

HAVE WE GOT NEWS FOR YOU!

Spring 2005



Keeping in Touch

'Having been closely associated with the JDA ever since my father launched it over 50 years ago, I have known many of our members since they first joined us in their twenties and thirties. So the launch of our ambitious Keeping in Touch project is very close to my heart. The project aims to bring elderly Deaf members to our North London Community Centre once a week, using a combination of minibus and taxi services

to collect them from all over Greater London and the Home Counties.

At the JDA they can meet up with their lifelong friends over a hot Kosher meal at our weekly day centre and take part in trips, outings and celebrations of Jewish festivals. We're like a huge family here and the most important thing about families is that they need to stay together. This project is vital to that aim.'



Evelyn Gee, Chairman

The tight community of elderly Jewish Deaf people – who communicate in sign language – were mostly educated together at the UK's only Jewish Deaf Residential School, which closed in the 1960's. Now in their late 70's and 80's, mostly without family, many live alone and don't have access to transport to take them to the Centre. For some elderly Jewish Deaf people, the JDA Community Centre is a lifeline. Alone at home, picking up the phone for a chat is not an option. Textphone and fax machines are the main means of communication with the outside world, and provide no replacement for human contact. So the Centre plays an integral part in their lives – it's a meeting place for friends to communicate and keep in touch with each other's latest news and gossip and the JDA arranges a vibrant programme of activities to alleviate their isolation and stimulate their minds. Of course, they can also turn to the JDA for essential social work and welfare assistance, advocacy and sign language interpreters, as well as practical and emotional support.

But the Keeping in Touch project is very costly to run, relying on its own minibus, individual taxis and minicabs and often additional minibuses to ferry members to and from the Centre and on outings. In some cases, we are only able to bring more far-flung members to the centre once a month. The JDA is currently campaigning for more funds to support the project and would be happy to receive donations to ensure its expansion.



The Keeping in Touch project brings friends together at the JDA Community Centre from all over Greater London and the Home Counties.

All the two's...a date for your diary

Feeling lucky? The Hear!Hear! committee, which raises funds for the JDA, is staging a Grand Supper Bingo Evening on Sunday, 22 May 2005 at JFS School. With a fish and chip supper and prizes galore, this will be a fun evening for all ages – and Bingo Caller of the Year 2004, Ricky Denton - from Mecca Bingo in Wood Green - will be making sure the evening goes with a swing! Tickets are £35 to include supper, nosh and everything you'll need to play bingo. Numbers will be displayed on a giant screen and there will also be sign language interpreters, so that everyone is included. Proceeds from the evening will go towards the JDA's Keeping in Touch Project (see above).

Contact the JDA office, at the number on the back page, for a booking form - but hurry...tickets are going fast!

SIGNING SUCCESS



The Level 1 Plus course is for those who have completed Level 1 BSL and who now wish to improve their skills – without the worry of an exam at the end of the year!

The latest results for the JDA's Level 2 British Sign Language (BSL) classes were the best yet, with a record 80% pass rate – over twice the national average – for the taxing exam set by the Council for the Advancement of Communication with Deaf People. 'All our sign language classes, practice and social groups are taught by Deaf tutors who are qualified to teach BSL and the high pass rate is an indication of the quality of their teaching and the benefits our students derive from learning sign language in a Deaf community centre, with access to our specialist library, practice sessions and opportunities for volunteers to work alongside Deaf people', says Executive Director, Sue Cipin. 'And although the classes have a serious purpose, which is to enable hearing people to communicate better with their Deaf family, friends and colleagues, they are also great fun and immensely rewarding!' More information about forthcoming courses on the back page.

FUN!!!

on the farm...



A record number of hearing and deaf parents and their young deaf or hearing children had the time of their lives last summer when around forty attended an all-day party hosted by the owners of a 'private wonderland' in Hertfordshire. In a day packed with fun and adventure, it was wonderful to see the smiles on the children's faces as they took part in a treasure hunt, where they were given brightly-coloured buckets to fill with their discoveries. Brothers and sisters came along too and after a romp on a 'mock' beach, each child had the opportunity to ride on some of the beautiful horses from the stables and to stroke the latest additions – a group of adorable new foals!

An identical event has been planned for 26 June this year, with all the family and even their young hearing friends invited to attend.

The JDA's Family Services department offers unbiased guidance and support for any family with a deaf or hard of hearing child. Co-ordinator Jacqui Press, who is deaf, has extensive contacts with deaf organisations, specialist teachers, audiologists and speech and language specialists - and is herself a NDCS Qualified Family Supporter. The JDA offers information, support and guidance every step of the way – from birth onwards – in relaxed and welcoming surroundings. There are plans to develop services for families even further, with regular coffee mornings, for instance, so that parents can meet up and exchange experiences and information, and benefit from regular speakers on topics of interest. To find out more about Family Services or to book places on the summer day out, call Jacqui on Tel: 020 8446 0502 - or email her on: jacqui@dircon.co.uk

LIPSINC LOOKS FORWARD...



Last summer's launch of LIPSINC – a unique group for young deaf and hard of hearing people in their 20s and 30s who use speech to communicate – was an unqualified success, with over 40 young people now meeting regularly to socialise, exchange valuable information and offer each other support and advice on living and working with a hearing loss.

Three LIPSINC project teams – an Events Team, a Challenge Team and an Information Team - now meet every month to plan exciting programmes for LIPSINC members and their friends. Each group has a different purpose, but the overall aim is to provide lively, fun and active events for deaf, hearing and hard of hearing people, whilst raising the profile of LIPSINC to attract even more members.

The Challenge Team has already set itself a testing task – five members are holding a 2-day, sponsored walk, ending on August Bank Holiday this year, to raise funds for the JDA.

For those with slightly less energy, the Events Team has been busy planning several events, including subtitled theatre and cinema visits and active days out, such as go-karting and a summer picnic. Meanwhile, the Information and Networking Team are knee-deep in research on a number of topics of particular interest to LIPSINC members, such as Access to Work, Disability Living Allowance and technology. There are also plans for interesting talks and presentations from prestigious guest speakers on these and other relevant topics.

Information on all Lipsinc activities is now available on the new LIPSINC website, which has just been launched. For membership forms or any other information, please contact Jacqui Press as above.

Deaf awareness starting young



Over sixty 13-14-year-olds who took part in the JDA's Deaf Awareness Training Workshop – part of a groundbreaking four-week scheme run by the Jewish Free School's Informal Education Department - completed the closing event ceremony by performing a highly emotional version of the Hatikvah in British Sign Language.

The JDA's Deaf Awareness Training Workshop was an absorbing mix of practical information – such as how to fingerspell, the basics of British Sign Language, understanding the challenges of lip reading and how deaf people use modern technology at home and at work – and the personal experience of being a deaf person, as related by a JDA staff member. Other topics included common misconceptions about deaf people, how it feels to be deaf and tips on how to communicate with people who have a hearing loss. The course was heavily oversubscribed and was such a success that there are plans to repeat it this summer.





Once again our notice board is full of information about the everyday activities and services that we offer at the JDA. Our social and educational events are lively, our signed celebrations of Jewish festivals are joyous and our Day Centre buzzes with friendship and laughter. But it doesn't stop there. Every day, and in countless ways, we do our best to make a real difference to people's lives. With no family of her own, we'll accompany Tilly* to hospital and interpret the complex and highly personal interview with her doctor. And we'll hold her hand when she goes down for her op. We'll offer real support to Isabel and Mark*, the hearing parents who have just

been told that their baby boy is deaf. And we'll go on supporting them, and their son, right through his schooldays, Barmitzvah, university and as long as we're needed. We'll help Morris* arrange his meals-on-wheels now he is on his own. And we'll be there to interpret for him at his wife's stone setting, bringing all his lifelong friends from the JDA to support him. You won't see these services displayed on our notice board, but behind the scenes at the JDA, this is how we live up to our promise; to be there for anyone who needs us.
Sue Cipin - Executive Director
* Names changed for anonymity

'SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE AT THE JEWISH DEAF ASSOCIATION'

British Sign Language classes (BSL) CACDP Foundation Certificate in Deaf Studies

Daytime and evening courses, starting September and incorporating:

Course 1: Level 1 BSL & Deaf Community & Culture 3 terms.

Course 2: Deaf Awareness & Communication Tactics 1 term.

CACDP Level 2 BSL - 4 terms starting September.

Level 1 Plus BSL - Ongoing, for people wishing to improve their skills but not work towards exams.

Summer BSL taster courses for teenagers.

'Signing Social' - sign language practice and social events, Thursday evenings twice a month.

Services and social events for hard of hearing people

- Personal consultations with independent hearing aid specialist (by appointment only).
- Private one-to-one counselling sessions with qualified counsellor (by appointment only).
- "Sounds Social" - social and cultural group meets Tuesday afternoons, once a month.
- Short courses to help people handle their hearing loss.

HEARING LOSS? - For professional advice, unbiased information and the chance to try out specialised equipment to help you lead a more independent life at home and at work, why not visit the JDA's Resource and Technology Room?

- Expert advice in comfortable and relaxed surroundings
 - Try out: • Flashing doorbell/phone alerters • Telephone equipment
 - Wake up/fire/baby alarms • TV aids • Tinnitus relaxers.
- Strictly by appointment only - see below for contact details.

Minibus and Car Drivers Wanted...

Can you help us to save precious funds for our Keeping in Touch Project by volunteering to drive either the JDA minibus or your own car? We need reliable, friendly, caring drivers to bring elderly Deaf people to and from our North Finchley Day Centre on Wednesdays (weekly or fortnightly) and on occasional outings. Clear communication essential. BSL an advantage. For more information, contact Lisa Katz at the JDA (see below).

JDA LIBRARY

A vast range of books and videos about Deaf issues, learning sign language, and topics related to hearing loss.

Deaf Awareness training sessions

Tailor-made to your group, school or cheder class, the sessions educate hearing people so that they understand the challenges encountered by deaf people in their daily lives - and offer advice on communication with deaf people.

Tinnitus self-help group... ...and tinnitus management courses.

Tinnitus self help group and tinnitus management courses
Tinnitus self-help group meets every three months on Tuesday afternoons.

FUNDRAISERS

Do you have some time to spare, lots of energy and a few good ideas to raise money for the JDA? If so, please contact Sue Cipin at the address below and she'll tell you more.

Activities and Services for Deaf People

- Day centre - every Wednesday
- Sunday Social Club
- JDA outings and special events
- Signed synagogue services, cultural activities and celebrations of Jewish festivals
- Opportunities for involvement through committees
- Information, advice, practical assistance and one-to-one support services
- Computer classes in sign language - Tuesday and Thursday evenings
- "The Chat Room" - contemporary social venue with internet café
- Quarterly magazine
- Interpreting service for members

What's On for hearing parents and families with deaf children

Support, networking groups and unbiased information services for parents of children with a hearing loss.

Parent and children's group meets regularly and holds occasional social events.

LIPSINC - For young Jewish deaf and hard of hearing people and their friends.

- New social opportunities to meet people with similar life experiences in mainstream society
- Involvement in project teams organising events for young adults
- Discussion groups and information events
- One-to-one practical advice and guidance for individuals
- Up-to-date information about specialised technology
- Support with employment issues and in the workplace.

Contact Jacqui Press on: 020 8446 0502 (tel) 020 8369 5329 (textphone) or email her at: jacqui@jda.dircon.co.uk

New 30s - 50s group launched

A new group has just been launched, filling the gap between our young people's social groups and our well-established activities for elderly Deaf members. The 345 social group will appeal to Deaf people in their 30s, 40s and 50s who use sign language to communicate. For more information email Barry David on: barry@jda.dircon.co.uk



Contacting the JDA

Address: Julius Newman House, Woodside Park Road, North Finchley, London N12 8RP

Telephone: 020 8446 0502 Email: jda@dircon.co.uk

Textphone: 020 8446 4037 Fax: 020 8445 7451

Resource Room: 020 8446 0214 (voice & textphone)

Web: www.jewishdeaf.org.uk

New Charity Number

To ensure our compliance with current charity legislation, the constitution of the JDA has been updated and it has now been awarded A NEW CHARITY REGISTRATION NUMBER. Please note that from January of this year, the new number, which should be used to identify the JDA on wills and bequests, charity cheques or gift aid declarations, is now 1105845 and that we are now a Company Limited by Guarantee, registration number 4983830.