



SRSB

Sheffield Royal Society for the Blind

INSIGHT

WINTER 2013-14

MAKING A DIFFERENCE IN SHEFFIELD

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to our latest newsletter which we hope you enjoy. It's only the beginning of November but we are busy making arrangements for all the celebrations leading up to Christmas.

CHRISTMAS ACTIVITIES

Christmas Lunches

We will be serving Christmas Lunches on the following days: 17, 18, 19, 20 and 23 December. All clients are invited to join us and if you wish you may bring one guest. Lunch will be served at 12.30pm and you **must book in advance** on **0114 272 2757**. Lunch prices are £3.50 for clients and £5 for guests.

Christmas Social Evenings

These will be held on Tuesday 10th and Wednesday 11th December starting at 6:30pm and finishing at 9:30pm, held at our Mappin Street Centre. Please apply for your tickets on the enclosed application form (you may bring one guest). This year the cost is £3.50 per person plus £1.50 if we provide transport – please note that transport is only available for people with a visual impairment. Your food and drink is all included in the price and we have great entertainment booked so get your dancing shoes out. The closing date for applications is Monday 2nd December 2013 but please apply as soon as possible.

Christmas Raffle

Unless you have requested otherwise, 2 books of tickets are enclosed for the Christmas Raffle. As in previous years, it is being run for us by Sheffield Vulcan Rotary Club. Tickets are £2.50 per book (£5 for two books). If you can

sell them please put the money and the ticket counterfoils in the enclosed plastic bag and return to us in the **FREEPOST** envelope by Monday 2nd December 2013. Cheques should be made payable to **SRSB**.

Please do **NOT** return your counterfoils or money to Gregory Fenton Ltd.

If you or your family are able to sell extra tickets please call us as we can send you more and we always need to sell more tickets.

If you are not able to sell any tickets then don't worry as we appreciate that not everybody is a salesman but please do **NOT** return the tickets to us as we do have to pay postage for the FREEPOST envelope if you use it. If you would prefer not to receive raffle tickets in future then please just give us a call.

Christmas Cards in the Activities Centre

We understand that our clients, staff and volunteers like to send Christmas Cards to each other which often can be very expensive and time consuming at a busy time of year. So again this year we are going to offer an alternative. We will place a giant Christmas poster for each day in the centre. Clients can add their Christmas greeting and make a donation to **SRSB** in lieu of Christmas cards. The messages will be read out during Christmas lunches. A great

idea as it means you don't have to buy loads of cards and you are helping to provide for next year's lunches.

Café VIPS – Service with a Smile

Call in and sample our menu which has a number of specials changing on a weekly basis. The menu will have a festive feel to it during December so please call in for some Christmas cheer.

Christmas and New Year Holidays

To give all our staff and volunteers a well-earned break over Christmas, our Mappin Street Centre will be closed after the Activity Centre on Monday 23rd December and will re-open on Thursday 2nd January 2014.

Volunteers

Could we thank all our volunteers for their continued support and help throughout the year; please don't underestimate how much we value your continued support.

The efforts of volunteers as well as staff are acknowledged with a staff and volunteers Christmas party.

Christmas Gifts & Gratuities

We understand that Christmas is a time of giving and that many of you like to express your appreciation of our services with a gift.

We need to draw your attention to our policy on gifts for staff and volunteers. Individual staff and volunteers are not allowed, under our rules, to accept gifts of any nature as it can lead to suggestions of favouritism or even taking advantage of people. Individual staff or volunteers could not do their job without support from all the unsung

back room support people. If you wish to show your appreciation it is a lot easier for us to manage if you could give something like a box of sweets or biscuits which can then be shared amongst everybody. Items such as cash or gift tokens cannot be accepted unless they are donated to **SRSB**. Please do not be offended if staff or volunteers refuse gifts as this is what they are instructed to do as otherwise they would be subject to disciplinary procedures.

SERVICES AND ACTIVITIES AT SRSB MAPPIN STREET CENTRE

Equipment Centre

Christmas News

We have a small selection of tactile Christmas cards for sale as well as a number of other seasonal items.

The 2014 large print diaries are now available in 3 sizes: A6 Pocket Diary - £4.95, A5 Midi Diary - £6.50 and A4 Desk Diary - £7.95 and the **SRSB** 2014 large print calendars are also now available at £3.75.

If you are unable to get in to our centre then please give us a call – We will be able to take your order and post most items out to you (there is a 25p charge for packaging).

Used Equipment for Sale

We have various electronic video magnifiers for sale ranging in price from £50 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 **SRSB** for a trial.

Humanware Smart View

One of our clients has a Humanware Smart View synergy desk top electronic magnifier for sale – 19 inch LCD screen base unit and camera magnification 2.6x57x for reading papers texts and objects.

Like new, had very little use, original cost £1,195 when new – selling for £500

For further information please telephone **01226 211331**

Activity Centre

Just to remind you we have a daily set of activities here in our centre, together with regular short outings, talks etc as well as a freshly cooked lunch.

We have a few spaces to accommodate more people on most days and door-to-door transport may be available on one of our minibuses or we can help arrange alternative transport. If you are interested in finding out more please contact Olwen at **SRSB**.

Support and Sharing Group

You might remember reading some information in the last newsletter about **SRSB** starting a new support group for people who are finding it hard to come to terms with losing their sight. We are aware that some people find it hard to accept that they can't see as well as they used to, they feel angry, or feel that it's just them who has these feelings.

The "Support and Sharing" groups are aiming to invite about eight people to come for six weekly sessions to talk about and share their feelings and

frustrations around sight loss. There will be two group leaders, and it won't be anything heavy, there might even be some laughs as everyone gets to know each other and share things.

We hope to start running the groups as soon as there are people interested; the groups will continue throughout the year. If anyone is interested, please contact **SRSB**.

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 Darren at **SRSB** to arrange an initial chat and demonstration of what is available as well as free training in computer use.

Humanware Exhibition

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.

Products for People with Hearing Difficulties

Action on Hearing Loss came to visit the Equipment Centre recently to demonstrate some equipment. These included mobile phones that are hearing aid compatible, vibrating watches and conversation amplifiers. They will be sending us some large print catalogues and we hope to stock a few of their products. They will be holding an exhibition to demonstrate a

wider range of equipment at our Mappin Street Centre on Wednesday 27th November from 10am to 3pm.

For further information about their products please telephone Action on Hearing Loss on **01733 361199** or textphone **01733 238020** quoting **SRSB**.

Off the Shelf Literary Festival

Mappin Writers again gave an entertaining performance of their work on Saturday 2nd November as part of this prestigious literary festival. This also marked their 10th year of taking part in the festival. Dr Sylvia Dunkley, **SRSB** Ambassador and former Lord Mayor was one of the readers and the special guest speaker was local artist Joe Scarborough. Thank you to all the writers and readers who contributed to this event.

Health and Beauty Centre

SB Holistic - Massage and Aromatherapy

For a while now Sarah has been doing regular massage and aromatherapy sessions for people at **SRSB** which are proving increasingly popular.

Sarah has submitted the following article:

SB Holistic is a new holistic massage therapy business based in Sheffield. Dr. Sarah Bryan, business owner and principal practitioner, has been a qualified holistic therapist since 2010 and has completed her massage qualifications at the prestigious Sheffield Centre for Massage Training (www.massage-training.co.uk.)

SB Holistic is based both in Hillsborough at the Foot, Knee and Back Clinic and in Sheffield city centre at Woodland Holistics. Sarah also works regularly at **SRSB** providing massage for service users, their family members and carers, staff and volunteers.

Sarah is qualified in holistic therapeutic massage, sports and remedial massage, deep tissue massage and aromatherapy. SB Holistic prides itself on offering a “made to measure” massage service – integrating aspects of different massage approaches to meet the client’s ever-changing and complex needs. SB Holistic also specialises in delivering sports and remedial massage techniques outside of the usual experience, which may be seen as prescriptive, formulaic and sometimes painful. This is achieved by the client and therapist working together, addressing the client’s needs from within a person-centred framework. “I work with my clients rather than “doing to” them. “I don’t simply treat their injury but work with the individual at both physical and psychological levels. I also provide aftercare advice, which enables the client to be proactively involved in their treatment.”

Holistic massage therapy has many physical and psychological benefits, including relaxation, relief from muscular tension and from the symptoms of everyday stress, enhanced body awareness and improved sleep patterns. As described by SB Holistic client Chris, who is living with the long-term consequences of a

series of strokes, “I find that my legs have changed since I've been having massages with Sarah because I can walk more comfortably and for a bit longer. It also helps that I don't always have to use pain medication to ease my calves and legs to work better.”

Sarah has been interested in human biology, health and illness since childhood, and became more interested in natural health and well-being whilst at boarding school. She completed a PhD in Speech and Language Sciences at Sheffield University, but increasingly realised that her vocation was to return to her love of natural health, and her enjoyment of helping people in a more hands-on way. Sarah was born with a visual impairment, and is registered blind, which has strengthened her resolve to be successful and independent in running her business.

As described by Sarah, “The most rewarding part of my work is seeing long-term improvements in my clients' well-being. It feels so rewarding when someone can comfortably move a shoulder which was previously painful, or when someone tells you that they feel relaxed for the first time in ages. Long may it continue!

Clinic times:

SRSB, Mappin Street: Mondays (for service users, family members, carers, staff and volunteers only).

To discuss your needs, make an appointment or for details of other clinic times contact Sarah.

Pricing: £50 per hour, concessions available at **SRSB** on request.

Website: www.sbholistic.co.uk

Telephone: 0114 233 9693

Mobile: 07949 654779

Twitter: @SBHolistic

Facebook:

www.facebook.com/sbholisticmassage

Other Health and Beauty Services

Just a reminder that we also have a chiropodist, hairdressers and others who offer services in our Health and Beauty Centre. Please contact Carol on Reception at **SRSB** for more information about which days the services are available.

Tai Chi

The Tai Chi group which meets every Friday afternoon at our Mappin Street Centre has been very popular with participants over the last two years. People find it an excellent way to relax; it also increases circulation and improves balance. This class is suitable for people of all mobilities.

If you want to find out more or join the group then please contact **SRSB** as soon as possible.

NEWS AND NOTICES

Tap and Ballroom Dancing Performance

Saturday 23rd November,
11am to 2pm

The University of Sheffield are holding another 24 Hour Volunteering event in November. The event sees hundreds of students sweep through Sheffield during a 24 Hour period, going to lots of local charities brightening up the day of lots of people with their enthusiasm to get involved by offering their time.

We are very excited that two of their Dance Societies are coming to **SRSB** to put on performances of Tap and Ballroom. Those of you who attended the Teadance in March will remember the fabulous Tap Dancing group who entertained us all, and if you love Strictly Come Dancing, then the Ballroom performance will be right up your street!

Come along and enjoy this fabulous performance by our city's fantastic up and coming talent!

This is a **FREE** event for **SRSB's** clients. Please let us know if you would like to attend as numbers will be limited. Refreshments will be available. Contact us on **0114 272 2757** or email info@srsb.org.uk

Employment Survey

We recognise that people of working age with a sight problem find it extremely difficult to find employment and also that people in employment sometimes struggle to retain their employment when their sight deteriorates. **SRSB** are here to help in these situations but to help us develop appropriate services we will be conducting a telephone survey of people of working age over the next couple of months. If you receive a telephone call from us we will be grateful if you can spare the time to complete the survey which should only take 10 to 15 minutes. If there are any particular issues you wish to raise with us not covered by the survey you will have the opportunity for comments at the end of the survey.

UN International Day of Persons with Disabilities

3rd December 2013

Sheffield Town Hall

1pm to 3:30pm

“Break Barriers, open doors: for an inclusive society for all”

Sheffield Entrepreneurs will tell their stories.

Come and hear their stories and celebrate with us!

If you are interested in meeting amazing people in Sheffield who have set up a business or you have considered it yourself? – then come and spend the afternoon listening and chatting to successful entrepreneurs who will share their stories of success, and hear how they overcame barriers to fulfil their business dream.

Afterwards you will have the opportunity to chat with key organisations around Sheffield whose purpose it is to provide further practical and technological support to help you.

Hosted by the Sheffield Enterprise programme we specialise in helping people in Sheffield set up in business and will be on hand to support you to unlock the barriers and open the door to self-employment and help you set up your own business!

The speakers are:

[Adam Bradford](#)

Regarded as the UK's most influential voice for young entrepreneurs.

Founder of UnITe Computing, Development Manager at UnLtd and National Ambassador for Peter Jones Enterprise Academy. Adam suffers

from Asperger's Syndrome, a mild form of Autism.

Dr Sarah Bryan of SB Holistic

Will be sharing her experience of the Sheffield Enterprise Programme and her business which is a made to measure massage service integrating 4 therapeutic approaches. (Sarah offers massage treatments in our Health and Beauty room – see page 4)

Kathryn Littlewood

Writer, Advocate, Employability Development worker for Disability Sheffield will be discussing access to finance and how it may support you.

Light refreshments provided!

To Book: Please Call Suzy on **0114 213 6310**

Suzy.cornwellball@senta.co.uk

Don't forget to inform us of any assistance that you may require.

Look forward to hearing from you

Regards Suzy

Welfare Benefits

Many benefits are in the process of change or may change over the next year or so. There are changes also to Housing Benefit which may reduce the amount some people are entitled to. If you are affected by any changes and would like advice then please do not hesitate to contact our Community Advice Officers. It is important that if you receive any communication about your benefits from DWP, Jobcentre Plus, Pensions Service, Sheffield City Council etc that you contact us straight away to avoid losing benefits or being put on the wrong benefit. This is

particularly important if you are currently in receipt of Incapacity Benefit (IB) or Employment Support Allowance (ESA).

Retinitis Pigmentosa (RP) Support and Information Group

We have had a busy few months with the RP group. We have run a number of research sessions with Cambridge University. Staff from the university ran half hour sessions at our centre with members of the group taking some data, doing some general eye tests and also doing various balance exercises. We had around 20 clients take part over three sessions and they all found it really interesting. As a thank you the researchers invited us down to Cambridge. In October we took them up on their offer and had a fantastic day finding out more about the research, having a look around the labs and Eye Clinic and having a lovely tour of the city. Matt and Ahoora, the researchers, had planned the whole day and the clients really appreciated it and hope to continue to be involved with the projects.

We have a pre-Christmas RP Group meeting planned for Wednesday 11th December so please come along. It is at our Mappin Street Centre, starting at 2pm

If you are interested please contact Joanne at **SRSB**.

Glaucoma Support and Information Group

We held our third Glaucoma meeting on the 18th September; we had one of the doctors from the RHH come along to talk about treatments and research.

We also had David Harris from the International Glaucoma Association, who discussed the importance of administering eye drops correctly and brought along some equipment to make this easier. Everyone found it interesting and positive.

The next meeting is likely to be March next year, further information in the next Newsletter.

If you are interested in attending or require further information please contact Joanne at **SRSB**.

Fundraising

Please have a read of the enclosed Fundraising News as there are some interesting articles in there. We would draw your attention to the Fire Walk event on Sunday 27th October.

We had a great night, holding the Fire Walk as part of Sheffield Fright Night. Almost 30 people did the Fire Walk for **SRSB** which has helped raise money for us although with sponsorship still coming in we haven't got a final total at the moment. Thank you to everybody that took part and/or helped on the evening.

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 just using the standard accessibility features within Windows.

A new group of learners will start in early January. We need new students to keep the class going. It is a great opportunity for visually impaired

learners 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.

For more information contact Alan Thorpe on **0114 220 7007**

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 on **0114 249 6000**.

More information can be found at <http://digbig.com/5bgjet>

November	Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat
January	Jack and the Beanstalk Oliver! (with Touch Tour) Dreamboats and Petticoats The Comedy of Errors
February	Tom's Midnight Garden Seven Brides for Seven Brothers Happy Days Translations

Do bear in mind that our Culture Club is organising trips to some of these – see later in the newsletter for more details.

100th Birthdays Congratulations

Many congratulations to Constance Laver who celebrated her 100th birthday recently.

Cairn Home

Cairn Home, our residential care home at Crosspool, enjoys high levels of occupancy but vacancies do occur from time to time. For anybody thinking about residential care but who is a little unsure what a residential care home is like then why not book into our Respite Room which is available for short term bookings of just a few nights. Alternatively you can have a look around at any time. For further information please contact Kevin McGrath, Manager at Cairn Home, on **0114 266 1536**.

Appeal for Braille equipment

EYECAN are appealing for Braille equipment and have submitted this article:

We have been collecting a range of Braille machines now for quite a few years and now this project has moved on a step. We are teaming up with an organisation that wants to create a digital archive of Braille machines and other specialist equipment for the visually impaired – mainly tactile equipment for reading and writing documents. We are not looking for magnifying aids at this time however the project may move on to this area.

We will be filming the equipment and it will also be available to be sent out for exhibitions.

We are looking for equipment for either loan on a long time basis, for items to be donated to the project or even just for the filming. If you are able to offer any equipment please contact Alan on **07961 406739** or email: alan@eyecan.org.uk.

Healthwatch Sheffield needs you!

Healthwatch Sheffield is the new consumer champion for health and social care and has submitted this article.

“We’re here to give adults, children and young people a stronger voice to influence and improve local services.

Tell us about your experiences of using health and social care services.

We want to hear about your experiences (good or bad) of using:

- Health services (doctors, dentists, hospitals etc.)
- Social care services (care homes, personal budgets, day centres, home care providers etc.)

We can use your feedback to influence and make recommendations to improve the way services are designed and run.

To give us your views, please call the Healthwatch Sheffield team on **0114 253 6688** or email

info@healthwatchsheffield.co.uk

Healthwatch Sheffield Open Day

The Circle, 33 Rockingham Lane, Sheffield, S1 4FW

18 November, 2:30pm to 6pm

It’s your chance to meet and ask questions of the Healthwatch Sheffield staff team and interim Governing Body.

There will be stalls run by all the organisations who are helping to deliver services as part of Healthwatch Sheffield, as well as opportunities for you to leave feedback on the health and social care issues that matter most to you.

Looking for advice and information?

We provide information and advice about health and social care services over the telephone. To speak to an adviser, please call the Sheffield Adviceline on **0114 205 5055** (lines open Monday to Friday 10am-4pm and calls are charged at local rate).

Are you interested in getting involved?

We have a regular newsletter with updates on our work and we're currently in the process of developing a range of volunteering opportunities too. Please contact us for more information on how you can get involved in making a difference to local health and social care services.

Contact Healthwatch Sheffield: -

Tel: **0114 253 6688** or Email: info@healthwatchsheffield.co.uk
www.healthwatchsheffield.co.uk

Tell us what you think

The NHS Sheffield Clinical Commissioning Group is asking members of the public for their views on their website

<http://www.sheffieldccg.nhs.uk/> and has submitted this article.

Idris Griffiths, Chief Operating Officer said: "The new CCG website has only been up and running since April so we want your views on what's working and how we could possibly improve it in order to benefit your experience on the site.

From the feedback we get it will help us to develop the website and to make sure that we include information that people find informative and engaging and that it helpful to them."

The information on the website includes information on NHS services available in Sheffield, including GP practices, pharmacies, the Walk in Centre, Minor Injuries Unit and local hospitals, as well as details about the CCG and the projects they are involved in.

To get involved visit

<http://digbig.com/5bjbna> where you will find a survey on how you found the website and any suggestions you may have in order to improve it.

Student Links

SRSB always welcomes students as they are of great benefit to us as well as taking with them a much deeper understanding of the issues affecting visually impaired people.

Salma, one medical students, has just finished a six week placement with us, with two more, Bukky and Sophie having recently started. They have quickly settled in and become invaluable members of our team.

Salma really enjoyed her placement and wanted us to pass on her thanks to everybody in our centre and to all the people she visited. Others of you may meet Bukky and Sophie in the centre or may be lucky enough to be one of the people visited by them.

Tacmap

TacMap, production of portable tactile maps for you has submitted this article:

At TacMap, we are expert in the production of tactile maps to make spaces accessible to visually impaired people. Our maps enable our users to know what facilities they can find within

a building or an outdoor space before their visit, giving them more confidence, independence, dignity and extra safety. We aim to give essential information in a society where most of the signage is visual. We can produce maps for hotels, bus and train stations, parks, restaurants, museums, theatres, universities, banks, sports centres, in fact any places you would like to go and visit. We now work in collaboration with the company Describe Online that produces audio descriptions to complement our maps. If you have never used our maps before, you can see a copy which is available in the equipment centre at **SRSB**. Please visit our website www.tacmap.co.uk and don't hesitate to contact me if you need more information.

Patricia Dieng, Director of TacMap,
patricia@tacmap.co.uk,
Tel: **0754 042 8654**

A spooky night out

EYECAN are organising a spooky night out and have submitted this article.

Well to be closer to the point, this will be a talk about the history and spooky happenings in Sheffield over the past 300 years.

These talks would normally be included in a walk about Sheffield. As this may not be the best way for visually impaired people to do this we are having a sit down virtual walk where you can sit with your mug of comforting hot chocolate.

This talk will cost you £5. Plus refreshments.

Date and venue to be confirmed once we know how many people wish to attend. Booking is a must.

We understand some people's reluctance to venture out on dark nights. So we can arrange this as a day time or evening event, or even both.

Dependant on the success of this and people's willingness to go on an actual walk, we will be giving some awareness and sighted guiding training to the hosts of these events.

To register an interest call Alan on **0114 220 7007**.

CAMPAIGNS

Money talks

Thank you to Robin Story for submitting this article:

For the first time in 27 years of sight loss I was able to draw cash from my bank's automatic till machine (ATM) for myself. The reason? The Co-operative Bank at its West Street branch now has a talking ATM. All you need is a standard headset and your bank card. Having money in your account will also help! This facility is the result of a long campaign to require ATM's to be accessible to customers with sight loss. Now I am spared the delights of waiting for the bank to open, join the queue and deal with cashiers. Why has it taken so long?

For more about the Make Money Talk campaign see <http://digbig.com/5bhyke>
Many banks now provide talking ATM's but if your bank is not providing this facility then ask them why.

TRANSPORT

On the Buses – First and Stagecoach

We have continued to work with First and Stagecoach to support their work to improve the bus and tram travel for people with visual impairments in Sheffield. Some of us recently attended another event with people with visual impairments at the Stagecoach depot in Barnsley, along with representatives from their Sensory Impairment Service, Guide Dogs and RNIB. We met with depot managers, training managers, drivers and trainee drivers. They 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 staff and drivers were also able to explain the challenges they have driving large buses in busy traffic, with the responsibility for the safety of the large number of people on board.

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 – so please remember to make sure you have your pass in its orange wallet as this will help the drivers to help you.

It has been great to hear from a number of you about times when drivers have made special efforts to help passengers with visual impairments as well as other passengers. We have been able to pass on these comments to the

relevant bus companies and we understand several drivers have received commendations from their managers. At the same time we have also received a few complaints about buses not stopping amongst other problems. These have been reported to our contacts at each bus company, and the drivers have been spoken to by their managers. If you have praise or other comments to pass on about services in Sheffield or Barnsley then please do contact us.

Lastly please remember to keep your bus pass in its orange wallet and make sure the driver can see it as the bus approaches the stop – this will help the driver to help you.

Supertram Works and tickets

Just to keep you up to date on developments relating to Supertram. The current round of rail replacement work has now finished between the station and Spring Lane. On the whole the bus replacement service and the help given seems to have worked very well and people have been pleased with the extra help being given. We'd love to hear any further feedback about this, it's great to be able to tell Stagecoach the good things but we will also pass on details of any problems or issues to make sure service is even better when future works take place. We will of course keep you posted about future works.

CULTURE CLUB

We've had a lovely summer with plenty of sunny days out and about. In July we had our annual trip to RHS Tatton Park Flower Show, as always a great

day was had by all. In October we visited the picturesque Shugborough Estate, we explored the elegant mansion house, the working Victorian servant's quarters, the Georgian farm and mill and the beautiful restored walled gardens. Everyone was so taken by the estate that they have all requested a return trip next year.

We returned back to Sheffield Theatres after their Summer break with a selection of audio described shows including Priscilla Queen of the Desert and Thriller Live. 2014 performances already fully booked include Oliver, Brassed Off, Fiddler on the Roof and Dirty Dancing. We are currently taking bookings for Croft House Operatic Society's matinee performance of Grease on Saturday 15th March 2014. Last date for bookings and payment is 2nd December so if you would like tickets (£11 each) please give us a call now.

We have a Christmas get together organised for December to look at suggestions for the forthcoming year. This is on Monday 16th December from 3pm to 5pm at our Mappin Street Centre. Please let Olwen or Joanne know if you are able to attend.

Already people have mentioned a few places including Beamish and Lotherton Hall. 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 Club

We continue to have a regular group of clients attending our book club. Each

month we all read/listen to the same book and give our opinions at the meetings. It's always fascinating to hear the varied responses! We have a good discussion and always plenty of laughs! If you would like to attend a meeting of the book club to find out whether it might be suitable for you please contact Joanne at **SRSB**.

CHILDREN'S ACTIVITIES

In July we had two days out, our Little Sparklers visited Butterfly World on the 17th and our big trip to Skegness took place on the 26th. We had excellent weather on both days. The Sparklers' trip marked Jane Jones', from the Visual Impairment Team, final session prior to her retirement. Jane had been with Sparklers from the very beginning and we were all sad to see her go.

We took two coaches full of children and their families to Skegness. We had a brilliant mix of ages and everyone had a fantastic day.

We ran a small trip to Cleethorpes in August with some of the families from Actionnaires, again the sun shone and lots of fun was had.

Later on in August we ran two Activity days with Sheffield Wednesday at their Middlewood Training Ground. They were fantastic and the staff really worked well with the children, the kids had lots of fun but also gained a lot of confidence from the sessions.

We held a Halloween Party on 27th October, immediately preceding the Fire Walk and Fright Night celebrations in the city centre.

Little Sparklers Christmas Party has been arranged for 11th December at Junglemania and the Children's Christmas Party is on 21st December at Monkey Bizness. In addition we have our annual trip to Leeds Playhouse in January.

Full details will be mailed out to families.

Further information from Joanne at **SRSB**.

LEISURE EVENTS AND SPORT

There are a wide range of sports and leisure activity groups for visually impaired people in Sheffield. Please contact us for further information on any of the groups which include archery, ten pin bowling, crown green bowling, walking, swimming, cricket, goalball and Tai Chi.

We are always looking at possible new sports and leisure activities and we are currently working with SIV which operates the former council leisure centres including Ponds Forge, Hillsborough and Concord. Possible activities might include visually impaired Tennis, Yoga, Football or anything else you think you would like to try. Please let us know what sport or activity you would like to try.

Goalball

Goalball is a fun, fast paced sport for visually impaired and sighted people aged 14+. We hold training sessions on a fortnightly basis at City College, Granville Road, S2 2RL. If you would like any more information please contact Kyle Crossland at **SRSB**.

Bowls

Graham Draycott has submitted this article:

The Bowls Club has now moved indoors for the winter session which takes place at Concord Sports Centre. We play from 11am to 12 noon on Wednesdays; we meet on Snig Hill at the Boardwalk (Mucky Duck) at 10:30am for the transport to Concord and when we have finished the transport brings us back to town. We have some room for new members both men and women and anyone will be most welcome to try it out.

If anyone is interested please call me so that I can get you a seat on the bus. After we have played we enjoy tea and biscuits and a natter. My phone number is **0114 286 4121** and I look forward to speaking to you.

STAFF

We have a few changes to advise you of:

Stuart Hayes, one of our minibus drivers, left us in August and was replaced by Dennis Crofts.

Yu Shi, one of our cleaners left us at the end of August and was replaced by Norma Antcliffe, one of our volunteers.

Jacqueline Juden is leaving our Equipment Centre and we are currently recruiting a replacement.

We wish all the leavers well for the future and their replacements all seem to have settled in well to their new roles.

And finally,

Ralph Barton has just retired from the Activities Centre. Ralph originally

joined us 10 years ago as a volunteer minibus driver, becoming a paid driver in November 2004 and then transferring to the Activities Centre a few years ago. Thank you to Ralph for all the service he has given to the Society and most importantly the many blind and partially sighted people who have benefited from his care and support during his time with us. We wish him well in his retirement and I am sure he will be calling in to see us in the future.

VOLUNTEER RETIREMENT

One of our volunteers, Edna Johnson, who supports the Activities Centre on Tuesdays, has decided to retire having reached 90 years of age this summer and having just completed 20 years' service with us. This is a marvellous achievement and it is impossible for us to accurately say how many blind and partially sighted people she will have helped in all that time but it must be many hundreds. We marked her retirement with a celebration on her last day with us including a cake and a glass of bubbly. Thank you Edna from everybody at **SRSB** – Enjoy your retirement and we hope you will still call in and say hello to us occasionally.

VOLUNTEERS – TELE- CONTACT

Just to remind everyone that from time to time you may be contacted by one of our volunteers by telephone. This is a routine courtesy call just to check

that you are well and to ask if there is anything that we could help or assist with; it's our way of keeping in touch with you. Whilst the volunteer is talking to you they will ask you a few brief questions just to enable us to have up to date information. The volunteers really do enjoy many of the wonderful conversations they have with many of you; so thank you for taking the time to answer their questions.

NEWSLETTER

We would be delighted to hear from you with articles for inclusion in our newsletter or ideas for things that we could cover in future editions.

This newsletter is available in a variety of formats. 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

This is the last newsletter for 2013 so we would like to wish all our readers a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. Our next newsletter will be arriving with you in early February next year.

