for the next holiday. This will be in September to Weston Super Mare are you thinking of coming with us, if so have a word with Olwen

Adrienne Nixon

We are planning two breaks later this year: -

Autumn Break – Weston Super Mare

Monday 16th to Friday 20th
September. £318 including insurance.

Staying at the Lauriston Hotel. See the new pier and promenade, entertainment, and coach tours.

Turkey and Tinsel – St Annes-on-Sea

Monday 28th October to Friday 1st
November. £268 including insurance.

Includes sherry reception, mince pies, afternoon tea and scones, full Xmas dinner with a glass of bubbly.

Entertainment including cabaret, tours each day including lakes and mountains, Victorian holiday resort of Southport, all on the flat and ancient Cleveley by the sea.

If you are interested in the holidays then please contact Olwen at **SRSB** to discuss the options.

Belmont Hotel

The Belmont hotel in Llandudno is also offering autumn breaks from 28th

August to 3rd October for £32 per person per night, (seven nights £200, or 12 nights £360) – all include Dinner Bed and Breakfast and evening entertainment. You would need to make your own travel arrangements.

For more information please ring the hotel on **01492 877770** or email belmonthotel@royalblindsociety.org

STAFF

In the Activities Centre we have appointed Joint Co-ordinators, Debbie Weller, who many of you will know from her time working in our café, and Lesley Miles who transferred from Cairn Home.

In the café Kathryn Marsh has joined us to replace Debbie.

EXHIBITONS

Sight Village

We had a great trip to Sight Village in July – as well as the exhibitions at the centre with Optelec and Synapptic, and later with Pamtrad. All of these are invaluable ways of keeping up with new developments as well as to try equipment before spending your money.

Forthcoming Exhibitions at SRSB

Please call in and visit the forthcoming exhibitions at **SRSB**. Whilst here, you are also welcome to have a look around our centre, check out the Equipment Centre and get refreshments or lunch in our café.

Visualeyes and Synapptic

On Monday 2nd September from 10am to 3pm Visualeyes will be back with us demonstrating their range of

electronic video magnifiers and other technology products. They will be joined by Synapptic with their accessible smartphones and tablets.

Humanware

On Friday 22nd November 10am to 3pm Humanware will be demonstrating their range of specialist products including electronic video magnifiers, braille equipment, accessibility computer software, GPS navigation devices and much more.

COMPUTER TRAINING

Limbric – Computer Course

Over the past 5 years there has been a computer course held in Hillsborough for visually impaired people who have enough sight to see the screen without any assistive software, just using the standard accessibility features within Windows. We are looking for a new group of learners for the start in September. We must find 7 new learners to ensure that we keep the funding for future classes. The course has been such a great opportunity for visually impaired learners that it would be a great shame for it to end as there are no other classes like this held in the city. It is a friendly relaxed place to learn more about computers and how to use them.

To find out more about the course contact Alan Thorpe on **0114 220 7007**

Computer Training at SRSB

For people who find it easier to attend our Mappin Street Centre for computer

training or for those who need additional magnification or speech packages to enable them to use a computer then please contact **SRSB**.

LEISURE EVENTS AND SPORT

Singing Group

The Wednesday singing group, now known as “The Mappin Street Singers” went out on Wednesday the 3rd July and sang for 45 minutes at Lifestyle Gold’s retirement village in Broomhill and had a great time. We were well looked after and have been invited back; an offer that we will try and take up later this year. On August the 7th we are going out to The Meadows extra care scheme near the Northern General Hospital and I am working on another venue for September. The singers have learnt a lot of songs by heart and are working very hard at singing the songs accurately and ensuring that what we do sounds ‘right’ as well. There are times when we sing that I wish that I was recording what we were doing – perhaps one day there might be a permanent recording of the Mappin Street Singers.

The Monday singing group is slowly getting bigger but there is space for more participants, if we get big enough then we can go around care settings in Sheffield as well.

We shall begin practicing Christmas carols and songs in October; we are singing and collecting at the Abbeydale Road Tesco on December 18th as we are keen to improve upon our performances last year.

If anyone reading this knows of a care setting that might want the singers to visit please let **SRSB** know and they will let me know, or you can e-mail me David Cox at: singwell@outlook.com

Monthly Social Evenings

Every month, usually on the third Thursday from 7:30pm to 9:30pm with entertainment and supper provided. Transport is usually available. To book your place, please contact Olwen at **SRSB**. There is a charge of £3.50 per person to attend the social plus £1.50 if we are able provide transport.

Sheffield Blind Bowlers Group

The Sheffield Blind Bowlers Group currently has spaces for new members. The group meet every week and have a great time in a very friendly atmosphere!

They meet at 10am on Wednesdays at Hillsborough Park for the summer season and 11am at Concord Sports Centre for the winter season.

Transport is usually available from the city centre for the winter season at Concord. For further information please contact Graham Draycott on **0114 286 4121**.

SERVICES AND ACTIVITIES AT SRSB MAPPIN STREET CENTRE

Equipment Centre

We continue to add new products to the Equipment Centre. The range of products is too large to list here so for further information please telephone

us or call in any weekday between 8:30am and 4:30pm.

If you have any suggestions of products that you would like us to stock then please let us know.

Used Equipment for Sale

We have various video magnifiers for sale ranging in price from £25 to £800. If you are not sure whether you would make full use of one of these magnifiers then we can arrange for free loan equipment on a trial basis. Please call in to our Mappin Street Centre to see if any of these might be suitable for you.

Health & Beauty Centre

Just a reminder that we have a chiropodist, hairdresser and masseuse who visit our Health & beauty Centre. Please contact Carol on Reception at **SRSB** for more information or to book an appointment.

NEWSLETTER

This newsletter is available in a variety of formats including audio format on CD, braille, by email, or print in the font size of your choice on a variety of different coloured paper. If you are struggling to read this newsletter then please contact us to discuss an alternative format.

CONCLUSION

Don't forget, we are **here to help you**. If we can't do something ourselves we almost certainly know somebody who can – Just contact us at **SRSB**, Making a Difference in Sheffield.

