

30th Anniversary News Letter

SPRING 2008

Happy 30th Birthday

Here are some of the many activities of The Aldingbourne Trust, a charity dedicated to unlocking the potential in people with learning disabilities within West Sussex and surrounding areas, by providing places to work and residences with varying degrees of support.



What's this ... (see back page)

THE ALDINGBOURNE TRUST

Blackmill Lane,
Norton,
Chichester,
West Sussex, PO18 0JP.
Tel: 01243 544607
Fax: 01243 544807

THE ACORN

Todhurst Site,
Chichester College,
Brinsbury Campus,
North Heath,
Pulborough,
West Sussex RH20 1DL.
Tel/Fax: 01798 873533

For further information,
please log on to:
www.aldingbournetrust.co.uk
or phone us on 01243 544607.
We look forward to hearing
from you.

These charming poems say it all, don't they? Julia and Layla's words speak volumes about daily life at Aldingbourne – and the impact the Trust has had on their lives. Celebrating our 30th Anniversary allows us to reflect on the last 30 years, the faces, the changes, the buildings, and now the animals! Congratulations to Julia and Layla who will receive vouchers from the Friends of The Aldingbourne Trust in recognition of their contribution.



Julia

30 years The Aldingbourne Trust has run,
How time flies!
People go,
New faces come,
I've seen so many changes.
Pigs at the centre, how sweet they are.
The top building was on fire – those naughty rats!
How we coped!
Now we've got a brand new Top Building.
Friends I made over the years,
The Centre is a lovely place to work.
Congratulations on your 30th Anniversary.
Julia Miles

In November 1997 I started at ACC
It helped me to make new friends
And made me very happy
The jobs I do are varied
One day is never the same
Organics with Jo,
Or cooking in the café with Jane
We all have so many fun times
Barbeques, Christmas parties and fairs
Singing, dancing, and dressing up
Wondering what to wear
Being at ACC teaches me a lot
To be independent, to live with my
friends
The skills to get a job
There is always someone on hand to
help with reading and writing,
Advice or a chat
ACC is something special
And I am so glad to be part of that.
Layla Clifton



Layla

Those of you interested to learn the full history of the last 30 years of The Aldingbourne Trust and all aspects of our work may like to visit our website, www.aldingbournetrust.co.uk. But perhaps the best way to get a real insight into the last 30 years is to talk to Alistair Riddell and Paul Dunne, two of our first clients, and Frank Harfield, our greatly valued Trustee, who were there at the start.



Two of the Originals

Thirty years on. Alistair Riddell and Paul Dunne were there at the beginning – in fact Paul was there on Day 1 – and they are there now. They remember the Country Centre when it was an open field with the great oak tree which is still there. They helped dig the holes for the hedge which divides the site – it is now three-men-tall. They joined their parents in the fundraising, the sponsored walks and the fete. They helped eat the sandwiches which their parents made to sustain all the workers through the first cold winter.

But it has changed, not only in the buildings and the activities provided at the Centre, but also in the way Alistair

and Paul use the Centre. It is less of a full-time occupation. Alistair works at the Earnley Butterfly Farm two days a week and comes to the Centre on the other days to work with the Wood Recycling team and on the Woodland project. He is also a leading member of Powerful Trainers. Paul has one of the independent flats at Milton Lodge and also does three days work a week with the Wood Recycling team.

They want to tell people what working at the County Centre means to them and how much it has all changed – they are collecting old photos and old stories to share with us all.

Your Friends Need You!

A very simple way of supporting the work of The Aldingbourne Trust is to become a Friend.

Whatever your contribution, or whether you attend our events or buy raffle tickets, your membership makes a significant difference to many people.

If you are already a Friend, encouraging just one friend to join immediately doubles our numbers, so please contact Central Office today on 01243 544607.



Frank's story

Frank Harfield first heard of the Aldingbourne Trust as a member of the Chichester Lions, who were some of the Trust's original fund raisers. He was approached by Paddy Whiteside, who together with Susan Evershed and Mavis Miles had the original vision of Aldingbourne, as the man with the financial knowledge to advise on their new endeavour. Impressed by what he heard, Frank agreed to support this much needed local provision for people with learning difficulties, to be located on a plot of land in Aldingbourne, then leased from the Surrey Health Authority. Frank helped set up the financial systems, employed a book keeper and still chairs the Finance Committee, vital to keep the wheels of the Trust turning today.

30 years on, Frank remains our longest serving Trustee and has certainly seen some changes along the way; new faces, new staff, the opening of Milton Lodge in 1980, the acquisition of The Acorn Centre in 1989, and in 1993 an ambitious building programme which today is what we know as the conference room, offices, coffee shop, kitchens and workshop. There have been hurdles too, but perhaps the most significant event since Aldingbourne's conception was that Susan Evershed managed to persuade the Surrey Health Authority, who owned the site, to sell the land to the Trust, enabling the original vision to grow to what we know today.

And the next 30 years? We'd like to think Frank will be able to lend his expertise, dedication and steady hands to the Trust for as long as possible. We take this opportunity to say a very big thank you from everyone at Aldingbourne for his long standing support.

Friends of The Aldingbourne Trust

Don't think that a quieter programme of events last year means this year will be the same – we've been saving ourselves for a bumper 2008 to celebrate the Trust's 30th Anniversary!

By the time you all receive this newsletter, our splendid 'in house' celebrity chef Rosemary Moon will have again entertained and enthused us with her 'Sussex Spring Flavours' evening at the Parish Centre, Bognor. Well known as the author of her own West Sussex publication, Moonbites, where Rosemary generously allows us advertising space, Rosemary and her husband Nick, our valued treasurer, are loyal supporters of the Friends. Perhaps some of you reading now are new Friends who have joined us as a result of that evening - if that is the case, a very warm welcome and thank you for your support.

If you enjoyed the lovely evening in Lady Egremont's beautiful gardens at Petworth House last summer, you will surely remember Jazz Smugglers, who have kindly agreed to entertain us again at this summer's event in the glorious grounds of West Dean House on Friday, July 4th. Tickets will be priced at £15 per head. Lovely gardens, live music, appetising refreshments and a chilled drink – what better way can you think of to spend an English summer's evening?

Next stop will be Uptwaltham Barns, venue for our Harvest Barn Dance on Wednesday 24th September. Bring your friends, wear some comfy clothes and come along for some energetic fun, and the opportunity to win one of the fabulous prizes in our 30th Anniversary raffle. All prizes are produce of Aldingbourne, the piece de resistance being the first prize stunning quilt, lovingly crafted by clients at the Art and Craft service. Other prizes will include half an Aldingbourne reared pig for the freezer, some of our innovative recycled garden furniture (watch out Chelsea!) and organic plants and produce.

Our event 'quartet' is completed with an afternoon of Christmas music, poetry and prose at St Paul's Church Hall on Sunday 23rd November, 2 – 5 pm, just the thing to soothe pre Christmas stress. But spending our funds is just as important as raising it and since our last bulletin in the autumn newsletter, its good to hear our clients have enjoyed their Christmas presents and outings. Clients are also enjoying capturing images depicting life at Aldingbourne, be they photographic or illustrated, the best of which we will select to reproduce as postcards for sale.

Latterly the majority of the considerable behind the scenes organisation has fallen at the feet of Clare Scherer, our splendid secretary who finds due to pressure of work she can no longer take on as much. Sue Livett has kindly temporarily taken the reins – thank you Sue - but we are always looking for more help and more Friends. If you think you would like to be part of a friendly, informal but committed group of people, we'd love to hear from you on 01243 544607.

We're looking forward to your call!

Thinking Caps On!

For some time the Country Centre has been looking at ways to make more use of the land and space that they have. The Centre is very popular with our trainees (and visitors!) and has a waiting list at the moment. Over the past few months a small working group has been meeting to find out which are the most popular departments and what we could improve for the benefit of our trainees and visitors.

Since its beginnings 30 years ago, the Country Centre has always had some commercial activity – this is a key part of its vocational training activities and helps to support people with learning difficulties to gain greater independence and control over their lives. More recently, the Centre has actively developed more social enterprises, for example the new Wood Recycling project. Training opportunities linked

to commercial activity will continue to be an essential part of the support and opportunities that are offered at the Centre. One of the next steps is to get an accurate survey of the site so that new ideas can be mapped out – the survey work is already underway.



We welcome your ideas – if you've often thought "Why don't they" – then now's your chance to let Simon Hutchins (the ACC Manager) know about it. Drop him a line or email simonhutchins@aldingbournetrust.co.uk.

Steaming Ahead!

The Adopt a Station project at the Acorn is really starting to take shape. Alongside their instructor Sarah Ross, students have recently completed planting a 60ft x 8ft area at Barnham Station and four displays at Christ's Hospital which they hope will be entered in Horsham in Bloom this year. One of our valued volunteers Christopher Allen supported the students and quotes, "Many passers by stopped to compliment us on the transformation".

The Acorn have recently teamed up and are starting to work in partnership with Ian Storey, a member of staff and his clients from The Pines day centre in West Durrington. They have volunteered their support and are planning to maintain Worthing, West Worthing and Lancing stations. This builds on

what is already a fantastic project and is encouraging volunteers from other organisations to work alongside us.

Back at the Acorn, Sarah and her team are currently preparing the many hanging baskets and troughs that now need to be created and placed on each station. Sarah has had several past students from The Acorn and Aldingbourne express an interest in returning as volunteers to help maintain the watering of these stations. If you or anyone you know would like to offer their support in maintaining a station please contact Sarah Ross on 07508 038632.

Follow the list of stations at the bottom of the newsletter to see how many we have adopted. Perhaps one of them is local to you!



ACC Pool Tournament 2007

One of the casualties of the fire at the Top Building in 2006 was the pool table, but thanks to the ladies of Worthing golf club, the ACC Annual Pool Tournament lives on.

Lady Captain Jacky Pearson presented a cheque to Managing Director Sue Livett and runner up Richard Padgham for a stunning £3,513, raised through a variety of activities, and a splendid new table is now in pride of place.



32 teams were drawn from a hat to enter the competition, and in a very keenly contested tournament, the eventual winners were Philip Strutt, later named player of the tournament, and Matt Swanson (Deputy Manager) who beat Richard Padgham and Jo Rea (Organics Instructor) in front of a packed audience. Simon Hutchins, the new ACC Manager presented the prizes, and Matt, who had organized the tournament, assured everyone the draw had not been fixed!

Everyone agreed it was great to have the pool table back, and is very grateful to the ladies of Worthing Golf Club for their generosity.

We Mean Green

It's good to see the high street is following our example.

The recent publicity surrounding plastic bags and recycling really brings environmental issues home to everyone, and at last recycling, organics and all matters green are losing their 'hippy' status as the health and environmental benefits are widely acknowledged.

Here at Aldingbourne we've always been interested in green issues, but now we're getting serious. Whether we're talking about our cycle scheme, wood recycling or organics, we believe we have a responsibility to continuously improve, innovate and educate.

Green issues are part of our clients' every day life at Aldingbourne, be it about life at the Country Centre, or conserving energy and recycling at home. Who would have ever thought chip fat could be used to run garden maintenance vehicles or our wood recycling collection van?

Next time you come along to the Country Centre or the Acorn, take a minute to see what measures we are taking to 'Mean Green' ... and pick up some organic plants and vegetables to take home with you in one of our new eco bags too!



... it's part of the stunning quilt, crafted by clients at the Art and Craft Service, and 1st prize in the Friends' Anniversary Raffle.

*Tickets available at all our functions and central office.
Tel: 01243 544607.*

Dates for your Diary

Saturday 24th, Sunday 25th and Bank Holiday Monday 26th May, 10.00 – 4.00 pm

Craft Exhibition at Aldingbourne Country Centre

Thursday 29th May - Saturday 31st May

Visit our plant stall in the Bishop's Palace Garden at the Chichester Festival of Flowers.

Friday 4th July, 6.30 – 8.30 pm

Enjoy live music and refreshments with the Friends whilst sipping a chilled drink amongst the beautiful grounds of West Dean House. Tickets £15 per head.

Thursday, 21st August

30th Anniversary of the Aldingbourne Trust Call in at the Country Centre and see how we're celebrating 1978 style!

Bank Holiday Sunday 24th August

An Aldingbourne Trust 5 km Fun Run at the Goodwood Motor Circuit. Run, walk, cycle, push or watch! Refreshments provided by the Friends.

Wednesday 24th September, 7.00 – 10.30 pm

The Friends' Harvest Barn Dance at Upwaltham Barns, Upwaltham, and Grand Raffle draw. Tickets £10 per head.

Sunday, 23rd November, 2.30 – 4.00 pm

*St Paul's Church, Chichester
An afternoon of Christmas Music*

All enquiries please to Central Office, 01243 544607.

Going Green – Seeing Red!

To celebrate our 30th Anniversary Year, we're printing our newsletters in full colour.

We like it so much we're going to continue, but as this is our first edition, there may be more changes to come, so do let us know what you think! We are always interested to hear your views, and are very grateful for the Friends' continued sponsorship of this newsletter.