

Summer 2004

# cfc NEWS



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## Editorial

*The summer of 2004 marks the beginning of yet another stage of development for Christian Family Care. It heralds the arrival of our very first web site, which will not only help raise awareness about our work but will also be a useful tool in fund raising, recruitment and service development.*

*Communication is so important in our modern world and it is remarkable that at the touch of a button, it will be possible to access information about our work almost anywhere in the world. Look out for this new site, which should be launched sometime between the middle and the end of August.*

*This month, we have also seen the opening of the 'Youth Barn', in Sandy, Mid-Bedfordshire, a specialist project for vulnerable young people. The refurbished building alongside the Family Centre will provide a wide range of support services for young people who self-harm and for those who are considered to be at serious risk in the community.*

*These new developments are the fruits of many hundreds of hours of labour and we are grateful to all those who have given their energy and expertise to make them happen.*

*You will read elsewhere in the newsletter that Gabby McAuley has recently joined the staff team of Christian Family Care in the role of manager for the Refuge and Charis. Gabby left us to study for her Diploma in Social Work in 1998 and we are now delighted to welcome her back.*

*Please join us for our Annual General Meeting on Tuesday 26th October when Gabby and the other managers will be talking about their current work and their plans for the future.*

**Chris Ure**  
Director

## Chairman's letter

BEHIND THE SCENES, the Trustees have been busy working on the organisation's Risk Analysis policy. This has resulted in increased examination of our administrative and financial procedures and has led to a number of useful reforms.

The growth of our work has for some years been placing greater demands on the Director and managers and we are currently reviewing the Executive structure of the organisation. To this end, Mrs Sally Hall, has temporarily stepped down as a Trustee in order to work with the Director to assess the management needs of Christian Family Care in the years to come.

People are so much more important than things and we are grateful for the skills and expertise that our staff and trustees bring to the work, to enable us to share God's love with needy and hurting families in this area.

You will be pleased to read in this newsletter of the new Youth Barn Project at Manor Farm Family Centre in Sandy, which has just been completed. This will be used to provide individual support and groupwork with teenagers. We were honoured to have the Bishop of St. Albans visit all our projects, during which he blessed the Barn, which has since been officially opened by the Lord Lieutenant, Samuel Whitbread.

As always, we are so grateful to you all for your prayerful support.

*Dr Gordon Stroud*  
Chairman of Trustees



## Summer fun!

THANKS TO AN UNEXPECTED and welcome donation from the local Emmaus Community, the Children's Project staff have been able to organise a varied programme of activities and outings for their children throughout the summer. As well as organising a farm picnic and games, they visited a living museum in Buckinghamshire and attended a party in Battersea Park, organised by Variety Club. In August they have organised the first ever residential break on a canal boat on the Grand Union Canal.



# The Youth Barn opens

A WARM WELCOME was extended to The Right Reverend Christopher Herbert, Bishop of St Albans, when he visited all three projects of Christian Family Care in June. Whilst visiting Manor Farm Family Centre, he provided a prayer of blessing for the new Youth Barn Project, which was formally opened by Samuel Whitbread, the Lord Lieutenant, the following month. The new project will provide specialist services for some of the county's most vulnerable young people, addressing issues of self-harming, drug and alcohol abuse and teenage pregnancy.



Above: Right Reverend Christopher Herbert, Bishop of St Albans  
Left: Mrs Jayne Whitbread and Miss Aimee Norman

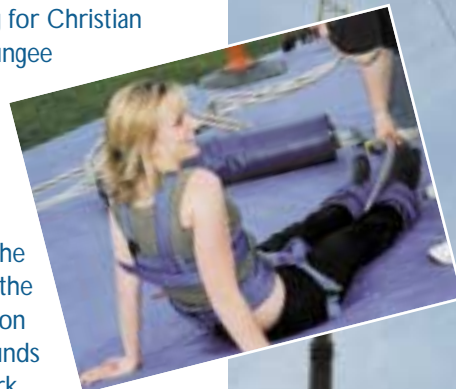
Right: (Left to right) Celia Bennett; Phil Gregory; David Young; Veta Hudson-Rae; Rev Jennie Cappleman and Clarissa Robinson

Below: Vanda Dray; Samuel Whitbread and Mrs Jayne Whitbread



## Flying high

IN JUNE, local fundraising for Christian Family Care included Bungee Jumping from a 200ft crane, high above the Bedfordshire countryside. As intrepid fund-raiser Nikki Smith took a leap for charity, she and other customers at the Slater's Arms in Kempston helped raise welcome funds to support our local work.



## Meet Gabby McAuley

I first worked for Christian Family Care in 1994 as a Bedford Refuge Key Worker. It was a defining part of my life and career.

Jane Chohan, Margaret Wardale, Jean Henry, Bernie Romain are just a few of the dear friends and colleagues I worked with and shared special times with.

I left Christian Family Care in 1998 because it taught me the complexities, inadequacies and positives of systems needed to address social care on many levels. I wanted to know more, to learn, to explore, to understand, 'where was the justice'?

The Refuge had taught me so much from the residents; I learned patience, strength and humility from my excellent Manager and colleagues. I also learned faith, tirelessness and a desire to facilitate the best for mothers, women and children who: 'There, but for the grace of God, go I'.

Now I'm back as the new manager of the Refuge and Charis.



I've since gained my diplomas, training, certificates, child protection expertise, mental health support work, and knowledge of working with adults with learning difficulties. I have worked as a Family Support Social Worker, Manager of a Refuge in Cambridgeshire (working on both core and initial

assessments of families in need for social services) and latterly working with children in Foster Care and being placed for adoption. I believe I have gained an insight into the diversity of families in need and a knowledge base grounded on theory and practice that enables me to work in a way which will achieve the best outcome for our clients.

I am blessed with three strong handsome sons (I think, anyway)! and a little eight year old pearl – oops sorry, I mean girl!

So here I am, let's get on with the laughter, tears, fears and hard work.

Thanks and praise for having me back!

## Meet Sheena Howe

I joined Christian Family Care in June 2004 and was welcomed with such warmth, I was soon

feeling part of the team. My employment history is extremely varied, from providing secretarial support in the entertainment industry, the Probation Service, a school and now here! It is

lovely to be a part of a Christian organisation. I have already gained a sense of achievement through working towards supporting vulnerable people, which is what I believe is important.



I am a Christian and attend Elstow Abbey Church, near to where I was brought up. It was my love of music that drew me to becoming a Christian. I joined the choir from the age of eight and have been involved with the church ever since. Sundays are often a busy day for me; I'm usually playing or singing

in the church band whilst intermittently entertaining the children in the creche - and I have even been known to help out ringing the church bells!

## Rallying support!

DENNIS TAILOR'S 2004 Caribbean-theme fundraising event was certainly a mixture of sunshine and showers as teams of four participated in a 24-hour volleyball marathon in the somewhat un-Caribbean Bedfordshire climate! Among the competitors were school and church teams as well as a team from Manor Farm Family Centre. The Children's Project staff ran a non-alcoholic 'Cocktail Bar', complete with palm trees and a parrot and the Biddenham Steel Band provided the music. We are most grateful to Hastingsbury Upper School, for the venue; the ATC for the catering and as always, to Dennis who this year is raising funds to provide transport, outings and breaks for the many families supported by the projects of Christian Family Care.



Coconuts for prizes!

## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2004

You are warmly invited to attend our Annual General Meeting on Tuesday 26th October 2004

At the Howard Room, Corn Exchange, Bedford

12.30 p.m. - 2.00 p.m.

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