

SPRING 2007



Spinal Injuries Scotland

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ROUGH RIDERZ



line
news

the SPINAL INJURIES SCOTLAND quarterly magazine

pararallying

in scotland

It was a bitterly cold Saturday in January when Dave Hawkins came up to Knockhill Racetrack in Fife with his "Pararallying" operation.



Strapped in ready for the off

"Pararallying" comes north of the Border

With two other instructors in tow, as well as his son Angus, Dave brought his two rally cars to let the SIS membership loose on the gravel and tarmac of the Knockhill Rally stage.

Despite the cold, everyone had a fantastic day out, trying their hand at driving a Vauxhall Astra round the track, testing themselves against the clock, and for the more competitive among us, each other. In between blasting around the track in the 2-litre Astra, we were treated to the delights of a passengers-eye view from the full competition-prepared Subaru Impreza. Most people would agree to it being the fastest thing off the blocks that they have ever been in.

It's no small undertaking getting four people and two rally cars all the way from Hull to Fife, so we're indebted to Dave and the guys for giving the SIS members in Scotland the opportunity of trying out Pararallying on home turf.

If taking part in a rally day interests you then you can get in touch with Dave.

Dave Hawkins Tel: 07946 262467 Email: info@pararallying.com

For more information, contact:



Wheel to wheel

Photos Courtesy: GB Photography



Impressive Impreza

All enquiries and requests for membership applications to our address at:

**Spinal Injuries Scotland,
Festival Business Centre,
150 Brand Street,
Glasgow G51 1DH
Tel: 0141 314 0056
Fax: 0141 427 9258
Freephone Helpline: 0800 0132 305
E-mail: info@sisonline.org
Website: www.sisonline.org**

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Any opinions expressed in the SIS Newslines are those of the person writing and not necessarily shared.

*Articles from the Newslines are available on disc or in large print on request.

Area Representatives

If you require knowledge local to your area, call the office. We will pass your name and number to one of our Area Reps who will then contact you. Also look out for forthcoming area groups.

Spinal Unit Visits

SIS representatives are in the unit every Wednesday from 1.30pm and are available to visit individuals any time on request.

Legal and Welfare Advice Services

If you are concerned about a legal or welfare issue, call the office and we will put you in touch with our advisors.

Support Line: 0800 0132 305

If you need someone to talk to, call the above number. If no-one is available, leave your name and number and one of our support line volunteers will call you back as soon as possible.

Honorary President

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David Rhoney
Jean Stone, MBE
Brian Thomson

In the Office

Andy Macleod	Liaison Officer
Dougy Johnstone	Information Officer
Lucienne Sencier	Administrator & Events Officer
Nabila Sattar	Volunteer
Chantal Sencier	Events Support

dargan's diary



It's been another busy spell here in the Spinal Unit since we last reported to you, so here's the latest update on the goings on at the QENSIU.

Senior Staff Nurse Lynn Smith is getting married to Kenneth on the 30th of March, so everyone wishes them well for the future. Staff Nurse Adele Rae has given birth to a son called Kyle, congratulations to Adele. Staff Nurses Muriel Govan and Kathy Craig are both retiring at the end of April. Both are long-serving members of staff and will be greatly missed by their colleagues and patients alike. We all wish them a happy and fulfilled retirement. Staff Nurse Laura McLean is moving from the wards to take Kathy's place in the outpatient department.

Work has begun on the refurbishment of the showers and toilets of room 2, this will help improve the environment and welfare of everyone in the unit. We welcome our new consultant, Dr Purcell to QENSIU. Elaine Hutchison from the physiotherapy department is getting married in April, in Orkney! We wish her and her future husband the very best for the future and we hope they have a wonderful time at their Island wedding. Another

successful Karaoke night was held in the unit on 15th March, we're grateful again to Derek for giving up his night off to help entertain the patients. Patients will be attending the Independent Living Show on 28th and 29th of March, to take in what's on offer at the show and meet with the SIS staff and volunteers. Some of the current inpatients will be heading off to the inter-spinal unit games at Stoke Mandeville between 17th and 20th of April, so best wishes to the guys.

Remember "Newslines" is your magazine, let the office know what you're up to, hobbies, things of interest, holidays, whatever, and you never know, you might end up in the pages of the magazine.

Helen

www.sisonline.org

I must confess that as a working-class Glaswegian bloke whose first love is football, had you told me a few years ago that I would have opted for a night of contemporary dance over watching an important European tie on the telly, I think I know what the answer would have been!

Well, times **do** change; especially if your team have been playing mince this season! I took myself off along the road and the miles to Dundee; to the very accessible Dundee Repertory Theatre for the opening night of the Scottish Dance Theatre's (SDT) spring season.

The evening began with a short performance from Scottish Ballet entitled "Chasing Ghosts", minimally set, moodily lit, a score reminiscent of John Barry at his best and the girls all looking like Mary Quant models from the 60's, this was fabulous to watch and one could only marvel at the grace of movement of all concerned.

The main event of the evening and the reason I had been kindly invited along was to take in the inaugural performance of "Angels of Incidence" by the SDT. This was a

work with a difference however, the SDT company dancers were joined by dancers with a disability, which included Michael King, a paraplegic and wheelchair user.

Michael by his own admission will tell you that at L1, 2, 3, he is pretty incomplete and can stand and walk with elbow crutches, although he does use a wheelchair most of the time. All these aspects of his physicality are encompassed in the work; there are other wheelchair users on stage with him, along with other dancers with disability.

Again, this performance is on a bare stage, simple projected backdrop and no place to hide. I never could have imagined that such an ensemble cast could have moved with such grace and elegance. It's one thing for an able-bodied dancer to throw themselves into someone's arms, its another thing entirely to allow your wheelchair to be plummeted backwards almost to the floor and trust your partner not to drop you!

The dancers using wheelchairs bring another dimension to the work, allowing a seamless fluidity of movement when interacting with other dancers and at times the chair user is

Tour

Edinburgh

Tue 27th March

7.30pm

Angels of Incidence + Touching Zulu

Edinburgh Festival Theatre

13/20 Nicolson Street, Edinburgh

0131 529 6000

Strontian

Fri 30th March

8.00pm

Angels of Incidence + Touching Zulu

Arainn Shuaineirt

(The Sunart Centre)

Strontian, Acharacle, Argyll, PH36 4JA

01397 709228

Scottish Dance Theatre Production of

"Angels of Incidence"



Photos courtesy Scottish Dance Theatre

Dates

Stirling

Thu 19th April
8.00pm

Angels of Incidence + Touching Zulu
PLEASE NOTE: SDT INTERACTIVE
event, Thur 19th April, 1.30pm

macrobert

University of Stirling
01786 466666

Dundee

Sat 21st April
8.00pm

Angels of Incidence + Touching Zulu

The Space @ Dundee College

Old Glamis Road
01382 342600

dethroned and the chair used as a prop by the others in the company. The work examines issues such as exclusion and struggle, Michael is on his crutches at one point fighting against one of the able-bodied dancers; it's almost painful to watch the slow progress across the stage as he pushes relentlessly against the opposing force.

Such inclusive works can be open to accusations of tokenism and as a sop to the disability lobby, but it is evident here that this is an entirely merit-based cast, no passengers here, even if they do use wheelchairs. I can vouch for the full house and standing ovation received by the cast that this is a production standing (forgive that one please!?) on its intrinsic worth and not any misguided "correctness" agenda.

The night closed with a performance of "Sorry for the Missiles" by the SDT Company. A frenetic at times farcical, at times moving and tragic examination of the horrors of war, and no little hint of the holocaust. Beginning with what appears to be an Irish Ceilidh with music reminiscent of the Pogues on speed! (A not altogether unlikely possibility lets face

it), but with a hint of Oompah band in the background!

Much jollity, jigging, cartwheeling and leaping around give way to a darkness and the subtle costume change of the female dancers emphasises this darkness. From bright reds and yellows, they return in shades of grey and you're left in no illusions about the very real likelihood of them being the subject of rape and defilement. By this time the music has morphed from what I imagined to be Irish (most likely very wide of the mark), to a relentless and very distinct eastern European accordion and violin driven sound that could have come straight from a Neil Simon movie score.

As you can see the show is touring shortly and you can take it from me that it's worth a look, you might be pleasantly surprised.

For more information contact the Scottish Dance Theatre on **01382 342600** or their website at www.scottishdancetheatre.com

Andy Macleod

Visable People: Acting and Modelling Agency

Louise Dyson had run her own agency placing actors and models in television and advertising roles for many years when she received an enquiry from a client.

The client was a wheelchair manufacturer and specifically wanted someone with a disability to feature in their advertising. This set Louise's mind in motion as to how right it was to make this request and how there might well be an opportunity for a niche agency.

Established well over a decade now, "Visable" remains unique in the marketplace and is the first port of call for companies seeking out models and actors with a disability, to appear in productions and promotions.

Despite being a disability-specific agency, it is far from a list of wheelchair and stairlift companies that seek out Louise's expertise. Listed among her regular clientele are blue-chip companies like British Airways, Channel 4, Granada Television, the NHS, Marks & Spencer and the Ford Motor Company.

Another high-profile client is the BBC, who are very pro-active in placing people with a disability to fulfil the role required and with her extensive length of knowledge in the field, Louise is able to ensure that she gives best advice and has the right person placed in the role.

The ethos of "Visable" is best summed up by Louise herself:

"The whole point of VisABLE is to persuade advertisers and producers to offer bookings to artistes **irrespective** of the fact that they have characteristics, which distinguish them in the eyes of some people as "disabled". I find the very word "disabled" very unhelpful and rather dreary and altogether quite laughable that there should be any misconception of inability, in view of the exemplary **abilities** of the artistes I represent at VisABLE."

One of the most instantly recognisable actors on the "Visable" books is Luke Hamill, who appeared in the long running Police-based soap opera, "The Bill" between 2002 and 2006. Luke has appeared in many other productions including Holby City and Casualty; he was paralysed as a result of a road accident in 1990 and has been wheelchair dependent since then.



Luke Hamill

"The business" is by its very nature extremely London-centric and therefore the opportunities north of the border are limited. But if travelling does not put you off and you think you might be the next Hugh Grant or Helen Mirren, then why not find out more about it by looking at the website www.visiblepeople.com or telephone 01905 77 66 31.

It's not a mis-spelling;
it's a play on words "Visable" that is!

VisABLE People

'ORGANISED CHAOS'

r e v i s i t e d

Jackie Elwin (T 5/6) brings us up to date with the trials and tribulations of the dedicated gardener and also her travels to Cornwall, taking in the Eden Project and Heligan.



Getting around made easy on the PDQ



Purple Helibore



Rhubarb

By now we have all heard about 'global warming' and the effects it is having on the planets weather systems - but just whose prediction will be right? Some theories suggest we are heading for a mini ice age across Europe (Gulf Stream conveyer belt theory) while others predict hotter, drier summers with wetter autumns and severe winters along with flooding from higher sea levels. The earth may also be going through a magnetic flip - where the poles actually change their magnetism. Only time will tell which, if any, theory will be correct?

Here in the UK our weather patterns are changing and these changes are already affecting our wildlife. Spring is starting earlier and our growing season is getting longer. Some species are adapting to these changes while others are struggling. Already a rise in sea temperature has affected the sand eel population in Orkney and Shetland. Sand eels are the main food source for guillemots, puffins and other seabirds so a reduction in sand eels has drastically affected the seabird population.

Similar effects can be seen in our own back yard. Our blue tits are having trouble feeding their young as the caterpillar numbers are peaking too early. The frogs are coming to our pond earlier to spawn, but the hard late frosts are killing all the frogspawn. To help our wildlife out a bit we are putting mealworms out for the blue tits. Live ones are best and although I had an interesting few months when I decided to breed some myself; it is a lot easier to just buy them mail order instead. To help out the frogs we keep a bucket of spawn in the cool conservatory during spring and once they have hatched into tadpoles we can pop them into the pond.

We lost a few plants and shrubs last summer due to the very hot and dry conditions but most of the others have survived well, needing only a bit more mulch to keep the moisture in.

Climate change however is not the main culprit for some of the changes in our back garden. In February 2006 we acquired a new canine friend, Chiquo, who is in his element in the back garden. In just his first week here he found that he could leap effortlessly over the 1.5m walls - hence the addition of trellis above all the boundary walls. He took our neatly coiled hose for a wee jaunt around the raised bed, around a few trees then chewed and reduced its length by a few metres. He runs full pelt up, down, across and through the garden and has already worn a muddy trail under the right hand arch. One fine game is to find and dig up the peanuts that the squirrels have hidden. He has absolutely no respect for our borders - crashes his way through the tulips and narcissi and even has a chew at the odd branch while it is still attached to the tree.

One major project in 2006 was stripping out the old pond liner and replacing it. Poor frogs - we made them a makeshift pond; a large flat container with their old pond water, stones and a few plants, then placed it about 2 metres from where we were working and popped our amphibious friends into it. Harry stripped away the old liner then added some new soft sand while I cut back the water lilies, divided the flag irises and threw away any overgrown oxygenating plants. Meanwhile, our homesick frogs who did not appreciate our efforts at a makeshift abode, jumped straight into the sandy layer before their new home was finished. We were

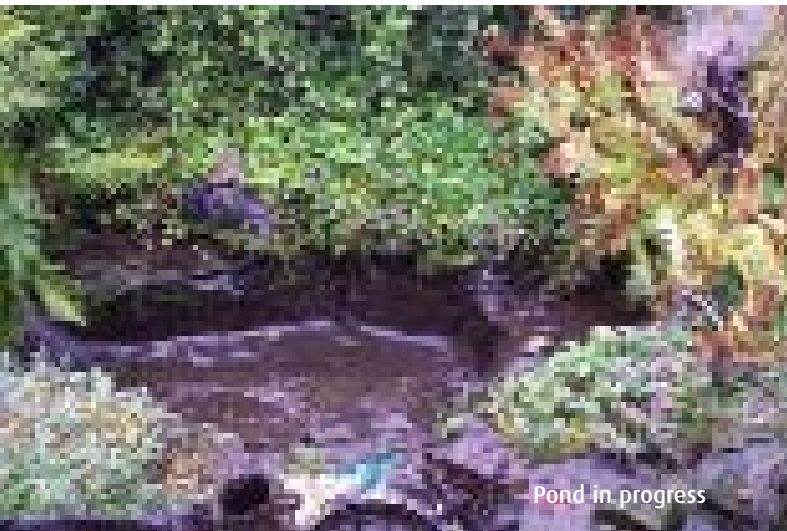
astonished to find that only 2 weeks later the new pond liner had sprung a couple of leaks. ***bleep bleep*** exclaimed Harry. This time they were just patched with pond lining tape.

A visit to the gardens of Heligan and the Eden project in Cornwall was a real treat in September last year. I am inspired to create an atmosphere similar to Heligan's jungly wild woodland with its grottos and wishing wells and lost valleys. Both places were vast and I really appreciated my PDQ trike (although you could hire a battery chair there). It managed very well with almost all of the hilly parts of Heligan (even some areas that were not meant to be

accessible with wheelchairs) although I still needed a shove up some very steep bits. Both places were beautiful in September but I am quite sure they would be even more so in the spring. Well maybe next year.

With the excitement of Christmas and New Year over, the wet grey dreary winter will soon be transformed into bright spring days with the apple green of new shoots and leaves heralded by the first snow drops.

Jackie Elwin.



Pond in progress



Snowdrops

the disabled birdwatcher

Some of you may recall the very informative article on voice recognition software that John Curran (C4) wrote in a previous issue; here he shares another of his passions, bird watching.

Everyone, in some way, has seen a bird of some kind at sometime in our life. You will, at sometime, have watched in wonder as some majestic, large bird glides or soars high above using only the air currents and its



Where there's a will...

wings to provide lift. Or found the unmistakable mark of bird's droppings after washing the car. You may have seen 10,000, or more, starlings swarm at twilight and move altogether as one single wave, as if orchestrated by one single composer and wondered, how? Mums and dads will have been asked how and why that happens. Children have an inquiring mind. They ask questions. If walking through a wood at night, you will have heard the unmistakable hoot of an owl. You do not have to be a birdwatcher to enjoy watching birds. Nor do you need binoculars, a telescope or any other fancy gadget. With a good pair of binoculars you can see birds in far more detail than with the naked eye. However, bird watching, in principle, does not require any sophisticated gear at all. Your eyes, ears and brain are your most important requirement.

The easiest way to watch birds is from the comfort of your own home. A bird table well stocked with high-energy foods such as peanuts*, sunflower seeds or scraps of fruit and bacon rind* could mean the difference

between life and death to a small bird in winter. Clean, fresh water is something that should be provided, not only to prevent dehydration, but also to cleanse their feathers and keep them in good condition, ready to take flight from predators.

Identifying one species from the next can sometimes be easy. Most non-birdwatchers could probably rhyme of 40 to 50 birds that they already know. Sparrows, crows, curlews, lapwings or Peewits, blue tits, gannets, puffins, guillemots, are just a few birds that a non-birdwatcher might already know. Therefore, identifying an unknown bird is normally just a case of elimination. Unfortunately, there are many types of bird that are a lot more difficult to identify. If I am having a problem identifying a particular bird then I usually ask someone. Usually other birdwatchers can be very helpful and if you get someone that knows their subject. Then you can really learn something!

A field guide on birds is indispensable but inexpensive if you need to identify birds accurately. The location of a bird would give a hint to what it might be. For instance, you would not expect to find a great tit in a potato field. Nor would you expect to find a black-headed Gull in deciduous woodland. Some bird's walk, others hop. Some hover, like the kestrel. Others swim underwater to catch their meal using their wings or webbed feet as propulsion. Some have lost the power of flight like penguins, ostriches, emus etc and spend all their time on land or in water. Comparing the size of one bird that you know can give you an indication to the relative size of one that is unknown to you. The beak can be many different shapes depending on what and where the birds feed. There are CD-ROMs available at approximately £40, but they can make identification very easy indeed. If you have got a field guide and still cannot identify a particular bird. Make a mental note of it or, better still, make a rough sketch of the bird in a notebook with a pencil. Remember to note the salient features you think might help identify what that bird might be when you get home. If you cannot identify a bird don't worry, it's not a contest and you will identify it sometime with experience.

The migratory season is perhaps one of the best times of all to see the many different kinds of birds that visit our little island either to breed, or escape the harsh winter of the Arctic. Spring brings the summer visitors to the British Isles where they will lay their eggs and raise their chicks. Likewise, our winter visitors that arrived in the autumn, due to their summer feeding grounds being far too cold and frozen for them to survive in winter, will fly north again in spring.

The best place to see birds and wildlife is in their natural surroundings. In most cases, this is usually by the sea or the countryside. Scotland has many nature reserves that are run by the RSPB, Wildlife and Wetland Trust

(WWT), National Nature Reserves (NNRs) and Country Parks and many others. These reserves are easily found on the Internet if you use a search engine like Google. Unfortunately, not all reserves are 100% suitable for wheelchair users and it is best to telephone beforehand to ask about suitability. However, they are quiet and peaceful places to have a pleasant day out, except for the sound of bird noise.

If you want to see birds in more detail you should get yourself a good pair of binoculars. If you have good balance and strong hands and arms a pair of binoculars such as 10 X 50 or 8 X 40s will enable you to observe a lot of detail that you would otherwise miss. For those that are not strong with their hands and arms there is always the Compact style of binoculars such as: 7 X 24s** or 8 X 24s. These binoculars are very light, compared to the ones that I had previously mentioned, above, due to their relatively small Objective Lens***. Do **not** make the mistake of buying a binocular with a magnification greater than 10, or you will lose stability of what you are viewing and you will not be able to identify your subject. If you need a magnification greater than 10, then you should go for a telescope or camera with a telephoto lens and have it mounted onto a tripod, or platform, as illustrated.

For those that have never used binoculars before and do not understand what the numbers mean (above). Take for example a pair of 10 X 50 binoculars. The first number represents the magnification and anything you see through the binoculars would be 10 times the size of what you can see with the naked eye. The second number represents the size of the Objective Lens in millimetres. Ideally, you want a binocular that will give you a ratio of 4:1 or greater, when the Objective Lens is divided by the magnification of the instrument. The higher the ratio, the better your chance of identifying the subtle differences in colour or texture of your subject. However, the higher the ratio the heavier and more bulky your instrument will be. Identify the circumstances in which you will be using your binoculars most. If twilight and dusk are your favourite bird watching times then you will want as high a ratio as possible. However, if you're mostly using them during daylight, then a low ratio binocular might be your choice. Never buy a pair of binoculars or telescope without trying out first, as you have got to be comfortable with, what is a precision instrument. The best thing to do is visit, or speak to a good binocular retailer for not only good advice but to try out different kinds. Note how easy it is to use the focus feature on the binoculars. Very important if you do not have good manual dexterity. If you use the Internet, www.eBay.co.uk always has a good portfolio of optical devices at sometimes half the price that you would buy elsewhere.

Bird watching does not take any specific time to do. There are no exams to pass that will make you into a super birdwatcher but there are courses that can help your understanding of birds and our environment. There are a lot of holidays to exotic lands catering especially for birdwatchers. You can take out a membership of the Royal Society for Protection of Birds (RSPB) or Wildlife and Wetland Trust (WWT) and get a quarterly magazine that will let you know about all the aspects of bird watching and biodiversity. Biodiversity is the relationship between birds, the animals, fish, insects and ourselves. Birds are very important to our life as humans on this planet as they can be an indicator to any imbalance in the ecosystem that could be harmful to our lives. Birds live on crops, seeds, insects, fish etc, and any poisons that are in these basic food substances will show up in the birds that eat them. Not only that, but I feel that without birds and all the other flora and fauna in this world our lives would be boring. However, my primary reason for watching birds and nature is because it gives me great pleasure.

*peanuts can carry toxins that are harmful to birds but not humans. Please make sure that any peanuts you buy have a BTO guarantee (British Trust for Ornithology).

** do not use salted peanuts or salty bacon.

**exactly the same type of binoculars that I use mounted onto a pair of ski goggles.

***the Objective Lens is the one nearest the object that you are viewing through the binoculars or telescope.

John Curran (C 4)



Adapted ski goggles



In profile

Changes

TO PERSONAL INJURY TRUST PAYMENTS

From 2nd October 2006, a number of amendments have been made to the way in which compensation for personal injury is treated for all means tested benefits including Income Support (IS), Income Based Job Seekers Allowance (IBJSA), Housing Benefit (HB) and Council Tax Benefits (CTB).

Where a trust fund has been set up out of compensation for personal injury to the claimant, the value is ignored as capital. Rules have also been amended to ensure that the value is also ignored where the trust is for the claimant's partner.

Where previously the disregard of Income derived from a personal injury trust was £20 per week, this is now disregarded in full regardless of how much it is.

Where there is no trust fund set up, a new disregard is introduced to provide for a 52 - week grace period for lump sum personal injury payments. Starting from the date the claimant receives the first payment; all lump sum payments for that injury are ignored for 52 weeks for (IS), (IBJSA), (HB) and (CTB).

What is a Trust

According to DSS Legislation a trustee can be any person or body such as a relative a solicitor or a bank. A trustee has to do what the terms of the trust and the law says.

The terms of a trust say what is being held on trust and who the beneficiaries or **donees** are. The terms do not have to be written down provided the trust property is not land, but if they are they may be in a will or deed of trust or a deed of settlement.

The person giving the capital is the **trustee**, the person who is holding the capital is the trustee and is the legal owner of the capital, and the person who the capital has to be used for is the beneficiary and is the beneficial owner.

New government Bill to help elderly and disabled people make the switch from analogue to digital television

The BBC is to be given access to the records of millions of benefit claimants as part of a scheme to help elderly and disabled people make the switch from analogue to digital television.

The 'Digital Switchover (disclosure of information) Bill', announced in the recent Queen's speech, will allow the Department for Work and Pensions, the Ministry of Defence and the BBC to share information on who should receive assistance with the costs of making the switch when the analogue signal is switched off.



Lily Simpson

You will have become quite used to Keira Procter's input to Newsline over recent issues, what with her sailing, off-roading, appearing in DVD's and volunteering for SIS. Well, when one of her best friends recently presented her with God-daughter Frankie, Keira had to think about the best way she would go about her baby-sitting duties and what devices were out there to help.

"One of my best mates recently had a baby, my God-daughter Frankie and this is my first experience of playing a part in a baby's life; I wanted to find something suitable for being able to carry & hold her and still be able to have a hand [or both] free if necessary.

I did some looking about to see what the most suitable carrier would be and wow! Once I started looking there were loads but most seemed to have bulky straps like a

Bergen rucksack that would just be uncomfortable whilst sitting in my chair.

So I finally found what's called a freedom sling on ebay, new for around £15-£20; It's a reasonably long and wide piece of fabric with a buckle to pull the fabric through on itself and grip at the necessary size for the baby you are carrying. As you can see from the picture, it fits over you like a sash with the buckle sitting near the shoulder, so it can be tightened or loosened when required. The sling is also available in a variety of colours.

Once the baby is in the sling they will lie across your front and with the width of the sling it gives an almost hammock effect for the baby to be comfortable.

The baby lies comfortably in the sling-like contraption and it is easy enough to roll up quite compact to take anywhere you need it; The sling can also be used by able bods and comes with an instructions on ways to fold the sling to carry a little one in different ways up to toddler-ish size."

Keira Procter (L 2/3)

freedom Sling



Keira and Frankie

Kathy Craig Retires from the QENSIU

One of the stalwarts of the Glasgow Spinal Unit is retiring; Staff Nurse Kathy Craig is fondly remembered by all the patients she nursed in the wards and more recently in the outpatients department.

Sister Karen McCarron invites anyone who wishes to say Bon Voyage to Kathy along to a tea on Friday 27th April at 12.30 in the dayroom. Also, Karen has been asked by many if there is a collection for Kathy's retirement, so if you are interested in making a donation, then give Karen a call on 0141 201 2563.

We all wish Kathy well as her well-earned retirement means she can now spend more time with her grandchildren.

FOR SALE

"Bromakin Racing Chair" Good condition
Seat width 14.5 inches **£150.00** ono
tel FRANK on:
01501 734080 or 07801 152915



2007 World Wheelchair Curling Championships

Scotland went into the 2007 World Championships in Sweden with high hopes, so they should be reigning champions.

Despite a good showing in the round robin stages of the tournament they were unable to make the final, contesting the Bronze medal playoff against Canada. The guys took revenge on their Paralympic conquerors by ensuring third place and the bronze medal.



The team has consistently medalled at every World, European and Paralympic games to date. It's big congratulations to the entire team for yet another excellent showing at the highest level of the sport.

FOR SALE

**RENAULT TRAFIC T1100D
MOBILITY COACH**



Short wheelbase, low roof model.

Original holdsworth conversion with lined, soundproofed and carpeted side panelling; carpeted plywood flooring; central roof lighting; tinted windows with 2 slide opening; 5 fixed seats plus place for 1 large chair.

Fitted with C.N. unwind wheelchair tracking and rolac vision ramp which has been strengthened to support a heavy power chair and occupant.

This vehicle which is in very fine condition has an extremely low loading height at only 18" to the floor, is no longer than a standard saloon and is therefore easy to drive and park in a standard driveway or parking space.

First registered 1992(K), the Vehicle has covered 94123 miles from new, has a 2068 cc 4 cylinder diesel engine coupled to a 5 speed manual gearbox and regularly returns 34 MPG. Having the same owner for the last 12 years, it has a new radiator, is newly MOT'd to 28 January 2008 and is being sold for offers in the region of £2500

**If interested please call
Ken MacCallum on:
0141 812 7314
for further details**



European Spinal Cord Injury Federation (ESCIF) Annual Assembly 2007, Heidelberg.

SIS Chairman Adrian O'Donnell and Information Officer Dougy Johnstone are heading off at the end of April to represent SIS at the 2007 meeting of ESCIF.

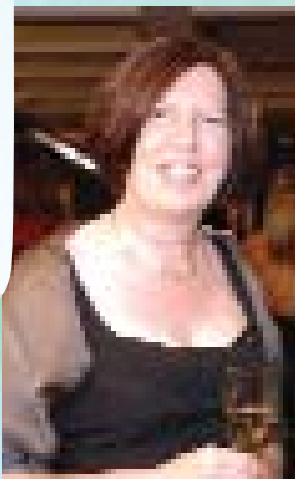
The assembly is taking place at the cutting edge Manfred Sauer Foundation in Lobbach near Heidelberg in Germany. The delegates will be given a tour of the state-of-the-art centre, which offers both physical and psychological rehabilitation post injury. Staff from the centre will also be making presentations on their work.

During the three-day event, the delegates will be exchanging views and ideas about the ongoing care of people with spinal cord injury; this includes a discussion on a recent survey of acute care and primary rehabilitation. In addition they will be treated to meals from the in-house restaurant, accompanied by some beer from the in-house brewery... Interesting!



Spinal Injuries Scotland has been involved with ESCIF from its inception and with Adrian O'Donnell as Treasurer it ensures that SIS has a continued presence at this unique forum in Europe.

London Marathon



Izzy Maciver, the director and producer of the SIS DVD has decided to further assist the charity by running the London Marathon on our behalf. She is deep into her training regime, clocking up the hard winter miles around the streets of London. Her hope is to raise £5,000 for SIS and if you wish to help her towards that total, you can donate online at: www.justgiving.com/maciver

If you wish to know more about the work that she produces, then check out www.madmacproductions.com

2007 Spinal Unit Outreach Clinics

Aberdeen (Woodend)
6th June
29th August
3rd October
12th December

Dumfries Royal
16th May
12th September

Arbroath
20th April
7th September
16th November

Inverness (Raigmore)
3rd May
21st June
9th August
8th November

Borders General (Melrose)
16th March
26th October

Hi, my name is Peter and I made this trip with Maggie, my daughters Lise & Megan and Maggie's daughter Lisa. I am C.4/5 complete, and have been so for almost 24 years. I have not let my disability stop me travelling, and I would urge you to do the same.

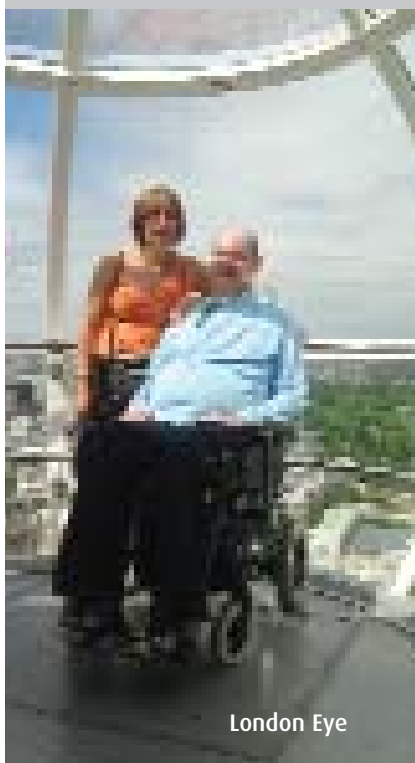
We decided to travel by train with Virgin, from Glasgow to Euston. 4 hrs 30 minutes of relaxed travel. I was able to sit in the comfort of my own power chair, with space to move. Another good thing is they only ask you to arrive around 30 minutes before departure, using an adult disabled rail card, we have made return trips with Virgin for as little as £46.00.

I have flown often, but would always use the train going to London. Flying does have one obvious advantage, speed; we did fly home from Geneva for this very reason.

The London part of the trip we were childless, it was just myself and Maggie, that's proper planning!!!! Almost all London cabs are wheelchair accessible, and we took one to our Hotel, the Premier Travel inn, County Hall, right next door to the London Eye. Hotel was good and staff were helpful, but the best thing about the hotel was its location, the London BA eye & cruise & the London Aquarium are right next door. The Houses of Parliament, Big Ben & Downing Street are only a few minutes walk, wheel or crawl away. We thoroughly enjoyed the trip on the Eye and the 40-minute sightseeing cruise costing just £18 for a combined ticket for a wheelchair user and companion, it was excellent value.

We spent two nights in London and went to see the show Mamma Mia, it was excellent, as were the shows Chicago, Spamalot & We Will Rock You, which we

Peter Joyce lets the members know about his fantastic three-city break in 2006, taking in some of Europe's premier cities. London, Paris and Geneva... By Train!



London Eye



Eurostar

have also seen, all theatres were accessible by wheelchair and had accessible toilets. We travelled on The Original Tour sightseeing bus, personally I would not recommend this unless you can climb the stairs to the top floor; the view from the lower floor is not great at times, using the local buses is probably better, more and more are becoming wheelchair accessible.

We have also visited Madame Tussaud's & the Planetarium, London Dungeons, the Tower Bridge exhibition & the Natural History Museum, all are wheelchair accessible.

On a short trip to see some shows we have stayed at the Travelodge Covent Garden, centrally located it is ideal for exploring the nearby Covent Garden market and getting to theatres without the need for taxis etc. It is the best-equipped hotel we have used, has a spacious toilet with wet floor area and support rails throughout. It has a raised bed to accommodate the wheels of a hoist and a platform lift to access the cafe area. The access to the building may pose a difficulty for some travellers because of a steepish incline to the entrance.

Second leg: London-Paris

Unless it is raining it is not worth getting a taxi from the hotel to Waterloo Station, it is only 5 minutes away. This is where we would catch the Eurostar to Disneyland Paris resort. As with Virgin, the staff at Eurostar were very helpful. It was a first for us to travel through the chunnel, a wonderfully smooth journey. An added bonus is that wheelchair users buy a standard ticket and automatically get bumped up to first class!!! Complete with tea, coffee and meal. The seating set up is the same as with Virgin, excellent, and worth every penny at £65.00.

LONDON LONDON LONDON

After a very comfortable 3 hr journey we arrived at Marne-la-Vallée, Disneyland Station. We are taken by Disney's own wheelchair accessible minibus to the Santa Fe Hotel within the Disneyland resort, we used the minibus regularly during our five-day stay, although, pathways throughout Disneyland are very smooth, so it wasn't always needed.

Arriving just after lunchtime gave us time to settle before the girls arrived. They were flying from Edinburgh and using the direct Disney shuttle bus to the hotel (a shuttle bus that is not wheelchair accessible, an issue that Disney should address, although a small alternative bus may be available).

The Santa Fe, although basic, is quite adequate. The room was spacious enough, with hand rails in the toilet but no roll-in shower. It had the benefit of an adjoining room. All facilities were on ground level, including a helpful reception, where you can rent small electrical items for a small fee. There is an excellent restaurant serving a very good buffet breakfast, included with the accommodation, and an excellent, eat all you can buffet dinner. At £14 each, there was a good, and wide enough range to keep 3 picky teenagers happy and you can't ask for any more than that.

Access around Disney is excellent, although some of the attractions are able-bodied access only, there are still so many things to do there that you can thoroughly enjoy yourself, whatever age you are. I even got on the Buzz Lightyear attraction "To Infinity and beyond" no photographic evidence thankfully!! There are several attractions that wheelchair users get fast-track entry.

We ventured into Paris to visit the Eiffel Tower etc. The train to Paris uses old rolling stock, which includes the wheelchair user sitting in, not quite the baggage car, but about 4ft away from the nearest passenger seats.

On arrival, it was quiet! We had changed our planned Saturday visit for Sunday, on asking the concierge of the adjacent hotel where to get the bus, he replied "they don't run on a Sunday!!!! Stupid me, stupid, stupid me, I should have checked, Oh well ! It was hot and the girls were tired (they are not coming again!) The concierge said that it was a pleasant 30-minute walk, all downhill. The decision was made and the girls went on ahead in a taxi and we would catch up with them. On turning the corner to the taxi rank we discovered the Arc de Triomphe immediately in front of us, it was stunning to see it in reality.

Myself and Maggie wandered down, the indeed very pleasant, Avenue Kleber. Every pavement was lowered, as we would discover was commonplace throughout Paris.

From here you have a fantastic view of the Eiffel Tower and its parklands. Disabled people and their travelling companions have priority access; in the heat this is a real benefit. There are three levels on the Tower, wheelchair users can go no further than the second, but even from here the views are superb. When exiting the lift you arrive into an area with food & souvenir kiosks. When outside the view got a definite "wow" from me. The outside viewing area is quite spacious and there are disabled toilets on the ground, first & second floors. Although we did not take one, there are cruises on the Seine.

We eventually returned to Disney, and prepared for the next day and our train journey to Geneva.

PARIS PARIS PARIS

After a very comfortable high-speed train journey with TGV SNCF, we arrived in Geneva. We had chosen a family run hotel, remarkably quiet although just next door to the train/tram/bus stations. It has no specifically designed disabled room, but the helpful staff removed some unneeded furniture, which gave more room to move around. The hotel lift is small and as I have a biggish power chair, this just fitted.

After some good food in the hotel restaurant it was now time to explore Geneva. We wandered down Ave Mont Blanc to Lake Geneva. A lovely wide street, part pedestrianised with cafe restaurants (and a McDonalds!!) and watch shops, lots of watch shops, when I say "lots" I mean "LOTS"!!!

Again, like Paris, the pavements were good and the kerbs had been lowered just about everywhere. The Lakeside was beautiful, although not particularly appreciated by the girls!! There were several pleasure boats tied up awaiting the next day's voyagers, which would include us. We were happy taking in the Lakeside views; it is a beautiful setting; you have parts of older Geneva on the far side with the Saleve mountain behind, then the yachts in the Marina and the magnificent 140-metre high fountain, Jet d'Eau

The only problem with the Lakeside is that there were midges, especially at a tree-lined section. They are easy to spot though, the Scottish midge is conspicuous because of its large sabre teeth, the Swiss midge is very conspicuous because they all wear watches! ! !

Next day we made an eagerly awaited trip, cable car to the top of the 3500ft high Saleve, just over the French border. A 20-minute accessible bus trip takes you there, you just walk or wheel over the border to the base station. Although not the highest mountain, it has an almost sheer cliff face which makes it dramatic. The spacious cable car takes only

five minutes to travel to the top, it's a bit quicker coming down if they don't use the brakes!!

At the top there is an excellent viewing platform looking down on the valley and a restaurant (being refurbished). After spending some time there we enjoyed our trip down before taking the girls, as promised (won't make that mistake again) to the Balaxert shopping mall. All I can say is that "it's a shopping mall". The girls went shopping and myself and Maggie went to a Mexican restaurant! As you do when you're in Switzerland!

Next day, our last in Geneva, it was pouring with rain, which eventually cleared in the afternoon. At Lakeside we chose a boat and a very long (see-saw) ramp was provided for access. The boat was easy to move around and also had a disabled toilet. We had a very pleasant trip around the Lake, taking us very close to the Jet d'Eau. We headed back to the hotel via Ave Mont Blanc and I'm sure the watch shops had been breeding since the last time we passed!

We ate in the hotel restaurant, and being Switzerland, it just had to be the national dish, fondue. After the bread had been dunked, I mentioned that at home the girls often eat chips and cheese, oops, french fries were ordered. We did have a laugh with the restaurant staff, they shook their

heads as the chips were dunked, then SACRILEGE!! Tomato ketchup was ordered, I must point out that I rejected the ketchup. The restaurant now has an addition to their menu "Fondue Ecosse" (I did not even attempt to explain deep-fried Mars bars!)

Next morning we were up early to catch the train to the airport, only a 10-minute journey, then the flight home.

For all rail journeys, arrangements were in place for the provision of ramps. I also prearranged the hire of a hoist in each country.



If I can be of help to anyone then just e-mail me c.montheoops@tiscali.co.uk

2007 Oil & Gas Quiz

Ardoe House, Aberdeen

Now firmly established as a 'must go' event in the Northeast of Scotland, the Oil & Gas Quiz was a huge success once again.

The evening is a two-centre event, with the second venue being the Renaissance Chancery Court in London, where Channel 4 racing pundit and sometime Celebrity Big Brother contestant John McCririck keeps the evening flowing along.

SIS has taken a more pro-active role in the organisation of the evening, which consists of a gourmet meal followed by a quiz, as well as charity auction and balloon raffle.

In attendance this year, among many others, were SIS' newest patron, Sir Ian Wood, Chairman of the Wood Group and HRH The Princess Royal, recently installed as Honorary President of SIS. There were also a



Formal Introduction



Petrofac Table



Sir Ian Wood



further 330 people from the Oil and Gas industry there making it the best attended Oil and Gas Quiz to date.

The Scottish end of the evening was hosted by broadcaster and Sunday Mail columnist, Alison Craig, who kept the guests entertained as well as ensuring the auction bids flowed in. After many months of hard work in the SIS office, Lucienne and Adrian, ably assisted by Lynn Newborn of ConocoPhillips ensured that the event was the most successful Oil and Gas Quiz EVER!

Among the fabulous array of prizes on offer were signed Scotland and England Rugby shirts, the chance to have a portrait painted by SIS patron Fiona Carlisle, vintage and rare whiskies, a day out golfing at the Old Course in St Andrews, with hospitality, a weeks accommodation at Melfort Pier and Harbour and many, many more.

The recently commissioned SIS DVD was shown to the assembled crowd, followed by a truly inspiring and moving talk by Kenny Herriot, to leave no-one in any doubt about the kind of cause that they were there supporting on the evening. Her Royal Highness The Princess Royal also spoke of the work of both SIS and SIA, once again displaying her in-depth knowledge of the subject of spinal injury and the work of both SIS and SIA.

Photos Courtesy Joanne Yeadon



HRH Speech



Winners



The Volunteers



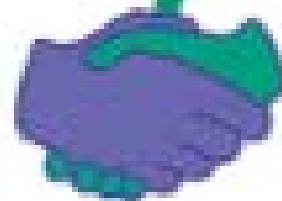
HRH, Adrian and Sir Ian

28-29 March 2007

Independent LIVING

SCOTLAND
SECC • Glasgow

SOLUTIONS FOR YOUR EVERY NEEDS



It's one of a very few opportunities to check out all the main players in the mobility industry, in the one place and time.

As always we at SIS will be there on Stand G50, so if you have some time to spare, why not pop along and have a chat with our staff and volunteers manning the stand.

There have been a few recent additions to the portfolio of companies in Scotland that provide relevant goods and services to people with spinal cord injury. SIS has offered three of those companies the opportunity to showcase themselves in the pages of Newline, so read on to find out what Albion Mobility, Central Mobility and Autability have to offer. If you want to find out even more, then they will all be at the show too, so why not pay their stall a visit too, for an informal chat.

If you are planning a trip to Glasgow for the event, then it might be worth knowing that there is also the chance, on Thursday 29th to check out all the main suppliers of continence equipment at the Glasgow offices of Fittleworth.

They can be found at Unit 1, Riverside Business Park, 45 Moffat Street, Glasgow, G5 0DH. That's just off Ballater Street in the Gorbals, very close to Glasgow Green. For more information call 0800 783 7148 or Email caring@fittleworth.com

Central Mobility

As I was speaking to Maureen she was just finalising details of her third location, which is pretty impressive considering the business is only about 14 months old. Her strategy has been a simple one as she explained. "We have been selecting locations that have a high footfall of people" she told me, "We are interested in locations where the public are coming along to buy other products and may not actually be expecting to see a mobility company."

And that's why Maureen's first location was in a market environment and why she has just signed the deal to take Central

into a garden centre. However, it wasn't the great master plan to develop this quickly. "I thought that I would be happy with my first location, which was literally an 8 foot by 8 foot space in a market" Maureen confesses, "The demand for the service made me change my plans. I just couldn't cope with the amount of customers we were getting and at times we would have five or six people in wheelchairs queuing up. It was causing problems with the traders who were next to me. So, I took the decision to move into a much larger unit in the same location and that's when we saw the real growth."

It was around this time that Ian Martin joined Maureen and the 'Skootability' service was launched in the market. "Within three weeks of offering the service we had 140 members" Maureen recalls. Skootability is simply a free scooter loan service for people coming to the market where Central is based.

The company then won two Lanarkshire Shopmobility contracts and that's when Maureen noticed that there were a large number of visitors coming to the first location from the East Lanarkshire area, who were being referred to the company from the Shopmobility scheme. "That's when we started looking in that area for a location similar to our original site. We found a small market in Bellshill, not on the scale of where we had a site already, but of a similar style and so we opened that in June last year".

The Central bandwagon rolls on, with the opening of the third location, but not due to any detailed planning this time. In fact, as Maureen admits, it was a pure fluke. "I had a day off" she explains,

our marketplace is pretty straightforward" Maureen suggests, "but the training you can't give that easily is for communication skills and I've employed people who I think are good communicators. For example, one of the members of our team was selling me advertising space for the Bellshill shop and I was really impressed by her whole approach and attitude and so offered her a job.

Ian is the only male member of the team right now but it's just the way it's happened and not particularly a strategy to employ ladies. However, Maureen does feel that the female touch works well in this marketplace. "To be fair I have always wondered why it's such a male dominated industry. I think females can bring something extra and can be more approachable sometimes."

Maureen has also produced a different look when it comes to staff wear too. "The girls wear a tunic similar to a beauty therapist type and I think that it's a nice look as well as being different in our marketplace."



Grand Opening



The Central Team and Customers

"and I decided to visit a new garden centre in the Clyde Valley. I was blown away by the design and style of the garden centre, which had been developed in an old converted warehouse. There are lots of other traders in there and it feels very much like an exhibition with beautiful furnishings, carpets and paintings, an antiques gallery and a great restaurant area too. The day that I went they were still sorting the place out, but I thought it looked fantastic and so I spoke to the management and they had an office space, with a small piece of floor space outside available. Thinking quickly on my feet I offered them the opportunity to become the first garden centre in Scotland to run a Skootability scheme free of charge and they bit my hand off."

There are now 6 staff in the Central team. Interestingly, Maureen hasn't employed people from inside the industry that she knows so well after spending many years running the sales teams at Kincaid Mobility. Her philosophy has been to employ people that she has come across and who impress her. "I believe that the product training in

There's no doubt that Maureen has been and still is, buzzing with ideas about her business, but she is still surprised to find herself running her own business. "I must admit that I had reached a stage in my life where I didn't see myself doing something like this at all" she told me, I had very little financial support and it was a huge gamble to try to start up".

Clearly Maureen is in a very different place to where she thought she might be right now when she opened for business in February 2006, but even more clearly, she is relishing the challenge and enjoying the way the business is developing. "I have my ideas book with me all the time" she enthused, "and I've got enough ideas in there to keep me going for a couple of years."

"The fact is that I'm very proud of what we have achieved and what we are doing."



Central Mobility
Caring for the Heart of Scotland

0141 554 0101

www.centralmobility.net

YOUR LOCAL CENTRAL MOBILITY OUTLET IS NOW OPEN AT
1201 Duke Street, Unit D10, Forge Market, Parkhead, Glasgow G31 5NZ

Albion Mobility

is a new family run company based in the very heart of Scotland

Barbara McCallum, one of the partners said "I am passionate that the foundation of Albion Mobility will be built on our promise to provide the one thing lacking in so many areas today, good service. From the first point of contact through assessment, sale and beyond, we want to assure our clients that they will be treated in a friendly respectful manner. We are determined to build a client base built on trust, with the client knowing that we will offer a first class service long after the sale has been concluded."

Barbara has worked within the private Mobility market for the past seven years, before which she worked within the NHS in both the wheelchair service and community loan stores. With her previous

sponsorship for a suitable group. Albion Mobility are also dealers for the Kuschall range of chairs through Invacare and the Quickie range from Sunrise Medical. "We are extremely keen to encourage high end users to seek their prescriptive products in Scotland rather than travelling to the South."

Albion Mobility has a large showroom where along with manual chairs they hold a wide range of powered chairs from Invacare and Moving People.net. There is also a private room where an assessment can be conducted and where clients can trial products at their leisure. Alternatively they are more than happy to conduct an assessment in the comfort of your own home. The company are also fortunate to



Colours in Motion Range



Barbara McCallum

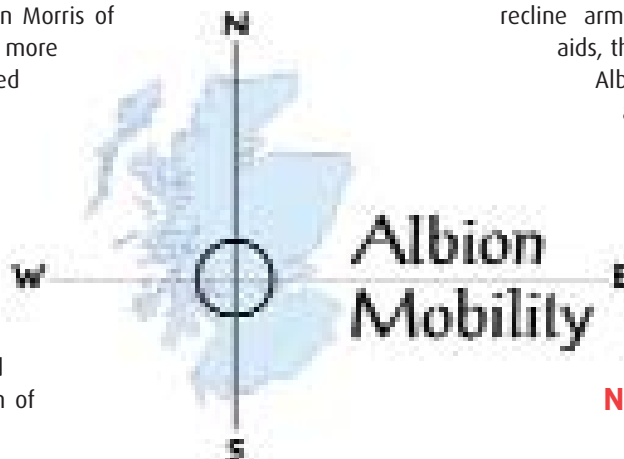
employer, Barbara's role was in the provision of prescriptive products, where she amassed a wealth of knowledge providing assessments on manual and powered wheelchairs together with comfort style tilt in space chairs. Albion Mobility has secured sole distribution rights for the Colours in Motion manual wheelchairs in Scotland; something they are proud to promote. Colours in Motion's everyday and sports chairs are famous for their unique ride and sometimes controversial names. In addition these chairs all carry a user's lifetime warranty on the frames! Albion Mobility delivered their first Colours in Motion chair in Scotland to SIS member Mr Ian Morris of Aberdeen who said "I have never had a more professional service or been measured more thoroughly for a wheelchair before. I am more that happy to recommend your company to other wheelchair users." Barbara and her family are also particularly interested in hearing from any Scottish wheelchair sports associations as we hope to develop the Colours in Motion sports range and would be keen to look into some form of

have an in house technician and workshop on site. "With so many options now available on products we will ensure our staff impart clear concise information on the product and it capabilities. Combine this knowledge with listening to the user's expectations and any limitations in using the product, which may be environmental or as a result of their medical condition, there by ensuring the end user receives a product which will enhance their lifestyle. We aim to be able to provide any mobility/rehabilitation provision our clients may require. Our range includes manual and power wheelchairs, mobility scooters, electric profiling beds, floor hoists, stairlifts, rise and recline armchairs, walking aids, bathing/toileting aids, the Chillow pillow and aids to daily living"

Albion Mobility will be exhibiting at the ILS at Glasgow SECC on the 28th - 29th March 2007 you will find them on stand C3.

Why not come along and meet the team. Free registration forms for the show can be sent on request; contact Albion Mobility on 01259 272167 or by email albionmobility@btconnect.com.

NO CALL TOO FAR



Unit 3 Block 1 Cooperage Way, Cooperage Way Business Village, Alloa, Clackmannanshire, FK10 3LP

www.albionmobility.co.uk

AUT & BILITY

QUALITY USED VEHICLES FOR YOUR WHEELCHAIR USER



New Company Selling and Hiring Wheelchair Accessible Vehicles in Scotland

Autability are a new Scottish company supplying Quality Used Wheelchair Accessible Vehicles for sale and hire throughout Scotland and the North. They are based in central Scotland and are happy to visit you wherever you live or work with one of their Quality Used Wheelchair Accessible Sale or Hire Vehicles.

Autability's Used Wheelchair Accessible Vehicle stock changes regularly and includes only quality vehicles which have been converted by the best converters.

Their standard service includes:

- Home Demonstrations – Distance No Object
- Pre-Delivery Inspection and Service
- Comprehensive Warranty with All Recyclables Included
- Full Year MOT if applicable
- Part Exchange Welcome – Non-Converted Vehicles Considered
- Full Part Delivery Voted
- Free Delivery

Autability are always on the look out for quality used wheelchair accessible vehicles, if you have a vehicle for sale contact them on Freephone: 0800 258 5250.

Autability also have Wheelchair Accessible Vehicles for Hire. They are available for short, medium or long term needs. Their fleet includes vehicles across the size ranges and they are available for weekend breaks, holiday periods or longer requirements.

If Autability don't have a Used Wheelchair Accessible Vehicle to suit your specific needs, then you can take advantage of their Wheelchair Accessible Vehicle Sourcing facility. Their network of contacts located throughout the UK gives them access to vehicles that are not advertised locally. In this way the hassle and of finding that special vehicle for you.

Autability welcome enquiries for New Wheelchair Accessible Vehicles from private individuals and also from Community Transport Groups, Local Authorities and any other business groups requiring a vehicle of this type.

Autability also welcome enquiries on all issues regarding Wheelchair Accessible Transport including insurance and finance options. They are also happy to source additional mobility products for you, such as wheelchair batteries and other accessories.



Autability's Promise:

"At Autability we aim to deal with our customers in a friendly, respectful and professional manner. We hope that by meeting people this way they will come back to us for their next vehicle and perhaps recommend us to potential clients".

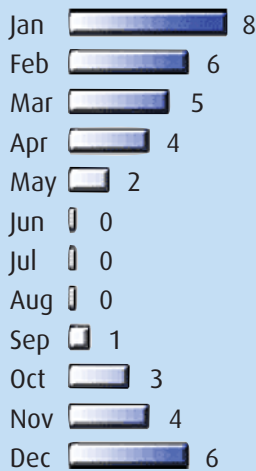
Andrew Dow
Director

For a local and friendly service contact Autability on Freephone 0800 258 52 50 or visit their website at www.autability.co.uk

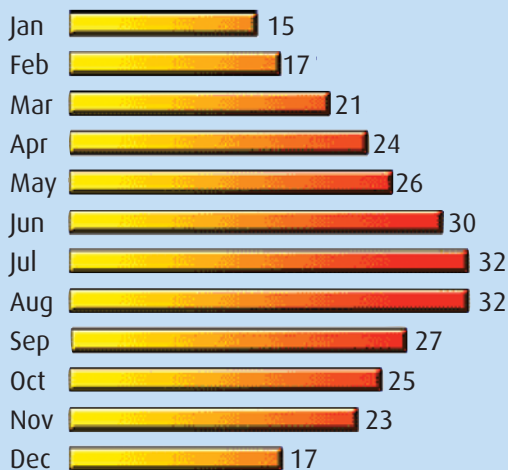
THE CYPRUS EXPERIENCE...



Average Number of rainy days in Cyprus



Average Temperatures in Cyprus



QUALITY, ACCESSIBLE APARTMENT ON THE OUTSKIRTS OF EMBA, PAPHOS

Emba is an "old-world" village with narrow, winding streets and a 12th century church. The nearby olive groves, banana plantations and orange trees all testify to the warmth of the climate.

LOCATION IDEAL: ALL THE ADVANTAGES OF PEACEFUL COUNTRYSIDE WITH PAPHOS TOWN IN EASY REACH.

This spacious apartment is fully accessible and has a roll-in shower with a self-propelling, wheel-in shower-chair.

From the living-room, patio doors open to a large, west-facing balcony with a distant view of the Mediterranean and fabulous sunsets over the sea.

It is on the 2nd. (top) floor, served by a roomy lift, in a new, attractive complex, step-free, low-rise and a quality build, with a communal pool, sun-loungers and sun-umbrellas.

WHY PAPHOS? We chose to be close to Paphos because the tourist area, known as Kato Paphos, is mostly flat and is the most accessible town we know anywhere.

ASSISTANCE FOR DISABLED PEOPLE

We are working closely with a small Paphos company, **OBERON EXPLORATIONS**, who have many years' experience of helping disabled people enjoy their holiday to the full. You can hire disability equipment from them, including an electric wheelchair and a small hoist, but you need to make the booking in advance. You can also arrange for them to meet you at Paphos airport in their accessible minibus, which can carry in safety 4-5 wheelchair users with a secure E.U. Standard clamping system, to take you to the apartment; they are available, by prior booking, for local taxi journeys.

GETTING AROUND

We can recommend to you a reliable car-hire firm, **CY-BREEZE** (their brochure is enclosed), for you to explore the spectacular scenery and fascinating tourist attractions throughout the island. (This firm includes in its fleet three automatics. Alas, hand-controls are not yet available in Cyprus.) Provided that you hire a car for a minimum of a week and arrive before 6.00pm, **CY-Breeze** will meet you at the airport and for no extra charge will chauffeur you to the apartment, leaving the car with you. (If you arrive after 6.00pm, the charge is CY€10). It is essential to give them plenty of notice. For no extra charge, they will meet you at the airport at any time if you wish to drive the car from there, though we recommend that you do not try to find the way yourself unless you are familiar with Paphos. If you make a booking with **CY-Breeze**, mention our name and you will get good service!

OR JUST RELAX

Without hiring a car, you can enjoy your holiday relaxing around the pool in the warm sunshine or on the spacious top-floor veranda of the apartment. For the short journey from the airport, Oberon are available or of course an ordinary taxi, if you are able to transfer. For visits to Paphos, taxis are relatively inexpensive.

DISTANCE FROM AIRPORT

Paphos International Airport lies just 9 miles from Paphos, it is a journey of about 25 minutes.

LOCAL AMENITIES

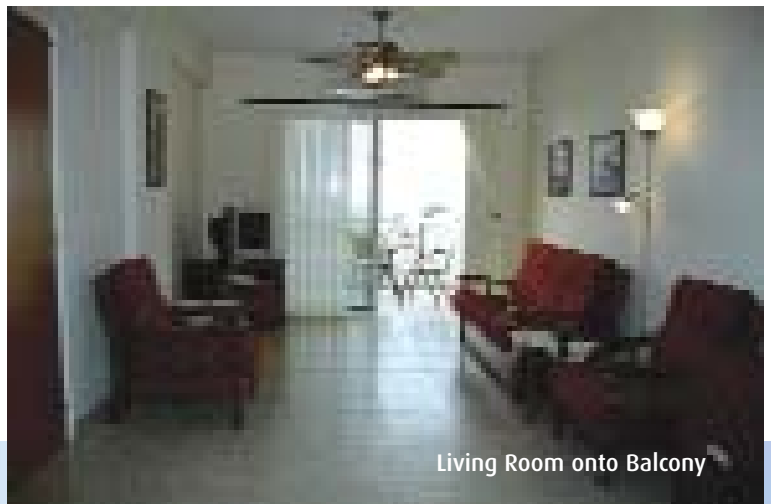
From the apartment a 10-15 minute walk along a level road through open fields takes you to a quality supermarket, with a café/take-away next door. Another 10 minutes takes you to a taverna and a pizzeria. Emba has a good take-away, with a delivery service.

TO PAPHOS OR CORAL BAY

From the apartment an easy drive of about 10 minutes takes you right into Paphos town with all its amenities. Or you can drive in 10 minutes to Coral Bay, where you can chill out on the best beach in the area; nearby you will find a wide choice of accessible shops, cafes and restaurants, with an accessible toilet in the car park overlooking the beach.

WHY CHOOSE TO HOLIDAY IN PAPHOS.....

- accessibility: a wide choice of shops, cafes, tavernas and restaurants with a step-free or *one-step entrance, often with tables on the pavement to lunch or dine al fresco. *a level wheelchair "push" along the sea-front and by the picturesque harbour, lined with cafes and tavernas, with its brightly painted fishing boats and pleasure craft.



THE APARTMENT.....

- sleeps 2/4
- open-plan living room, kitchen and dining room, for easy wheeling. **Satellite TV**, DVD player, CD/cassette player. Large dining-table seats 4 in comfort
- one double bedroom with a king-size bed, with easy wheelchair access to either side of the bed; height of bed: 58 cms.
- a double sofa-bed in living room
- shower-room: WC, wash-basin and roll-in shower; well-equipped with grab-rails, a linido (drop-down) rail and a self-propelling, wheel-in shower-chair. Height of WC: 49 cms.
- fitted kitchen, with full-size cooker and hob, fridge-freezer, microwave and washing-machine.
- patio doors to spacious, west-facing balcony, with a small table for drinks, sun-loungers and chairs.
- 3 ceiling-fans (free) in living-room and bedroom, also air conditioning (small extra charge) for cool or warm air
- all linen and towels provided, including towels for the pool (but not for the beach)
- windows are double-glazed and fitted with fly-screens
- roomy lift: 1.40 x 1.10 metres (4ft. 7ins. x 3ft. 7ins.)
- reserved, under-cover parking-space close to the entrance
- communal swimming-pool with sun-loungers and sun-umbrellas
- guests are requested to smoke only on the balcony
- level or ramped access throughout the complex

Please note: at the entrance to the apartment block, there is one tiny step of 2 cms. and another of 2 cms. to enter the apartment itself, with another of just 3 cms. from the living room to the balcony.

On your arrival at the apartment, our local rep, Kathleen (of Oberon Explorations), will lend you free of charge a mobile phone. (You pay only for the cost of any calls, which are relatively inexpensive.) Should there be a problem or a query during your stay, Kathleen can easily be contacted.

- excellent medical care in the event of accident or illness
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 - you drive on the left
 - petrol is cheap (a litre of unleaded costs about 60p)
 - English is widely spoken
 - eating out is less expensive than in the UK
 - 330 sunny days every year
 - low crime rate
 - Greek Cypriots are welcoming, hospitable and honest
 - Paphos is a UNESCO World Heritage Site, a fascinating mix of old and new: superb Roman mosaics and, a short distance away, popular bars and clubs.
- Whatever you enjoy on holiday, you will find it here.

FOR FREE INFORMATION, CONTACT
The Cyprus Tourist Office
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email: ctolon@ctolon.demon.co.uk
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Cyprus Airways: www.cyprusairways.com Tel. 0208 3591333

Oberon offers wheelchair users the opportunity to learn to ride or to go scuba-diving. Or for those who can enjoy an even more active holiday, there are nature trails to explore on foot, boat trips, water sports, waterparks, mountain biking, go-karting, tennis, and golf (there are three 18-hole courses close to Paphos).



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ROUGH
DOWNHILL CLUB

RIDERZ

OK THEN! WHATS THAT I HEAR YOU ASK? IS IT A WESTERN DIRECTED BY QUENTIN TARANTINO? NO, BUT IT'S PRETTY DRAMATIC NONETHELESS.

Give up? Well, it's a club that's been formed to cater for 4-wheel downhill mountain bikers; one of the fastest growing "Extreme" sports in the US and Canada and it's catching on here... FAST!

By the nature of the machines (4 wheels, one on each corner!) it's a fully inclusive sport, as people with SCI can take part, as well as able bodied. There is an active and growing scene here in the UK; and Scotland, being well served with mountains, makes it an ideal venue for such activities. Some of the places where it's already established and being developed include Nevis Range in Fort William, Laggan near Newtonmore and Glentress & Innerleithen in Dumfriesshire.

As you can see from the pictures, this is a high-speed, all-action sport which is assured to give a huge adrenalin rush to anyone who takes part.

Read on and find out one man's experiences...

Wheelchair user and self-confessed adrenaline junkie Philip Hall, of Preston in Lancashire, has launched 'Rough Riderz', a new club dedicated to making four-wheel downhill mountain biking available in the UK.

At just 31 years of age, he suffered permanent damage to his spinal cord in a serious road accident in September 2003. Now Paraplegic Philip can no longer walk and will need the use of a wheelchair for the rest of his life. Prior to this he had led a fit and active life, always relishing a new challenge. He enjoyed a range of outdoor pursuits including rock-climbing, hiking and even bungee jumping, but really found his niche when later introduced to the 'adrenaline rush' of off-road mountain biking. He became a very keen (amateur) downhill mountain biker, with the sport keeping him fit and feeding his appetite for excitement and achievement.

After the accident and his subsequent rehabilitation, Phil looked for ways to remain as independent as possible and continue his active lifestyle. He soon realised that most of his previous pursuits were now impractical or impossible for wheelchair users. Not a man to be easily defeated, he therefore searched for other ways to rekindle his enthusiasm for sports - not just to stay active, but to boost his self-confidence and his quality of life. This led to him trying many daring activities such as skydiving, water skiing and land yachting. He is also a 'wheelchair skills' instructor for the Back-Up Trust, and plays wheelchair basketball for his county team.

However, in Phil's own words: "These have all been good experiences for sure but wheelchair or no wheelchair, the thrill and excitement I've since had from riding these four-wheeled downhill bikes in the US is second to none... the amazing buzz and feeling of

freedom that this sport offers is something that I seriously feel must be made accessible to people here in the UK...".

Phil's first opportunity to get back into downhill mountain biking, since his accident, came whilst on an activity holiday at a centre in Colorado last year. He enthuses: "On these four-wheelers, my disability means nothing. In fact you have no way of knowing if a rider is a wheelchair user at all - riding these gravity driven machines means there's just no advantage either way! ...Unfortunately, whilst there is already a well established and fully integrated 4-wheel mountain biking scene over in the USA & Canada, it just isn't currently available to try anywhere here in the UK".

So, on his return to the UK, Phil immediately set about launching the 'Rough Riderz Downhill Club', to enable active wheelchair users and able-bodied people to get involved in this growing scene without having to travel thousands of miles first. He has already ordered his own four-wheel bike, and has also invested a lot of time, effort and money into starting the Rough Riderz Club and setting up a website. Rough Riderz is now registered with the National Governing Body of British Cycling.

Phil's work is not over yet, though. He remarks, "I am currently trying to secure adequate funding to be able to offer people 'taster days' so they can hook up with Rough Riderz and try it out for themselves. It has been hard work to launch and promote this unique new UK club, but I know when people feel that exhilaration and buzz they're going to want more - and that'll make it all worthwhile! The various sporting and disabled organisations I've spoken to have reacted very positively to these new bespoke downhill bikes, the disabled MTB scene and the clubs ambitions".



Too fast for the camera!



Steep banking

In a BBC interview, Karl Bartlett, a project manager for Forestry Commission Scotland, explained how they are already helping to roll back the boundaries of physical activity for disabled people: "getting people into mountain biking at all levels is really important for us...we need to make our region as accessible as possible to everyone...it is important that disabled people get a real experience of mountain biking".

The English Federation of Disability Sport have also launched the 'Count Me In' campaign, supported by former GB sprint hurdler, Colin Jackson. Their aim is: "to raise the profile of disability sport; create and extend access to sport and physical activity for disabled people; and encourage and support all organisations involved in the provision of sport to demonstrate a commitment to giving disabled people the same opportunities as non-disabled people".

For these reasons, both able-bodied and disabled people are welcome to join Rough Riderz, anybody at all who wants to get involved. When asked about the future Phil is very upbeat: "I'm optimistic that soon we'll have raised the funding needed to provide spare bikes and the required safety gear etc. so the increasing number of people who've expressed an interest will get the opportunity to come and try it for themselves. I just can't wait to show them what they're missing. Trust me - they'll be smiling for at least a week!"

Anybody interested in finding out more about the Rough Riderz, existing UK MTB trails or the sport in general can do so online at www.roughriderz.co.uk.

Written by David Westwood

Club Contact

Philip Hall (Club Secretary)

**17 Ashley Mews, Ashton, Preston,
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Tel: 01772 562883 or 07841 876436

Email: phil@roughriderz.co.uk



**THE 'ROUGH RIDERZ
DOWNHILL CLUB'
- A NEED 4 SPEED!**

Here's another wry look at life in the spinal injuries unit from ex-patient Alan Weight. If you like what you read, there's even more on the SIS website www.sisonline.org Alan requests that if you enjoy his work, then please make a donation to SIS by online giving, or whatever means you wish.

D' ye ken?

When friends first heard that I was going to be in a Glasgow hospital for a while I got a lot of ribbing about not being able to understand that the nurses said. Not true. OK concentration is required and you may give up if there is a group conversation going on but, in the main, we coped with each other. It was all helped by the fact that being the Queen Elizabeth National Spinal Injury Unit not only are the staff from all over Scotland but the patients have been referred from all corners as well. The truth is that, just as with a group of English from different areas, they can't understand each other either.

So Glaswegian (or at least its softer tones) became almost a second language for me but learning this lilt did nothing to prepare me for meeting Dougy. Dougy, you see, is from near Dundee and his accent, like the city's namesake cake, is rich, dark and, on occasion, fruity (I was going to add something about nutty as well but I'd like to visit sometime). In short it was, to my ear, impenetrable. Dougy was in the bed directly opposite me, a distance, mouth to ear of about twenty feet. Given our ability to communicate it may as well have been twenty miles.

Now then, my lack of experience in spinal wards led me to believe that I had a very special bed. It was split down its length and each half could be raised and lowered at the nurse's whim. I thought, at the time, it was in punishment for not bed resting hard enough. Heaven knows I tried hard at bed resting but, even at 2 o'clock in the morning when fast asleep, I didn't seem to impress anyone with my bed resting and the nurses had my bed doing the Edenhall boogie. Another favoured time was in the middle of the Cup Final or even the Scotland v Japan match in the Kirin Cup (come on guys

I cheered Scotland on in that competition are you going to do the same for England in the World Cup?).

I digressed a bit there. As I said I thought I had a special bed but Doggie's bed however was very special. It had a life of its own and did things, very noisy things, all on its own. I don't know what it did but it involved a lot of creaking, clanking and bubbling. Very disconcerting when you hear it in the middle of the night. I was convinced it was my antibiotic struck stomach complaining about the evening's meal of haggis and rhubarb crumble (on separate plates I hasten to add).

I needed to know what this bed did and the following morning I asked him. After ten minutes of intimate description of its workings the only word I had deciphered was "bed", about eight times. I put this down to my deafness and the distance across the ward but no matter what the reason I was still no wiser about Dougy or the bed.

Becky came to visit me the following Saturday and she was asking about Dougy. I told her that, like me, he was a long way from home and had infrequent visitors. So, Becky being Becky, she decided to pass a little time with him. "ask him about his bed" I asked. She sat being talked to by Dougy for ten minutes or so and, when she returned I asked "Why's he in here? What's his bed doing in the middle of the night?" "I don't know" she said, "I couldn't understand him." Things were obviously going to have to wait till I was mobile.

The day I was released from bed rest I was helped into a wheelchair and shown around the Unit. Now it was time to see Dougy and find out all about him and this amazing bed. So, with hearing aid fitted and turned up to a WHO concert volume I scooted over to Dougy.

"Hi Dougy, where are you from?"

"I'm frae Dundee ye ken."

"Aye Dougy I ken, whereabouts?"

"Aye well frae Glen Shiels ye come doon the brae, a braw brae it is too, and there's ma hoose on the right, ye ken."

"No Dougy I no ken"

"Ye know Ken, why'd you no say ye know Ken, Ken's a mate of mine, I thought you would no know Ken ye ken"

"No Dougy, I no know Ken I no ken, ye ken" (he'd got me at it by now).

"Aye I ken and fancy you ken Ken too. We'll have to have a beer."

"Sorry Ken, I mean Dougy no ken do, ha ha a bit of a whimsy there eh ye ken"

"What ye talkin' about, no ken do, you've got things mixed up the now"

"Me? I've mixed things up? it's Ken who's mixed things up ye ken"

"Look how am I to know you no know Ken when ye tell me you know Ken and then you no know Ken just leave Ken out of this"

"Leave Ken out of this? I'm ready to kill Ken"

"No, you can't kill Ken; Ken owes me a pint ye ken."

"Aye Dougy I ken that, it's the only thing I do ken today."

I retired hurt and non-the-wiser; to rest my weary and overtaxed brain cells. An hour later I was invited to join the Unit outing to see The Da Vinci Code. I turned down the offer; I'd heard it was the Glasgow dub and no sub titles. I guessed I'd no ken.

I was wheeled back to bed and tucked in, probably for my own good.

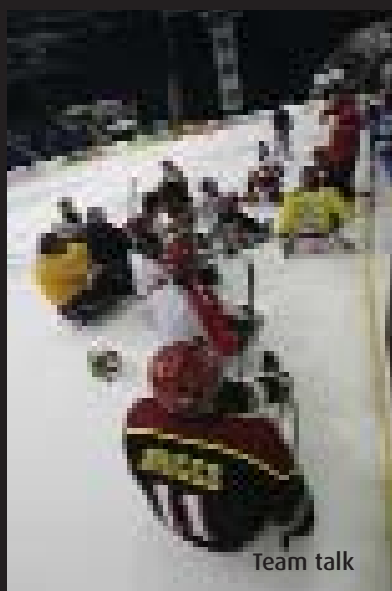
"Well that's you then" said the nurse.

"Aye that's me then" I agreed.

Alan Weight



sledge hockey



Team talk



Carving a turn

Sledge Hockey is the adaptive version of Ice Hockey, which is open for people with a lower body disability and is becoming increasingly popular.

Dundee has a rich heritage in the mainstream sport of Ice Hockey so it's a surprise that not only Dundee, but no-where in Scotland has an adaptive team. Gav Herron, a student at Abertay University wants to change that.

Gav is a wheelchair user as a result of having mild Cerebral Palsy, but he thought SIS would be a good place to try and create some interest in creating a sledge hockey team in the City of Discovery.

The sport is open to anyone who has a lower body disability and in non-IPC (International Paralympic Committee) events even able-bodied punters can take part.

There is the possibility for those who want to take part to progress to a higher level fairly quickly, as the number of participants is currently not that high, so any increase in the pool of players to choose a representative team from would be welcomed.

If you're interested in trying your hand then why not contact Gav via Email:

cartoonmad3@hotmail.com

To find out more about the UK Sledge Hockey scene, try a couple of these websites.

www.bsha.co.uk www.sledgehockey.co.uk



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