



Remedy

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Disclaimer: Articles and comments from members and readers reflect the opinion of the individual contributor, not The Disability Foundation.

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chief executive's letter

A new financial year and a new set of challenges. Financial stability and growth are high on the agenda together with our own relocation needs under the RNOH's current redevelopment scheme. Sadly we have learnt that the RNOH have not had their business case approved, however the good news is that the local Strategic Health Authority (SHA) has not asked the RNOH to look at alternative sites but to review the scale and scope of the existing scheme. Rest assured that TDF will be working closely with the RNOH on this matter and will be fighting to remain a part of the redevelopment on the existing Stanmore site. Neither the RNOH nor the charity is giving up!

TDF like most of our members is no stranger to challenge and adversity, indeed it is the very reason that TDF exists in the first place. I have come to learn that adversity can actually be a positive tool and I would like to share a quote from renowned author Sarah B Breathnach which I believe we can all apply at some time in our lives. "Real life isn't always going to be perfect or go our way, but the recurring acknowledgement of what is working in our lives can help us not only to survive, but to surmount our difficulties".



Frank Bordoni
Chief Executive



New birth

TDF would like to announce to all our members that Lisa Mendoza, our Head of Information Services who some of you may know, gave birth to a gorgeous baby girl called Olivia in May. Both Lisa and Olivia visited TDF where we all got to meet the new arrival who was fascinated by all the different faces looking at her. We just had to take this cute photograph so you could all see her.



TDF AGM, Year March 2004 – March 2005

We all gathered in sunny Pinner at the Village Hall on the 23rd May for TDF's AGM. Those present included the trustees, the TDF office team, members, therapists and TDF founder Julie Fernandez.

The AGM started with Janet Desmond, Chairperson outlining the strong base that TDF has, new initiatives being introduced to raise funds and the steps being taken to increase the profile of TDF. Frank Bordoni, Chief Executive, then updated attendees on TDF's financial situation and steps being taken to ensure TDF's strong foundation. You can see a full report of the day in the minutes sent out to all members

earlier this year as well as TDF's finances for 2004 -2005 in the Annual Report also sent to members.

As usual we organised a speaker to come along and talk to those attending. This year the speaker was Richard Matthews from Shape Arts who spoke about the many aspects of their work with disabled people in the arts field. To find out more on Shape Arts and how to access their services visit their website www.shapearts.org.uk or telephone 020 7619 6160.

TDF will have another AGM later in the year. Information on this will be sent out to ensure all members have the opportunity to attend.

TDF's New Telephone System

As you may already know from calling TDF recently we have installed a new telephone system thanks to the money very kindly donated by Sir Victor Blank's Trust.

When you now phone TDF you will be greeted by an "auto attendant" who will offer you several options. This hopefully means that you will be put straight through to the department you need to speak to.

The options that will be open to you include talking to someone about therapy appointments, obtaining disability information or enquiring generally about TDF's services. There is still an answerphone which will operate when the centre is closed where you can leave a message to cancel therapy appointments.

Our new system will be especially helpful if you have a disability enquiry, as you can go straight through to the Information Team. You will also be able to leave a message if you call during office hours and the information workers are busy so they can call you back as soon as they can.

TDF hopes that the new system will make the centre run more efficiently and it will be easier

for callers who will not have to repeat their enquiry to several people before reaching the person who is able to provide an answer.

For your reference, here are the options you will hear when you now telephone TDF:

Press one for general enquiries about membership

Press two to make/change an appointment if you are an existing member

Press three for the Disability Information Service

Hold the line to speak to a receptionist for all other enquiries.

We're having an interesting and varied year with TDF's fundraising

Richard Desmond / Express Newspapers

Our Honorary Patron Mr Richard Desmond, owner of The Daily Express newspaper group, held a phone-in competition for all its readers to win a car and fantastically donated all the proceeds from the phone calls they received to TDF.

Thank you so much for this generous donation and your continued support Mr Desmond.



Trust who kindly donated us the funds to install the much needed new equipment.

Our new phone system enables the staff to direct calls a lot more efficiently and allows extra phone lines which lessens the chance of any of our members not being able to get through to us quickly.

The new computers have equally added greatly to internal and external communications, data-bases, swifter responses online and have stopped the fear of computers crashing without warning!

Many thanks to Sir Victor and his Trust for supporting us.

Sponsored half marathon

Lisa Dawson and Sabrina Rahman of Northern and Shell have bravely completed

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The Princess Royal Trust for Carers

Chrissy Smith, TDF Fundraising and Marketing Manager, was delighted to be invited to attend, on behalf of TDF, an awareness evening for the Princess Royal's charity. It was an honour to meet Her Royal Highness and she was keen to know more about TDF and could clearly see the synergy between the two charities. We are now in discussions with her Trust about the potential of holding a joint media appeal and possibly in the future some form of event.

We will keep you updated as this relationship develops and we confirm what we will be doing with them.

Sir Victor Blank

We have now had our new phone system and computers installed thanks to Sir Victor Blank's



fundraising

the half marathon (13 miles!) on March 19th at Silverstone Race track on behalf of TDF.

These brave ladies decided that they wanted to do this for us and took their training very seriously, running every day to ensure they were up to the task and as a result they completed the full 13 miles with all sponsorship money again being donated to TDF. Thank you Lisa and Sabrina for all your hard work, personal endurance and support. They have been fantastic and even offered to do it again next year for us!

Champneys

In our last newsletter we said that Champneys were holding a staff parachute jump to raise money for both TDF and Tommy's. 42 members of staff and friends of Champneys were planning to jump and were all present on the day ready to perform this brave feat!

25 people jumped successfully when unfortunately the wind got too strong for it to continue safely but they plan for the remaining non-jumpers to have their go on another date! The money raised is very gratefully received by us all at TDF. Many thanks to Champneys

for your continued support and fantastic enthusiasm!

Thank you

We have many people who we owe a huge thank you to for their support since our last newsletter and we feel it is important that they are all mentioned as their support to TDF is absolutely vital and we are very grateful for their help:

Richard Desmond, Mehmet Dalman, Sir Philip Green, Galen Weston, The Rt. Hon. Nathaniel Rothschild, Jafar Omid, Dame Gail and Gerald Ronson, Jamie Kermisch, Sir Trevor Chinn, Paul Ferry, Michael Kerr-Dineen, Sir Harry and Lady Solomon, Jamie Ritblatt, The Bernhard Trust, Trevor Pears, Nick and Maxine Leslau, Keith Harris, Jonathon Shalit, Stan Myerson, Martin Ellice, John and Marsha Ratcliffe, Debbie Mills, Cyril Paskin of The Philip Green Memorial Trust.

We are planning a fund raising evening event in November and will update you in the next newsletter. Hope you had a good summer and if you have any fundraising ideas please send them in to TDF!

Did you know you can now donate to TDF online?

Every penny donated to TDF is vital and we are members of the Give Now online donations service. This is a service offered by the Charities Aid Foundation to help smaller charities receive donations using credit cards. It is a secure website so your private details are not passed on and your credit card details are not held on their server. You can choose to make a one off donation quickly, securely and tax effectively increasing the value of your gift to TDF by up to 28% using the Gift Aid option at no extra cost to yourself. You can also request to set up regular donations if you so wish.

It's simple, secure and straight forward. Simply log on to our website at www.tdf.org.uk. Go to the appeals section and then click the link 'donations on the web'. This will take you to the 'Give Now' website where you will see TDF's details displayed. The minimum amount that you can donate on this site is £5. We need as much help and support as you can give so any amount would be very much appreciated by us all at TDF.

Thank you in advance.

body, mind and soul

By Sarah Stanwix –
TDF Information Officer

Before coming to work at TDF I knew little about complementary therapies and had never even heard of Cranio-Sacral therapy. I thought that many others might also be unclear on how the therapy can improve the body and mind.

Directly translating the name of the therapy, Cranio means the cranium or skull and Sacral means the area at the base of the spine called the sacrum. The name makes sense when you know that the therapy is based on the cranio-sacral system, which comprises of the membranes and cerebro-spinal fluid that can be found around the

skull and spinal column. This system surrounds the brain and spinal cord and its purpose is to protect and nourish these fragile areas.

The Cranio-Sacral System has a distinct rhythm (Cranio-Sacral Rhythm), different to your heart beat, which a practitioner is able to detect. The rhythm can be felt throughout the body in the muscular, nervous and fascial systems. The fascial system is composed of the connective tissue (fascia) that can be found throughout the body providing support and cushioning to our organs.

During a treatment the practitioner uses a very gentle touch no heavier than a small coin on several key areas on the body to feel the strength, amplitude and quality of this Cranio-Sacral

Cranio-Sacral therapy

By Andrew Hovell –
TDF Information Officer

I have had Rheumatoid Arthritis for over 15 years since I was 25. I first started coming to The Disability Foundation in 2000 and quickly settled into having Reflexology on a regular basis. This helped to alleviate my symptoms including the pain and tiredness caused by my condition. When, in 2003, I began to volunteer at TDF I decided I would try the other therapies on offer. I tried Massage, Reiki and then I tried Cranio-Sacral therapy. I really enjoyed Cranio-Sacral as it left me feeling lighter and stretched - taller even though I wasn't. My back felt much more mobile and I felt like I was walking on air. After that I had Cranio-Sacral on a regular basis when I felt my body was getting too tense.

In my experience Cranio-Sacral is extremely gentle but produces amazing results. It just involves various parts, such as the neck or base of the spine, being touched and supported while the therapist goes to work. It is extremely relaxing and comforting and I find it brings a certain balance to my mind as well as loosening up my whole body.

An example of this was earlier this year when I was having a lot of pain in my jaw. I assumed this was due to my arthritis as it was very painful all the time and no amount of massaging could resolve the issue. Then I thought the problem could be with my ear so I decided to visit my doctor who informed me it was TMJ (tempromandibular joint) which I later found out is where the jaw bone is joined to the skull. It seems I was unconsciously clenching and grinding my teeth at night while I was asleep. My doctor said she could prescribe painkillers or anti-inflammatory medication but I am already on strong versions of those, so there was really nothing else she could offer. So I asked around at TDF to find out which therapy would be best to try and help ease the pain; Cranio-Sacral was the most popular suggestion. I therefore booked an appointment with our Cranio-Sacral Therapist, Beverley Katz. The treatment was so relaxing and this helped me realise that I had been very tense in my jaw area which was certainly contributing to my pain. Beverley said she could feel the tension and helped to alleviate it. I lay on the therapy table, Beverley's hands cradling my neck, and I let the tension go,

Rhythm. The practitioner is then able to discover any obstruction or stress and then encourage the natural flow of the cerebro-spinal fluid through touch and subtle manipulation of limbs.

Cranio-Sacral therapy can help a variety of health conditions as well as emotional or physiological problems, or it can be used to develop good health and well-being. It is so gentle it can also be used on babies and children for colic, sleeping problems and ADHD among others.

For more information on this therapy, or to try it yourself please contact TDF on 020 8954 7373

my body in a complete state of relaxation. I saw Beverley again the following week, after which my pain was completely gone and it hasn't returned since! I believe Cranio-Sacral definitely aided my recovery.

Recently I also fell and broke my collarbone and found Cranio-Sacral helped this immensely as well. Beverley told me during treatment that my body was in shock and askew. Cranio-Sacral therapy has helped me to relax my system and I feel sure my recovery from my broken collarbone was speedy and uncomplicated as a result of treatment with Beverley, especially as having arthritis means my bones can take much longer to heal.

I still visit Beverley from time to time to keep my body relaxed as it can get quite tense from my arthritis because I am always trying not to overstretch or bend too far in certain ways to avoid causing myself pain.

I would certainly recommend Cranio-Sacral therapy to everyone and for those of you who like to "feel" a hands on treatment don't be fooled by the gentleness of this therapy, it can do great things!



Winter Getaways!!

As summer draws to an end and the days get shorter many of you may be planning a winter break. Whether it is to escape the cold days and head for warmer climes or to set off for the ski slopes there are many things you may need to think about to ensure you have a smooth trip.

The key is to always plan ahead and book early to ensure you get what you want. Before booking your holiday you need to decide where you want to go and how you will get there. Will you be travelling alone, with friends, family, carer or with a companion? Would you join an organised group or tour? How would you travel to your destination, by train, plane or driving? Will you use your own vehicle or a hire vehicle?

You will also need to decide if you want to go self-catering, full or half board and whether you want to book a package holiday or book each aspect of your holiday independently. This will depend on personal preferences as well as how your disability affects you personally. There are holiday companies that specialise in arranging every aspect of a holiday while others provide lists of accessible accommodation.

It is advisable to find out as much about your destination and places you want to visit as possible. The Internet can be an invaluable source of such information or you can contact the TDF Information Service who can assist in your search for information.

It can be useful to find out if there is a local disability organisation at your destination as they often have detailed information on access to both accommodation and attractions.

When booking your holiday ensure that you are completely honest and detailed about your disability and its effects at every stage of your planning. This is vital to ensure that the accommodation is suitable for your particular needs as well as any transport taken and attractions being visited.

Things to Remember

- Double check arrangements are satisfactory and all transfers and hotel bookings are confirmed.

In addition check you have pre booked any mobility aids required at your destination.

- Make a list of any medication and equipment that you need to take with you and ensure you take more of your medication than you may need in case of delays. It is also advisable to take a letter or prescription with you in case you are stopped at Customs. Also check that your medication is not illegal in the country you are travelling to. Information on this can be found on the foreign and commonwealth office website, www.fco.gov.uk/travel .
- If you are travelling off the beaten track always ensure you have the required vaccinations and anti-Malaria medication - if you are unsure of the side effects check with your doctor.
- Keep your medication and anything else that is vitally important in your hand luggage along with your tickets and passport, if you are flying.
- When going abroad check that your passport is valid, as some countries require you to have at least six months left on your passport when visiting.
- Ensure that your home is secure while you are away and any regular deliveries are cancelled

Insurance

- Always take out adequate travel insurance.
- Always make sure it covers any pre-existing medical conditions (past and present) and check for any exemptions.
- If you have a wheelchair ensure you have sufficient insurance cover for it including while it is on the plane as some policies do not cover this.

It can be difficult to organise holidays when you have any kind of disability but as long as you plan ahead and ensure that service providers know of any special needs you may have it should not prevent you from going away and enjoying your holiday.

If you would like any further assistance, advice or information please contact TDF's Information Service on 020 8954 7373

disability information

London's Disability Rights Festival 2006

A major outdoor festival, named Liberty, took place on the 2nd September in Trafalgar Square from 1pm till 6pm. It showcased the artistic talents of disabled people and also celebrated 20 years of the London Disability Arts Forum. The festival was organised by the Mayor of London working alongside Deaf and Disabled Londoners.

Many disability arts organisations contributed to the festival including Shape Arts, Attitude is Everything, Greater London Deaf Association, People First and the London Disability Arts Forum.

All performances were free and all were from disabled people or disabled arts groups which included:

- CandoCo
- Johnny Crescendo
- Marlo Donato
- The Heroes
- Carousel

- Ramesh Meyyappan
- Creative Routes
- Kickin' Kangaroo Club.

There were also family arts workshops, a variety of interesting stalls and displays and even an organic café.

To ensure the event was accessible and inclusive for all, large screens were erected in Trafalgar Square with BSL interpretation and Palentype, which is the same as subtitles on a television and converts the spoken word into text. There were also some dedicated wheelchair areas to ensure everyone could see and all the stewards at the event had undergone disability awareness training.

If you missed this year's event you can always try and go next year. The festival will again be held at the beginning of September 2007. Look out for news at www.london.gov.uk, or check TDF noticeboard nearer the time.

Cinema Discount Card

This is a national card that can be used to verify that the holder, who is disabled, is entitled to one free ticket for a person accompanying them to the cinema. The card can only be used at participating cinemas, which includes big chains like Odeon, Cineworld and UCI. A full list of participating cinemas can be found on the website.

To be eligible for a card you must either be in receipt of Disability Living Allowance (DLA), be a registered blind person or have a disabled persons railcard. It is necessary to prove that you are eligible for a card so you should send either copies of letters or statements showing you receive DLA, a copy of your certification if you are a blind person or a copy of the front and back of a disabled persons railcard.

You also need to include a passport photograph of yourself and write your name on the back of it. This is to ensure that if your photograph

becomes separated from your form they will know who it is, otherwise you could end up with a card that has someone else's photograph on it!

You can obtain an application form by downloading it from the website or asking for one at a participating cinema. There is a fee of £5 to cover administration costs and the card will last for three years.

**The Card Network
The Technology Centre,
Rossmore Business Park
Ellesmere Port
Cheshire, CH65 3EN**

Tel: 0151 348 8020

Minicom / Text phone: 0151 356 7113

E-mail: info@ceacard.co.uk

Website: www.ceacard.co.uk



FES Rowing

by TDF Trustee Robin Gibbons

Anyone who has experienced a spinal cord injury will understand the many traumatic issues that have to be faced, and then overcome. My experience is no more unique than the next SCI person. I was just another normal fit, healthy guy that suddenly found himself in an extraordinary situation. I would like to share my story with you and the unique opportunity I was suddenly given.

A little over five years ago, on 7 January 2001, I ran off the road in my car on black ice and in so doing broke my back, which meant I was now paralysed, permanently, from the middle of my chest down. This was without doubt the most difficult time of my life.

Although I have been involved in numerous research projects since my accident, one stands out from the rest. It is associated with the everyday health and well being of disabled people of all kinds. I refer to the FES Rowing project run by a small team of extraordinary individuals at Brunel University. The idea was actually first conceived in Canada at the University of Alberta, Edmonton by Dr Gary Wheeler and Professor Brian Andrews.

FES stands for Functional Electronic Stimulation and refers to the electrical stimulation of the nerves that supply paralysed muscle. The team at Brunel University believes that the maximum benefit of this technique can be gained by rowing as this activity unusually involves both the upper and lower body at the same time. Indeed of all the physical activities I participate in, rowing allows me to achieve the highest cardio vascular workout of them all.

The team is headed by Professor Brian Andrews with Dries Hettinga as his right hand man. I first heard of their work whilst discussing research projects with a friend at the ASPIRE National Training Centre. After a number of telephone calls, I went to visit the team in March 2003 and finally started FES rowing in July 2003. It was truly a delight to see my paralysed legs once again moving under my control, be it with the use of electrical stimulation! It is a sight that never ceases to amaze me.

Initially, my training on the prototype FES Concept 2 rowing machine averaged just once a week at Brunel University with leg strengthening training 2 to 4 times a week at home. My weekly 'homework' initially involved stimulating my legs with a simple stimulator. I would lie on my bed with my legs dangling

over the edge and watch spellbound as my legs would miraculously alternatively lift and lower.

In November 2004 I took part in the British Indoor Rowing Championships (BIRC), sponsored by Concept 2, with another FES rower who had transferred from another research project involved with FES cycling at the University of Central London. This was the very first time that disabled individuals had participated in this non-disabled event. I have now taken part in my second BIRC event with two other FES rowers in November 2005, and this February I took part in the World Indoor Rowing Championships in Boston with three FES rowers, again for the very first time.

The physical benefits speak for themselves. I have never suffered from repetitive strain type conditions which a growing number of long-term wheelchair users complain of. My cardiovascular fitness has without doubt increased beyond anything I could have hoped to achieve with any other activity and my arms are the strongest they have ever been either before or after my accident with none of the usual muscle discomfort associated with hard physical exercise.

Secondary benefits are better body weight control and a stronger heart, which results in better circulation and an improvement in the body's immune system. Finally, there are also psychological benefits, which may not be at first appreciated. Rowing is one activity that is the same whether you are disabled or able bodied, so there is a definite feel good factor there.

In summary, I am totally convinced that FES rowing is the ultimate exercise regime for the majority of paralysis sufferers in that it has the unique ability of allowing the user to maintain the highest levels of all-round

fitness, health and well being. Not only do I, and the guys and girls that I instruct, feel better and more stable within ourselves emotionally, but we have found the activity has given us the increased energy levels necessary to help us to cope with the daily grind and frustration of life in a wheelchair.

I am committed to making this unique exercise available to as many disabled individuals as possible. I currently run the world's first FES rowing training programme at the ASPIRE National Training Centre in Stanmore as well as working to encourage other spinal units and eventually mainstream leisure centres, to adopt these unique machines. We have a way to go yet in terms of finding a manufacturer to take on the task of producing the FES rowing machines commercially, but it is a goal I believe is achievable in the not too distant future!

If you would like more information on FES rowing you can either look at the ASPIRE website, www.aspire.org.uk, or visit the FES rowing website, www.fesrowing.org.



Free as a Bird – Flying with the British Disabled Flying Association



It often comes as a surprise that disabled people can and do learn to fly aircraft of all types. Free from the limitations of a disability and the restrictions of life on the ground, disabled people of all ages can experience a sense of freedom which is hard to surpass.

The history of disabled aviation goes back to the early days of flight itself. In 1931 RAF Flying Officer Douglas Bader lost both legs in a flying accident. After learning to walk with artificial legs, he managed to convince the RAF that he could still fly, going on to play a heroic part in the Battle of Britain of 1940, finally being shot down and imprisoned in the infamous Colditz castle. Douglas Bader continued to fly after the war and was the President of the Royal International Air Tattoo (RIAT) from 1976 until his death in 1982. In 1983, RIAT's Flying Scholarships for the Disabled were founded and dedicated to Bader's courage and determination in the face of disability.

History of the BDFA

In 1992 a RAF pilot, Tim Ellison, was involved in a flying accident when his Harrier jet suffered engine failure at 120 feet during a hover manoeuvre. The accident left him paralysed from the waist down. Tim was determined to return to flying, but at the time, legislation was not in place to allow a paraplegic to fly in the UK. This was not however the case in the US, so Tim moved to America where, in 1994, he gained his FAA commercial flying licenses and in 1997 he became the first paraplegic in the world to gain an FAA Airline Transport Pilot's license.

During 1993 because of Ellison's passion for flying and determination to continue flying, despite his disability, he co-founded the British Disabled Flying Association (BDFA) to ensure that others could do the same. When he returned to the UK, Tim threw his energies into the BDFA and into finding a way around the bureaucracy that surrounded flying with a disability. These issues have now been resolved, and today anyone who is disabled can hold a private or indeed a commercial pilot's license, providing they are medically fit to fly.

BDFA's Mission

The BDFA has the broad aim of providing aviation opportunities for disabled people through:

- Making flying available for disabled people
- Developing aircraft adaptations
- Giving specialist advice
- Forging relationships with government bodies and aviation organisations
- Assisting past Flying Scholarships for the Disabled Scholars.

Through the medium of flight the BDFA helps disabled people to discover their true potential through the mental and physical stimulation of learning to fly. The challenges faced and overcome



enables new-found confidence and self esteem in rising above personal life difficulties so that the future can be viewed with greater self-assurance.

Almost all aircraft types are suitable for disabled pilots. Hanggliders, paragliders, microlights, gliders and powered aircraft are all being flown by disabled aviators in the UK. There are a number of specialist training schools although in many cases disabled pilots can simply train alongside non-disabled pilots at any training school across the country.

Wheelchair users may need specially adapted aircraft to enable them to fly. However, more and more aircraft are becoming available and hand control systems have become simpler and less expensive. The most "wheelchair friendly" aircraft available is the Piper due to its low wing height making it easier to get in and out.

For disabled pilots training to achieve a private pilot's license, there are few special requirements. Before the first solo flight it may be necessary to have a medical flight test which is basically for the examiner to determine that the disabled pilot is able to control the aircraft as well as a non-disabled person with the same level of training. If they pass the medical test the training process and the number of hours training required will be the same as for any other student pilot.

The Future Vision of the BDFA

The future vision of the BDFA is to create a purpose built flight training facility, run by disabled people for disabled people. To achieve this ground breaking initiative the BDFA started the Bulldog Project.

In June 2003 the BDFA received a gift of four Bulldog training aircraft from the Commander of the Royal Jordanian Airforce, Prince Feisal of Jordan. The BDFA has had close links with the Jordanian Royal family for many years as the late King Hussein sponsored a number of individual flying scholarships. These have provided amazing opportunities for disabled people to learn to fly or improve their aviation skills.

The Bulldog aircraft are the first step towards this ground-breaking initiative, which will enable



many more disabled people to become involved with something that was once thought impossible. The Bulldog Appeal is a major fundraising effort as the cost of getting the aircraft airworthy, adapted for disabled pilots and certified for use in the UK is considerable. Thanks to many generous sponsors and the hard work of BDFA members and supporters, the first completed Bulldog was launched in July 2005, unveiled by Lady Bader, widow of Sir Douglas Bader, and is already at work, based at Lasham (near Basingstoke) furthering the profile of the BDFA.

The BDFA has sold the un-airworthy Bull Dogs and the proceeds from this have been used to purchase a second training aircraft. They are also trying to raise funds to allow the provision of more free or heavily subsidised flying for sick children and disabled adults who may never really become pilots, but who will savour the opportunity to take the controls on an experience flight.

Interested in finding out more about the BDFA? Whether it is assisting someone who is inspired to attempt to try aviation for the first time, or someone who needs specialist advice and guidance on adaptations and training, the BDFA can help. If you would like general information on adaptive flying or to find where you can access fully equipped aircraft contact the BDFA by telephone on **07967 269 345** or check out their website at **www.bdfa.net**.

Important information about TDF's computerised Membership Database

We are aware that some members have been getting newsletters when you have asked TDF not to send them to you (you might have asked this because more than one family member is a TDF member and you do not need two copies sent or you have Internet access, can view them on-line and want the charity to save on postage and paper). Please accept our apologies! Our computerised Membership Database has recently undergone lots of changes and some of the data

stored has been changed. We are working very hard to rectify this and appreciate your patience. We would be very pleased if you would let us know if you are receiving newsletters or post from TDF which you have specifically asked us not to send you. Please let us know by phoning the Centre and asking to speak to a member of the Admin Team or emailing reception@tdf.org.uk. Many thanks!

Under One Sky



Harrow Primary Care Trust held an open day called the 'Under One Sky Festival' which took place on the 2nd July at the Zoom Leisure Ground. Its main aim was to give people living in the Borough of Harrow an idea of the organisations in the area that they can go to for help. It was the ideal opportunity for TDF to promote its services to people in Harrow.

The Information Department was there to answer any disability related questions and one of our therapists, Dhanu Kara, was on hand to give attendees 15 minute taster sessions of

Massage and Reflexology throughout the day. It turned out to be a glorious day with lots of visitors showing an interest in the charity. The stall looked slightly less tidy at the end of the day than the photograph shows!

Apart from the stalls there were many activities taking place including a Mini Golf course, a fun fair, an exercise class for the over 60's and stages where dance styles were being showcased. Under One Sky is a yearly event which TDF will hopefully attend again next year to continue promoting our services to those who may benefit from them.

ask TDF

The Information Department receives many different enquiries during the year. We have picked out a few popular queries to pass on some useful information to you, our members.

Q I used to get Incapacity Benefit (IB) but managed to find a job and so am not eligible for IB anymore. After three months though my disability deteriorated and I had to give the job up. I went back to the Department of Work and Pensions but they asked me questions as though it was a new claim. I had heard that if you found employment and it did not work out I could get back on to the benefits at the rate I was on previous to having the job. Is this true?

A You are right in thinking you can get your IB back at the same rate you were on before obtaining a job. It is called the Linking Rule so that if you have benefits and then get a job, which means you are no longer eligible, and then within 52 weeks you have to give up the job because of your disability, you return to the benefits you were on before getting a job.

I suggest you go to your local Job Centre Plus and talk to an advisor. You may also need a doctor's note to provide evidence that you gave up the job because of your disability.

Q I am going travelling through Europe and the Far East and am disabled. I need travel insurance that will cover my pre-existing medical condition. Do you know of any companies that provide this cover?

A There are a number of companies that cover pre-existing medical conditions and here are a few:

EnRoute Insurance Consultants – 0800 783 7245

Freedom Insurance Services – 0870 774 3760

Travelcare – 0870 428 4379

Venturesure – 0845 230 3521

Fish Insurance – 01772 724442

For a more comprehensive list please request TDF's Insurance Factsheet.

Q I live in North London but cannot bring my autistic son to TDF's centre to take advantage of the Yoga Therapy for children offered because of time constraints – I can only

bring him in the evening and weekends. Are there any other places that offer this treatment?

A We are aware that many people are unable to use our services at present because of our opening times and we hope to be able to extend our opening times in the future to cover some evenings and weekends. In the meantime there is a yoga organisation where you can find other yoga therapists in North London.

British Wheel Of Yoga have lists of therapists across the UK, www.bwy.org.uk, 01529 306 851.

If you would like more information on any of these enquiry topics or have an enquiry on any disability related subject please contact TDF's Disability Information Service.

Q I have recently become a member and was told that I need a consent letter from my GP before I can have a treatment. Why is this?

A Certain medical conditions and/or disabilities can sometimes be contra-indicated for complementary therapies. Your GP will be able to provide a more detailed medical background to enable us to understand any complex needs and assess whether complementary therapies are safe for you.

A consent letter will ensure that any treatment given by therapists at TDF will not cause a disability or condition to become worse or that it will reduce the effectiveness of any treatment or drug.

Service users who have or are suffering from, for example, cancer (active or in remission), inflammatory conditions (active or in remission), have a history of strokes and heart disease will automatically be asked for a consent letter. This list is not comprehensive or exhaustive however and users with other conditions may require a consent letter.

If you need a consent letter you will normally be notified when you first contact TDF to make a booking. You can then choose whether you contact your doctor yourself or TDF can do so on your behalf. Getting consent does not normally take long so you can proceed with treatment as soon as possible.

Contact TDF

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