

OAB *Newsletter*

April 2009

Working together

I hope that you are all enjoying the Spring weather. Winter certainly was a real challenge this year. Getting out and about in the snow and ice was difficult, if not impossible, for many. We managed to keep Bradbury Lodge open on all but one day. We even managed to build a welcoming snowman at the entrance, but I'm glad that it's a bit warmer now. It was working together as a team that enabled us to keep our services running, and it occurs to me that so much of our work is done working together with other organisations and people. Perhaps I can expand on that?

I'm sure that most people know that we work very closely with the Sensory Impairment Team of Social and Community Services. Their team of rehabilitation specialists visit newly registered or referred visually impaired people to offer assessment, information, advice and training in independence skills. They then often advise the person to get in contact with us to see if we can offer further support or perhaps come and try out some of the specialist equipment that we have in our resource centre. We also have a contract with them to provide

Telephone Reviews and Home Safety Checks to selected people to make sure that the person is managing at home. We also work together with the Eye Clinic staff at the John Radcliffe and Horton Hospitals. With our Sight Advisory Desk at the JR and our volunteer information workers at the Horton, we try to ensure that patients receive support through the anxious process of attending appointments and give information about where to turn following their visit.

I'm also delighted with our growing links with the Macular Disease Society, and it's three support groups in Oxfordshire: Oxford, Kidlington and Abingdon. You'll find more about this on page 10.

The Visual Impairment Team, the Eye Clinic, and the Macular Disease Society are all members, with ourselves and other groups like the Oxfordshire Blind Support Group, of the Low Vision Services Committee for Oxfordshire. This committee meets quarterly to share information and ideas, and work towards improving the situation for visually impaired people in the county. For

Please turn to page 3

First things first

Apology

We would like to apologise to anyone who had to pay extra postage on the last newsletter. We thought that the newsletter was within the size restriction for the usual postage and checked this out with the local post office. Regrettably, we have discovered that a few people had to pay extra postage and in some cases had to go to their local post office to collect the package. We are very grateful to those people who let us know that this happened and apologise to anybody who was affected. ■■■

Early notice of Annual General Meeting

It's five months away yet, but we thought that it would be a good idea to give you early notice that this year's AGM will be on 8th September, at 2pm, in the North Oxford Association Centre in Summertown. Everyone is welcome, though only paid-up members are entitled to vote on resolutions. ■■■

Keeping it short and sharp

TWO abbreviations appear in every newsletter. OAB is our pet name for The Oxfordshire Association for the Blind and VIP stands for visually impaired person and its other meaning is just as relevant! ■■■

The Oxfordshire Association for the Blind

Registered Charity 273559

**Bradbury Lodge, Gordon Woodward Way, Rivermead Park,
Abingdon Road, Oxford, OX1 4XL.**

Telephone 01865 725595 ● Fax 01865 725596 ●

E-mail : vision@oxeyes.org.uk ● Web site : www.oxeyes.org.uk ●

Opening hours 9-5pm weekdays (24 hour message service)

Chairman **John Hewitt** Vice-chairman **Adrian Hill** Treasurer **David Warr**

Director **Colin Cure** Administrator **Sarah Milrose**

Accounts **Michael Ling** Home Support Officer **Marian Small**

Welfare Group Officer **Mary Gregory** Information Worker **David Thompson**

Fundraiser **Ben Allcock** Sight Advisory Desk **Judith Wood**

Volunteer Co-ordinator **Ana Novakovic** (*Wed and Friday.*)

Banbury Co-ordinator **Janet Payne**

Your Newsletter is written, compiled, edited by David Thompson

example, we recently supported the successful national campaign to increase the Disability Living Allowance for many blind people who make their claim before their 65th birthday. Also represented on the Committee are the Royal National Institute for the Blind. I'm aware that there is still a misconception which exists that OAB are a part of RNIB. We are, of course, an entirely independent local charity (founded in 1877), but we do work closely with them. For example, their Employment and Lifelong Learning worker, Emma Griffiths, is based at our office on a Friday. Taking referrals from ourselves, the Visual Impairment Team and others, she supports people who are keen to get into or return to employment.

Together with RNIB, the Social and Educational Services and the local parent's support group, LOOK Oxfordshire, we held a very enjoyable Children's Activity Day at Thomley Hall in Worminghall in February. It seemed like much fun was had by all, although to be honest, I was rather disappointed that I wasn't allowed in the ball pool area!

Another national charity that we work with is Action for Blind People. For three days in March we joined forces with them to bring their Mobile Resource Centre to the towns of Faringdon, Chipping Norton and Wallingford. Later in the year, we hope to take the Centre to some different locations.

A more recent link that we've consolidated is with the Carer's Centre in Oxford. They offer support and guidance to anyone who has a caring role. Many people, they point out, do not see themselves as "carers" despite the fact that they spend many hours each week caring for someone. If you, or anyone that you know, would like to know more, please do contact one of the centres shown on page 11.

There are lots of other people and organisations that we work with including Age Concern and the Oxford Rotary and Round Table Clubs. Not least of course are the many Clubs and Groups for Visually Impaired People around the county, whose details are on the back page. We're keen that as many people as possible join their local group. It's a great way to meet people and share ideas, and our Groups Welfare Officer, Mary, regularly visits each group to see if there is anything that she can do to assist members.

Finally, of course, we work together with all those kind people who donate their time, their expertise or their money to us. It's so encouraging to know that people value the work that we do and wish to become involved with us. With this generous support we know that we can continue to assist blind and partially sighted people to get on with living the lives that they choose.

Thank you to all of you.

Colin Cure. ■■■

News from the North

by our OAB representative in Banbury Janet Payne

Health Walks for VIPs in Banbury – Summer 2009

In collaboration with Cherwell District Council and the Primary Care Trust, we have set up a series of monthly walks in and around Banbury during the summer. This should provide a fun way to meet other people, both VIP and sighted, and each walk will end with a get-together in a café or pub. The walks should also provide an incentive to strike out that little bit further – they are planned to be of around forty minutes or so.

7 people – Janet and Colin from OAB and five volunteers, Maurice Cooling, Jim and Ali Ellison, Gwen Whiting and Lorna McDonald are all now officially trained as Walk Leaders. If you come along you'll meet a combination of us on the walks as well as anyone else who'd like to join us, VIP or not. If you find walking alone difficult you will however need to bring a sighted person with you as we can't guarantee that we'll have a spare 'arm', as Walk Leaders have to be responsible for the whole group. Some walk leaders are VIP themselves!

We will walk in all weathers unless it's so hot that people could get sunstroke, so be sure to come in suitable clothing and strong shoes or boots, and maybe bring water if you think you might need it.

We'll cater for most paces – part of the idea is to raise your personal cardiovascular performance while you do the walk. Because this is a Health initiative you'll need to fill out a Health check form given to you by the walk leaders before your first walk. We'll have assessed the tricky bits of the terrain before we go, so that VIPs should feel they are in safe hands.

You'll notice that the schedule covers different days of the week to offer some flexibility to carers and people with other commitments. Ben tells me that many people requested walks on our Survey, so if you did and you are local, now's your chance! Walks like this are a great way to meet other people. They feel like a party on the move, whether three people turn up, or thirty. All you have to do is come along, and bring enough cash to buy yourself a drink at the end.

Feedback from our trial walk included:

“It's good fun walking and talking”;

“Nice to smell the hedgerows”;

“Can be slippery if it's wet, so wear good footwear”;

“A riotous time was had in the pub afterwards”.

Listing of dates venues and times

Thursday 14th May

Outside the Hanwell Arms off Dukes Meadow Drive, Hanwell Fields, Banbury at 11am.

Sunday 14th June

Outside the Mill in Banbury at 11am

Thursday 16th July

Outside Sainsbury's in Banbury at 11am.

Tuesday 11th August

Outside the Hanwell Arms off Dukes Meadow Drive, Hanwell Fields, Banbury at 11am.

Tuesday 15th September

Outside the Mill in Banbury at 11am.

For further information, contact me on my e-mail address banburycoordinator@oxeyes.org.uk or on my mobile telephone number 07528688619 (please leave a message), or telephone us at OAB, 01865 725595.

Other News

Age Concern in Banbury will be closing its offices for a refit for two weeks in May and June so there will be no OAB Help Desk on Wednesdays 27th May and 3rd June at White Lion Walk. ■■■

A little Local Fundraising

For those of you who like to support OAB by way of donations or sponsorship, you may be interested to know that Ben, OAB's Fundraiser, is taking on a whole raft of challenges and events this year to raise money for the charity. Over the next couple of months, for example, he'll run in two 10km and 5km races while he'll also be joining a team of local bikers to cycle just under 100 miles in two days to the National Arboretum near Derby. This will happen on the weekend of April 25th. You may remember this particular challenge as the "Tite Inn Bike ride", which occurs annually, though the team go to a different destination each year. He hopes to raise hundreds of pounds for OAB and a couple of other local charities in the process (including Katharine House Hospice), so please send in a donation if you'd like to support him. Of course, fundraising events are best when lots of people are involved, and we hope to announce very soon details of a couple of sponsored walks coming up during the summer, to which you are all invited; while the outside collection season starts soon. If any of you would like to join the fun and dedicated team of Tammy, James, Michael, Carol and Ben, you would be very welcome, and highly appreciated. Please just contact OAB if you would like more information. ■■■

An Invitation to a Tea Party

On July 12th, OAB will host a tea party in the beautiful surroundings of Wadham College gardens. The event is open to all OAB newsletter readers, with just under one hundred tickets available. The cost is £15 for the evening (including a glass of wine and some canapés), and an invitation can be found below. If you would like to attend, please fill it in and return it to OAB along, with a cheque or postal order made out to the correct sum.

A speech will be made by the local author Colin Dexter (Inspector Morse being his most famous creation) and we hope for additional musical

entertainment to be provided by a small band. The fun will start at 5:30pm and will carry on until around 8pm. We think the whole thing should provide a fun and informal occasion for supporters and service users alike to meet and greet and get to know each other, as well as being a good excuse to venture around a historic Oxford landmark in the company of one of its most famous artists. We hope to put together similar occasions around the county in the near future. For more information call Ben on 01865 725595.

**OAB Tea Party, Wadham College, Oxford.
12 July 2009**

Please send me _____ tickets

I enclose a cheque/postal order in the sum of _____
made payable to OAB

Name _____

Address _____

Postcode _____

Telephone Number _____

Return to : Oxfordshire Association for the Blind, Bradbury Lodge,
Gordon Woodward Way, Abingdon Road, Oxford, OX1 4XL.

A successful campaign!

On March 17th, it was announced in the House of Commons that the proposed increase to the mobility component of Disability Living Allowance for people classifiable as severely visually impaired (in this case meaning people with “no useful sight for orientation purposes”), had been approved. The change will take effect from April 1st 2011. Those people who are classifiable as having “no useful sight for orientation purposes” stand to receive an extra £29 a week.

We worked with local groups and societies for blind and partially sighted people to get group letters to local MPs, while some people we contacted directly made the extra effort of writing their own communication as well. MP's mentioned on the day how much of a difference these kinds of letters made, so well done to everybody who took part. ■■■

For Sale

Magnilink Colour Autofocus CCTV
3.5 – 45x magnification
Cost £2,400 Sale Price £950

Tagarno Mini Black and White
Manual Focus CCTV
14” Screen 3 – 30x magnification
Cost £1,300 new Sale Price £300
Telephone 01865 246344

Two become one

Two of the UK's national charities for visually impaired people, RNIB and Action for Blind People, have merged to become one charity. The merge will begin in earnest in April 2009. OAB are, of course, a completely separate charity from both Action and RNIB, but we do work with them to bring Action's mobile resource unit to the county, and to offer RNIB's employment service. Happily, we are confident that neither of these services will be affected by the merge, and we will be able to continue to work with them in the future. ■■■

Coming to a place near you?

As mentioned above, we work with Action for Blind People to bring their mobile resource bus to the county. It visited Faringdon, Chipping Norton and Wallingford during March, helping dozens of people in the process. This service is proving popular, so, if there is a place you would like it to visit, just let us know on 01865 725595. ■■■

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Vision Impaired Visually Active

VIVA is a group for visually impaired people with active minds, and meets on the second Tuesday of each month at 2.00pm in the North Oxford Association, Community Centre,

Diamond Place, Summertown, Oxford. We have an interesting and varied programme for the months ahead. Please note that there is no VIVA meeting in August.

OXVIC Programme 2009

May 12th Helen Webber, talk on being a local Police Community Support Officer

June 9th Outing, venue to be arranged

July 14th Bring and Buy Sale

August No meeting this month

Sept 8th Ralph Wilkins talks about Life as a College Porter

Oct 13th To be announced

Nov 10th To be announced

Dec 8th Christmas Lunch

For further details ring Ron Sears on 01865 553063. ■■■

Telephones to try before you buy

Here at Bradbury Lodge we have been working with the British Telecom Inclusion Team and are participating in their "Try before you buy" scheme. To enable us to do so they have very kindly provided a us with some demonstration telephones and a "virtual telephone exchange". This means that clients can come to us and actually try out telephones to see if they might be useful to them. So it is possible to hear the loudness, pitch and tone of them without having to buy one! If you would like to try them out please call David on 01865 725595 to make an appointment. We look forward to hearing from you. ■■■

Please let us know !

In order to give you the best possible service, we need to know you are coming to see us. Then we can ensure that the right person is here to give you the best possible help. So to avoid disappointment please ring us on 01865 725595 and make an appointment! ■■■

Are you thinking about work?

Emma Griffiths works with us at Bradbury Lodge as an Employment Advisor on behalf of RNIB. She is keen to help those who wish to seek employment and would like to hear from you. To get in touch with her call us at OAB on 01865 725595. ■■■

Lord Mayor's Parlour

On 12th February I was very pleased to join Dr. and Mrs. Potter, and the Chairman of the Oxford Rotary Club, Robin Birch, for tea with the Mayor in the Mayor's Parlour. Dr. and Mrs. Potter had won this event as a raffle prize at the Christmas Party organised by the Rotary Club. The Mayor, Councillor Suzanna Pressel, was a charming host and even found time to show us around the historic town hall, including the old courtroom. Just to try it for size, I went and stood in the dock. I must say that it was quite imposing, even though the court was all but empty. I think it's a law abiding life for me, then! I'd like to thank Dr. and Mrs. Potter, the Mayor and Mr. Birch for a very enjoyable tea. ■■■

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Music therapy 'Could help vision'

Listening to pleasant music could help restore impaired vision in stroke patients, UK research suggests. Up to 60% of stroke patients develop a form of impaired visual awareness - known as "visual neglect". It is caused by damage to areas of the brain critical for the integration of vision, attention and action - not the areas responsible for sight. In extreme cases, patients with visual neglect may eat only the food on the right side of their plate, or shave only

half of their face. They lose the ability to track objects in their visual field on the side opposite to where their brain has been damaged by the stroke. Studies suggests music can help ease the problem. Music appears to improve awareness because of its positive emotional effect on the patient, so similar beneficial effects may also be gained by making the patient happy in other ways. ■■■

Exhibition of IT and Equipment

**The Four Pillars Hotel, Abingdon Road, Oxford
21st May 2009 from 10.00am to 4.00pm**

Cobolt Systems Ltd

Cobolt are a U.K. based company specialising in the design, manufacture and supply of innovative aids for the blind and partially sighted.

As always they will bring a wide range of equipment to Oxford both speaking and non-speaking, some of them brand new additions to their collection.

For example The Tapmemo is a revolutionary hand held talking Organiser. Battery operated and using verbal commands the unit needs no special user training. It functions as a phone book, short memo taker, appointment calendar, and alarm clock. Numbers can be dialled automatically .

The Big Button Talking Phone with Talking Caller ID which will announce your dialled and received numbers. The phone book allows 30 numbers to be stored with a voice tag created using your own voice. They will also bring some of their extensive range of anti-glare, shields and glasses, which reduce glare and enhance residual vision . We look forward to seeing them, we are sure they will have just the product to meet your needs.

**Professional
VISION
Services**

Professional Vision Services is located in Hitchin, Hertfordshire. They sell & manufacture a range of low vision aids.

On the demonstration day they will have on display, black & white, colour and split screen electronic magnifiers. (Which are commonly referred to as CCTV's). They have a wide range of autofocus models, some of you may already have seen the fantastic Mira CCTV and the Stryx portable electronic magnifier that we have on display at our headquarters in Oxford.

They also have a new range of portable machines, which go through a laptop and as well as stand-alone models.

Their latest addition is a Flat Screen CCTV portable and light, in fact it weighs less than 2 bags of sugar, which makes it a very attractive proposition if you will need to move it around the home!



Dolphin develop software which enables people with a visual impairment to use computers easily. This software is ideal for the home or office and popular with libraries, schools and universities. Whatever your level of sight, spending budget or computer interest our screen enlargers, screen readers and Braille translators will help you get the most from your PC. Dolphin Software can be installed on desktops, laptops and networks. Easy to use, with free technical support and needing no special equipment it can work with industry standard Windows software and hardware. You can choose from a combination of magnification, speech & Braille: see the screen in large print, listen to computer speech and touch Braille at your fingertips. Come along to the Four Pillars Hotel on the Abingdon Road on the 21st May for a free demonstration of Dolphin's latest, and most advanced, computer access features for blind and visually impaired computer users. Even if you are not familiar with Dolphin's software and are currently using other access programs, Dolphin has made it easier for you change.

Techno-Vision Ltd.

Techno-vision provide a range of support and services for the production of braille and tactile communications.

Computer Room Services

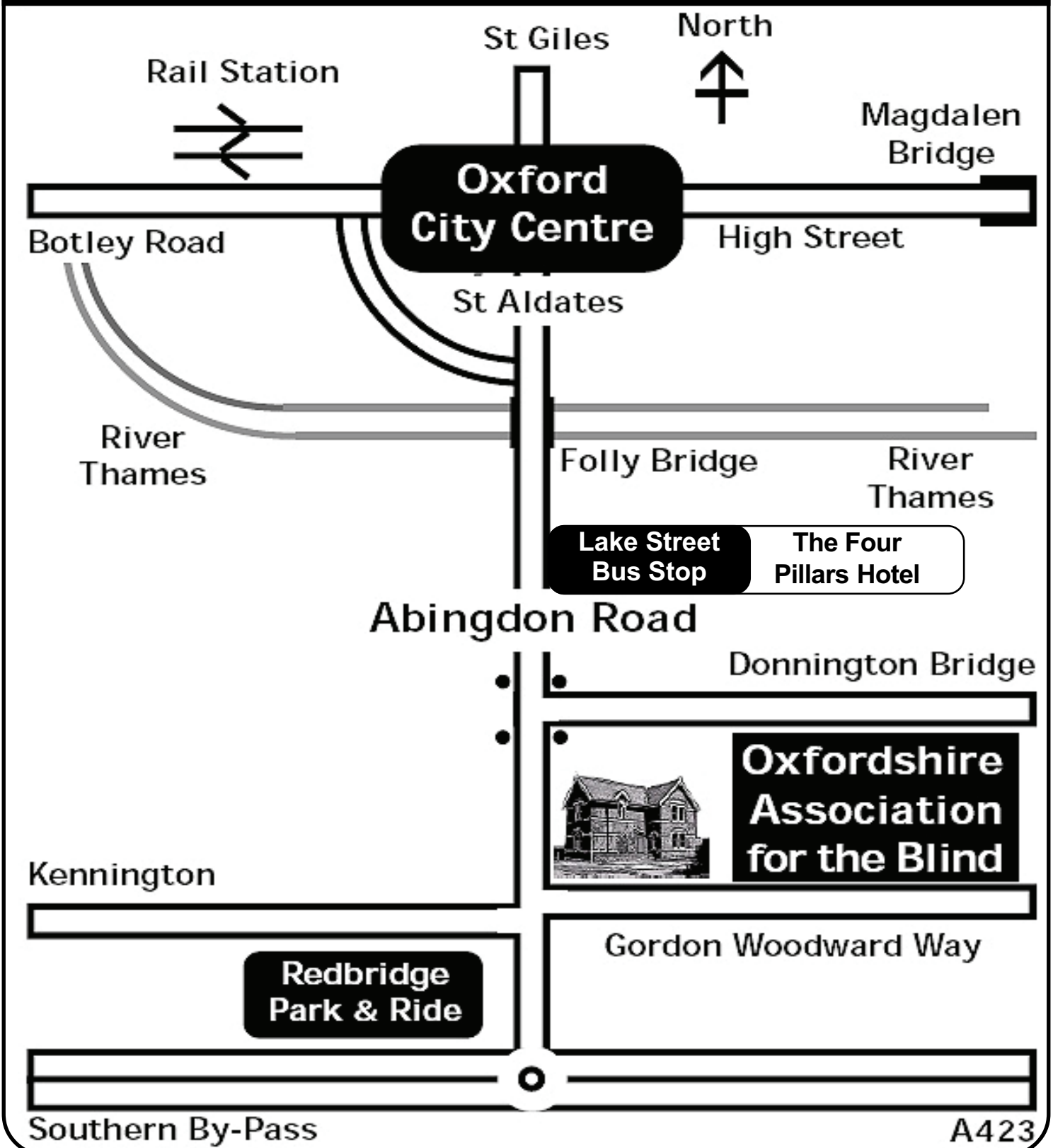
They supply a wide range of equipment, software and services, including computer games, hardware peripherals, mobile phones, note takers/PDAs, Braille displays, organiser software, computer tutorials, general computer software, audio software, audio hardware (accessible radios etc.), and computer screen reading software.

**This exhibition will be well worth a visit and has always been very popular at this venue
For more Information call us at Oxfordshire Association for the Blind on 01865 725595
We look forward to seeing you!**

Getting to the OAB Exhibition on 21st May 2009

The bus stop nearest to the exhibition is Lake Street, although you can ask for the Four Pillars Hotel. From Oxford it is served from stops H2, H3 and H4 in St. Aldates' near Christchurch College. These buses are the 35, 35a, X3, X13 and 31.

For more information call us on 01865 725595.



Only in America

Anyone who has lived with severe visual impairment and blindness for any length of time will have heard about people using guide canes, long canes and guide dogs to aid mobility. Some even know about the Hoople, the ultra cane and even GPS with speech synthesis! No I didn't just make them up.

Not so long ago I wrote an article about Rosie, Britain's first Guide Pony and it was not an April Fools joke! The ponies are tiny and don't take up a lot of room however their working life is two or three times longer than a guide dog, therefore they are seen by many as a viable alternative to them.

Now I have just heard about a young blind lady in America who rides a Guide Horse, she even rides into the supermarket when she needs to get some shopping! I don't really think I would want to be stood behind them at the check-out.

Reading sessions for people with MD

As Colin mentioned on the front page of this newsletter, we're very happy to be able to work together with Daphne Dorman from the Macular Disease Society. For the last few weeks, Daphne has been running sessions on "Eccentric Reading" for people with a loss of central vision, something that is often associated with Macular Degeneration. By identifying the most useful area of remaining vision and practising techniques to help focus the attention on this area, reading can be dramatically improved in some people

The sessions can potentially be of great help to those who take part, but they are not suitable for everyone, and a big commitment is required to get the most out of the technique. You will, quite literally, be re-learning to read. For further information call OAB on 01865 725595 or Daphne Dorman directly on 01993 811084.

Artists Support OAB

We're delighted to say that two local artists, Nicola Jenkin and David Parrott are supporting OAB by donating a proportion of the proceeds from their exhibition of paintings during August at the Said Business School, in Oxford. Interestingly, Nicola hones her artistic skills with the same tutor as our own Vice President, Professor Tony Bron. Professor Bron

will say a few words at a private viewing on the evening of 1st August. If anyone would like to attend then, please do let us know by calling us on 01865 725595. We are very grateful to Nicola and David. They both have their own websites, if you have that facility: www.nicolajenkin.com and www.davidparrott.com . ■■■

VIBNO

Meets on the first Tuesday of the month alternating between a meeting at a pub and another activity. If you are a VIP aged between 18 and 50 and want to socialise and have fun come and join us. Partners, family and friends are very welcome. For more information and details of our programme please contact Nicola Pamphilon 01869 331778 or e-mail flashnp@aol.com ■■■

Dreaming Spires Ten pin bowling club

We are a friendly team who play tenpin bowling at the Bowlplex in Oxford. No special equipment or experience is required and you are guaranteed a warm welcome. For more information about playing ten pin bowling, please can you contact Kevin Pamphilon club captain Phone 01869 331778. ■■■

Wantage Blind Club

A social club for partially sighted and blind people living locally. Meetings are held on the second Saturday of each month from February to December at the Wantage Day Centre from 3-5pm where members can socialise over afternoon tea. A raffle is held and there is often entertainment. We also have an annual outing. Transport is available by Special Transport Ambulance or in volunteer's cars. For more information call Hazel Aldred on 01235 765849 or Mrs Joy Ripley on 01235 763112. ■■■

Banbury Blind Club

Meets Tuesdays 10.30am - 2.00pm at the Baptist Hall near Whatley Hall for more information call Enid Smith on 01295 269568. ■■■

Carers groups in Oxfordshire

Carers, of any age, living or working in Oxfordshire, can find support, advice and information from their local carers group

North and West Carers Centre

27 Horse Fair
Banbury
OX16 0AE
01295 264545
cc.nwoxon@dsl.pipex.com

Oxford Carers Centre

174a Cowley Road,
Oxford, OX4 1UE
01865 205192
info@carerscentre.co.uk
Website:
www.carerscentre.co.uk

South and Vale Carers' Centre

5 Lydalls Road,
Didcot, OX11 7HX
01235 510212
carers@svcarers.org.uk
Website:
www.svcarers.org.uk

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NORTH OXFORDSHIRE

Video games 'improve vision'

Playing action video games can boost an aspect of adult vision previously thought to be fixed; the ability to notice even very small changes in shades of grey against a uniform background. This "Contrast Sensitivity" is important at night, or in conditions of poor visibility and is often one of the first aspects of vision to be affected by ageing.

Such improvement usually requires physical changes in eye optics, through eye surgery, glasses or contact lenses, however video game players who regularly play games involving aiming and shooting at virtual targets gain better contrast sensitivity when compared with players who play non-action video games. These results are not because people with better contrast sensitivity are more likely to be action video game players – non-video game players who practice daily video game playing can improve their contrast sensitivity. Crucially, the improvements are sustained long term, suggesting that time spent in front of a computer screen is not necessarily harmful for vision, as has sometimes been suggested. (Writes the proud, visually impaired owner of Playstations 1,2 and 3, an Xbox and a number of PC action games.)

So if a partner begrudges time spent playing "shoot-em ups" on your console you can tell them that it is good for your sight! ■■■

Seeing into the future

Technology is constantly pushing the boundaries of what is possible and the development of "Artificial vision" is a shining example. Ron, 73 who lost his sight 30 years ago has confirmed he now sees flashes of light after being fitted with a 'bionic eye' at Moorfields Eye Hospital last year. He is one of three people in the UK to have undergone the experimental surgery in a bid to restore his sight. Since being fitted with the Argus II device seven months ago, Ron says that he is able to follow white lines on the road and sort his socks, though not at the same time!

The device uses a camera and video processor mounted onto sunglasses to send captured images wirelessly to a tiny receiver on the outside of the eye. Once these electrodes are stimulated messages are sent along the optic nerve to the brain. The intention is that patients learn to interpret the visual patterns into meaningful images.

The bionic eye was developed by American company, Second Sight and has been tested on 18 patients worldwide as part of an international trial.

There are many other projects aimed at restoring sight or improving residual vision, although they, for the most part, are in very early or trial stages. Therefore it will be quite some time before we see the benefits. However there is progress being made and we will keep you up to date with any meaningful developments as

15 we hear of them. ■■■

OAB on the radio

On Wednesday March 18th, OAB's Director, Colin Cure, appeared on BBC Radio Oxford to talk about Macular Degeneration, its effects, and some of the support that is available for those affected.

Colin also invited Daphne Dorman from the local Macular Disease Society to talk with him and add her expertise to the subject. They were both hosted by DJs Danny and Lou.

The show was a great success and we were very happy to receive a couple of calls congratulating Colin and Daphne on putting the issues across so well.

If you would like to listen to the broadcast, you can access it through OAB's website on the following internet address www.oxeyes.org.uk/newsletter_1.html or by logging onto the home page and clicking on the link for the first page of the last newsletter.

We know, for many of you reading this, that campaigning and spreading the word of these important issues is very important to you, and we will work to be involved in more awareness raising like this in the future.

Of course, if you would like to help, a letter, email or phone call to your local paper or radio show, mentioning OAB and the issues we work with, will go a long way to help us do that. ■■■■

Children's delight at Thomley Hall

After a great deal of effort and organisation from the OAB team, working with RNIB, Social and Educational Services and, of course, LOOK Oxfordshire, the Thomley Hall activity day for visually impaired children, their families and their carers was a great success!

Over thirty children went on the day and were able to enjoy everything from the fun of a ball pool to a special bongo-drum workshop that was run by two local musicians. The day ended with a special raffle and, though one young claimant had some trouble getting her prize because she ate the raffle ticket, the day was thoroughly enjoyed by all who went: volunteers and helpers included.

Some of the families who attended asked about the possibility of going to Thomley Hall on other occasions. This is indeed possible, and highly recommended, but it must be understood that on most days the spectrum of disabilities of the children visiting Thomley is very wide and diverse. If you would like to arrange a trip to Thomley Hall in your own personal time, we would suggest you call them directly on 01844 338380.



Giving more easily and effectively

by Michael Ling, *OAB Accounting Officer and Guru*

Gift Aid

Gift Aid is a scheme to enable tax-effective giving by individuals to charities in the United Kingdom.

Gift Aid allows individuals who are subject to UK income tax to complete a simple, short declaration that they are a UK taxpayer.

Any cash donations that the taxpayer makes to their favourite charity, (OAB of course), after making a declaration, are treated as being made after deduction of income tax at the basic rate, and the charity can reclaim the basic rate income tax paid on the gift from Revenue and Customs.

So if you are a taxpayer please complete the gift aid form on the next page and let us claim a further 28% on top of each contribution we receive.

Standing Order

If you want to make regular payments to us, why not take advantage of a standing order with your bank?

This can be used to make regular payments whether weekly, monthly, quarterly or annually.

Not only does it save you having to remember when you last sent anything to us, it also saves you the hassle and cost of writing cheques and posting them to us.

If you do wish to pay by standing order, please complete the standing order on the following page, but please remember to send this to OAB and *NOT* to your bank.

Support OAB become a member!

Show your support for Oxfordshire's best loved Visually Impaired charity by becoming a member. At just £5.00 a year it is great value for money and your membership gives us a greater voice in the county. Just fill in the form on the next page or telephone 01865 725595 for more information. Thank you! ■■■

We are very grateful for donations received in memory of these people

Reginald Montgomery
Helen Harvey
Gil Croft
Gladys Prior
Bernard Sheppard
James Martin
Albert Teagle

Alice Allright
George Clare
Grace Wilton
Ethel Wyatt
James Hayton
Clive Brothers
Ida Huckins

Dorothy Brown
Mrs Smith
Mrs CE Bolam
John Bishop
Noreen D'Silva
Penelope Blundell

Thank you

Membership and donation

Important

If you are **eligible**, please Gift Aid your payment by signing the declaration below. In **all cases**, please complete your name and address details. If you wish to pay by standing order, please also complete the separate form overleaf and return to us at:

**The Oxfordshire Association for the Blind,
Bradbury Lodge, Gordon Woodward Way,
Oxford, OX1 4XL.**

Membership

Please tick the appropriate box

Member

(£5.00 annually)

Friend

(£20.00 annually)

Life Member

(£250.00)

Donation

£..... please show amount

Gift Aid

Please tick the appropriate box

Please treat this payment as a Gift Aid donation

Please treat all membership/donations that I make from the date of this declaration, until otherwise notified, as Gift Aid donations

I pay Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax at least equal to the tax that the OAB reclaims on membership/donations in the appropriate tax year. I will inform the OAB when this is no longer the case.

Signed

Date

Name _____

Address _____

Postcode _____

Telephone _____

OAB Oxfordshire Association for the *Blind*

1877-2007

*Helping blind people
for 130 years*

Registered Charity 273559

Bradbury Lodge, Gordon Woodward Way, Abingdon Road,
Oxford, OX1 4XL.

Phone : 01865 725595 Fax : 01865 725596

Standing order instruction

To the Manager:.....Bank plc

at:

.....

.....Post Code

Please pay to **CAF Bank plc,**
25 Kings Hill Avenue,
Kings Hill, West Malling,
Kent, ME19 4JQ

Sort Code 40-52-40

For the credit of Oxfordshire Association for the Blind
Account number is 00015471

The sum of £..... (in words).....

on theday of200.....

and the same sum on the same day in each succeeding
month / quarter / year (*delete as appropriate*) until further
notice and debit my account number

Signed **Date**

Name

Address

Postcode

Telephone



Clubs and groups for VIPs in Oxfordshire

Abingdon & District Macular Group

Daphne Baker 01491 835157

Banbury Society for the Visually Impaired

Enid Smith 01295 269568

Bicester Friends of the Visually Impaired

Mrs Peggy Clarke 01869 242290

Carterton Social Club

Rosemary Gibbens 01993 846825

Chipping Norton Friends of the Blind

Mary Gregory 01608 810899

Didcot/Wallingford OAB affiliated

Pam Organ 01235 813391

Dorothy Drummond 01235 812614

Faringdon representative

Jean Young 01367 241467

Henley VIP Group

Mike Pooley 01491 628284

Look Oxfordshire Support for families of VI children

Alison Baker 01235 868262

Kidlington Macular Group

Tom Wright 01865 376482

Marita Ferrett 01865 373104

Oxford Macular Group

Daphne Dorman 01993 811084

Oxford Visually Impaired Club

Mary Gregory 01608 810899

'Oxpots' Pottery Class

Christopher Barry 01608 730407

Thame and District Society for the Visually Handicapped

Norman Lilley 01844 261041

Visually Impaired But Not Old!

Nicola & Kevin Pamphilon 01869 331778

VIVA, North Oxford

Liaison Officer, Ron Sears 01865 553063

Wantage Blind Social Club

Mrs Joy Ripley 01235 763112

Secretary Hazel Aldred 01235 765849

Witney Area Visually Impaired Group

Mandy 01993 771078

Oxfordshire Social Services Sensory Impairment Team

A county-wide team of specially trained staff who can assess, advise, support, teach and inform people of all ages with sight problems:

Sensory Impairment Teams,

**Oxfordshire Social
& Community Services,
Foxcombe Court,
Wyndyke Furlong,
Abingdon Business Park,
Abingdon,
OX14 1DZ**

Telephone 01235 549395

VI Team

Beverley Downs

Kate Laybourne

Nigel Lewis

Elizabeth Jones

Meg Jones

Dorothy Hazell

Helen Fallaize

Serena Glistler

Sue Miles

Manager

John Fearn-Webster

Out of hours social services, emergency freephone 0800 833408.