

Kingswell Newsletter Autumn 2007

The summer has come and gone once again and we are pleased both for the refreshment we have received through summer breaks and what we have been able to achieve during this period at Kingswell. Since the last newsletter two Band Nights and the Youth Summer Scheme have taken place as well as the ongoing daily activities seeking to meet many and varied needs. Also there have been some improvements to the centre such as decoration, recarpeting and information signs. We are also hopeful of installing a stairlift from the ground floor to first floor sports hall by early 2008.

At this time of the year when we are again thankful for the harvest being safely gathered in throughout the countryside, despite the severe flooding during the summer and other unusual weather patterns, we are reminded of the truth of the hymnwriter John Gurney who wrote 'Yes God is good in earth and sky, From ocean depths and spreading wood, Ten thousand voices seem to cry, God made us all and God is good'. And we are thankful to Him for the continuing 'harvest' at Kingswell.

Nigel Evans (Manager)



A very special journey! by Lyn Berman

I knew of Western Samoa through Kingswell and also corresponding with Maj Wagstaff from Dorchester, whose descendants Betsy (a teenager at the time) and Sandy Chisholm went as missionaries from The Old Chapel, now known as The Kingswell, in 1842 to the South Pacific Isles. Their ship was blown off course in a storm and took shelter on Samoa. The Chisholms remained on the Samoan island of Savaii for many years and raised their children there. I was able to read all about their life on the island through Betsy's diaries and letters that she sent home to her family in Oswestry, Shropshire.

In April this year, I was privileged to visit the beautiful islands of Samoa and blessed even more to be able to make the journey with my daughter Eve and son-in-law Amr.

My first impression of Samoa was to be greeted, at 1am in their tiny airport, with beautiful music and harmonies, a 4 piece male band in colourful shirts and sarongs sang songs to welcome the visitors to their island.

One Sunday I was invited by Etti, a single parent with two young children to her local Church. Everyone, including the pastor was dressed all in white, the children looked and sang like angels and I was made very welcome.



The coastal roads (20 mph speed limit) ran through villages, each with their own open meeting place(fale) and wooden painted church. Pigs, hens, dogs all roamed freely and everyone waved and smiled as you passed by, as was their custom. Families grew much of their own produce and their gardens well kept with the gravestones of their deceased loved ones outside their homes.

I will have many lasting memories of Samoa, the friendliness and hospitality of its people, traditional fire-dancing, the beauty of garden-like landscapes and coral seas, waterfall lagoons, a topical rainforest, 40 ft. blowholes through lava rock, R.L Stevenson's burial ground and meeting the world's only 'Da Craterman', as he called himself, a Samoan man, who lives on the top of a volcano alone and carves the names of people who visit him on wooden name plaques, and displays them on the pathway up to the crater. A world so far removed from western ways. No wonder Betsy and Sandy decided to stay there.

I also met a young man from Oswestry in a resort on Upulo island who knew of people I knew from Oswestry. What a small world we live in!

An Ode to Frank (Our very handyman)

We are so thankful to Frank for getting us out of so many scrapes at Kingswell, whether central heating blips, dodgy plaster, floor leveling, decorating or even blocked urinals and always remaining cheerful!

Frank you are a star and we are all very grateful to you for all your help and support even though you have your funny ways like insisting your cups of tea are stirred in the right direction!! What would we do without you!



`Poppies` - Helping children who are hurting as a result of domestic abuse

Sarah and Michelle continue to meet the varied and significant needs presented by these children.

The following is one example of how such children are supported by the project. Sarah writes that the children `were throwing food at the walls` and `using abusive language to mother and me...no respect towards any adults...the parenting style...not working`. The support worker and Sarah encountered resistance from family members with the children resenting `boundaries and discipline..shout (ing) verbal abuse at anyone who..tried` and she noted that they found it very hard to `engage with me at first as I was consistent and would always follow through with parenting issues...they were trying to manipulate and control environments where they felt they could...I have engaged other family members in working toward...positive changes. They have begun to not talk about the boys negatively in front of them... (realising) they have been blaming the youngest boy for all the behaviour...this has been challenged. They have interacted in family time with the children and they all had fun...learned how to play and be with the children instead of projecting their anger and frustrations onto them. This family wants to engage and make changes and this has never been the case before.

Their mother said "I have never played or interacted with my children before...I never really knew my children as individuals, it was as if they have just been there fighting for my attention, which caused me to pull away. With the help of Poppies I have managed to build more secure and positive relationships with my

What do YOU think about tackling drug abuse? (`Headline` Newsletter Summer 07, with thanks to Abi Butters)

Home Secretary Jacqui Smith has launched a nationwide public consultation on tackling illegal drug use,

"I want to hear fresh and constructive ideas on how we can build on our achievements with the new drug strategy".

Drugs:Our Community, Your Say seeks to stimulate fresh and constructive ideas on how to best reduce the harm caused by drugs.

The **key areas for discussion** include—What should be done to get drug dealers off the street?

Should drug education and awareness programmes for young people be expanded?

How can we ensure continuity of care for drug abusers?

How can we better support young people and families dealing with drug issues?

Should cannabis be reclassified?

OFAAD Report

OFAAD stands for `Oswestry Families Affected by Alcohol and Drugs`. The service helps and supports people with drug and alcohol dependency due to relapse, homelessness, debt, family breakdown and many other problems related to addiction.

Many call in for coffee and a chat. We can also refer or signpost people to other supporting agencies.

OFAAD also supports the family and friends who care for loved ones with drug and alcohol dependency.

Youth Summer Scheme Highlights

During the summer scheme there were a number of young people with different learning needs who took part in a number of different activities including 6 sessions of canoeing where the young people achieved their level 1 certificate in canoeing. A number of young people took part in sailing for the first time and felt that it was something they would love to continue with.

We also did a number of different trips such as ice skating and the cinema in Telford, but I think the trip which all the young people will remember is the trip to Drayton Manor when we set off at 9 in the morning and did not get back to 2 the next morning. This was down to traffic from the V music festival. I know it will stay with me having to take young people across the motorway to the hard shoulder in a traffic jam to use the toilet while every one is watching in their cars (the whole day and following day was good fun).

(Tony Hayden, Youth Worker)

`Thoughts from the front line` (submitted by Jacquie Sharpe, Volunteer Receptionist)

"Thanks for the warm welcome and support I've received from the staff and all those at Kingswell., as I've sat on the `front line`!"

The prayer and Bible verse sum up Jacquie`s perspective on the needs presented to the Kingswell staff.

"Heavenly Father, I thank you for Kingswell and all the special people who work here and use all the facilities you have provided. Please bless and protect them all.

We know that for most of us `home` is a place of acceptance and love, where we develop and mature. But for many `home` is a place where they are neglected and may have been subjected to physical or verbal abuse.

We pray for all those who work to show your love to every member of these families in need. We also pray that every member of each family coming here to use the many services will be healed in body, mind and spirit. That each one may reach their potential and live happy, productive loving lives. In Jesus name, Amen.

James 1 v. 17 "Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows".