

Apuldram News

Winter/Spring 2014

The Apuldram Centre - Horticultural and Craft Training for People with Learning Disabilities
Common Farm, Appledram Lane South, CHICHESTER, PO20 7PE; ☎ 01243 783370

Editor: Paul Reed; Asst Editor: Sue Gilson

“**C**ontrary to popular belief, I’m a very nervous person”. So begins Pam Porter’s recollection of her first visit to Apuldram, over ten years ago. The editorial team had already decided that Pam should be invited to be the subject of this issue’s “A Day In The Life Of...” column and, following the announcement of her decision to retire at the end of March, it seemed to make good sense to ask her about her experiences as well. So, there are Two pints of Porter in this edition, and none the worse for that!

Andy Francis is in the spotlight in the ‘Good To Meet You’ slot. I have worked alongside Andy in the kitchen on Fridays and he is a hard worker; it’s good to have him on the team.

Sally Milligan reports that she has succeeded in her bid for funding to continue the work in the sensory garden which will include a multi-coloured willow-bed and a willow sculpture. In a couple of years this will allow Sally to coppice the willow to make more items for sale in the shop. The grant of £750 was from Southern Water, to whom many thanks.

Sally is also delighted that her request for ‘A Crafty Volunteer’ resulted in two new volunteers for Apuldram - Judy Whitehead and Peter Shaw, both of whom have had their first mornings ‘on the job’ and look like staying! Welcome to them both.

On the subject of volunteers, without whom Apuldram would cease to function with anything like the success which it enjoys, there’s a new column in which it is intended to showcase a volunteer each issue. If you are a volunteer and might like to be featured in this way, contact me (paulreed@apuldram.org).

Still on volunteers, there was a lovely lunch for them/us all at the Centre recently. It was a brilliant opportunity to catch up with each other and the moussaka was delicious; there were three different puds and, putting my own comfort to one side in the interests of journalistic integrity, I forced myself to try all three. Each was outstanding. Thanks to Jane Finch, Penny Yates and their band of helpers for such a good spread.

I hope you find much of interest in this Newsletter; please let me know if you’d like us to look at something.



A picture of Justin painting some spring flowers; it won’t be long before he’ll see the real thing through the window. At the moment there’s a bit too much water around.

Paul



Sally sent me this photo of the sensory garden from her phone.

February 100 Club winners:

£100: David Evans; £50: Nicola Jackson; £25: Jean French & Wendy Baker;
£10: Jane Ellams, Susan Mint & Charlotte Evans

If you’re not yet in the 100 Club, don’t you think it’s time you joined? email me for info:
paulreed@apuldram.org.

Pam Porter

reflects on her time with Apuldram

When did you join Apuldram?

I joined on 4 August 2003. Contrary to popular belief I am a very nervous person and I drove up and down Appledram Lane three times before I plucked up courage to drive in with my application form. I went in to the shop and handed my letter to the volunteer who took it to the manager. I then beat a hasty retreat.

I was interviewed by Tom the Manager, Pamela the Chairman of the Board and another lady not connected with Apuldram.

I started working a three-day week, but then Tom left and I was asked to work full time until a new manager was appointed. I have worked full time since.

What was your first impression when you came?

Everyone I met on my first day was very welcoming and friendly. The site was quite run down, my office was furnished with an old Formica-topped table and kitchen chair. It had a concrete floor and no door. That was OK, it was summer at that point!

A barbecue took up most of my first day, held as a goodbye party for the previous secretary. George Seth did the cooking!

On my second day Tom took me out to buy a pen, calculator, stapler, etc., and offered to treat me to lunch. 'Wow! What a job!', I thought. As the Centre was so broke we made our purchases at Sainsbury's, not really office quality but all that could be afforded; and lunch? Oh, that was a sandwich in the cafe!

Tom shredded my first pay cheque, I have often wondered if it was because Apuldram was broke or it was really an accident as claimed!

What was your previous work experience - what did you do before Apuldram?

I came to Apuldram after 14 years running the accounts office at a local commercial horticultural business. My new office was salubrious compared to working in an old static caravan where, when it rained, the water dripped down the flex over a bare light bulb onto my desk and you had to be careful where you stepped for fear of falling through the floor.

What changes have impressed you?

The Centre has more than doubled in trainee numbers and staff both in daycare and supported living. Apuldram owned one house in Chichester and when they bought the second house, Jane [Kilby] the manager - also new - and I had a lot of dealings with the estate agent. When the purchase was concluded the agent sent a letter wishing Jane and me much happiness in our new home!

The site itself has also undergone many changes with improvements: new glasshouse, Common Room, extending Common Lodge which was a small farmhouse being rented out when I joined up.

I think what has impressed me most is the dedication of the staff to enhancing the lives of the trainees in all ways possible whilst still managing to smile.

What do you do outside of work?

I love walking, reading, gardening, meeting up with friends, and, importantly, our family.

Will retirement from Apuldram give you more time to do those things or do you plan to develop new pastimes?

Already retired people tell me I will be so busy I will wonder how I found time to work. However, I will give myself a chunk of ME time during the summer and see what crops up, but there are some very interesting groups with U3A [University of the Third Age] so I will join later in the year. I have already joined the community choir which I love.

What will you miss most about Apuldram?

Oh, the list is endless, how do I sort it? My colleagues, the trainees, the volunteers, the busy days, the problems, the smiles, the funny moments which can be side splitting, the woes, 50-plus interruptions when I am busy adding up! Oh, and the cheese scones of course!



The Coca-Cola truck came to Chichester in the lead-up to Christmas and these Apuldram trainees/tenants, staff and friends went along to have their photo taken

Good To Meet You

Paul Reed talks with
Andy Francis 36, Bognor



Q What makes you happy?

A I like cricket - I like watching it on tv. Aldingbourne lost and we won!! Football makes me happy as well.

Q What are your hobbies?

A Swimming - I go on a Tuesday to Arun [Leisure Centre]; I go with Jane, a friend. I go to the gym on Wednesday with The Boys' Club. I will play football at the College next Wednesday. I lost 2lbs last week.

Q How do you spend your evenings?

A I don't watch much; I watch wrestling on Sky, three programmes a week.

Q What do you do at weekends?

A I go shopping with my mum and my sister, Vicky. I like shopping

Q Favourite films?

A Grease, 1 and 2. And The Mummy, 1, 2 and 3; they were Vicky's choice but I love them too.

Q Favourite singer/band?

A Boyzone and Westlife

Q What do you like doing best at Apuldram?

A I like the kitchen best. I like cooking and washing up. I work by myself a lot [Andy is well able to follow a recipe and there are always staff and/or volunteers available for advice or help].

Q Describe your family/pets

A There's my mum, my younger sister Vicky and her half-brother, Paul; I am the oldest. We have a cat - LaLa, who is black, brown and white.

Q Favourite meal?

A Baked beans and chips - low-fat ones!

Q Three words to describe yourself

A Friendly, happy, athletic

Meet the Residents:

I know it's a feeble excuse but it was too wet and muddy to tramp across the field at Apuldram to take a picture of one of the geese, ducks or chickens, so you'll have to put up with yet another picture of Marley, here being stroked by Emma. He certainly seems to know what he likes. PR



ALAN'S WINTER GARDEN



- Cover the soil with polythene or cloches to warm it up for spring sowing.
- If you haven't yet ordered/been to the garden centre then do so now for your seeds and young plants and also buy labels if you need them. You could order young plants from catalogues for later delivery.
- If you can heat your greenhouse enough, keep it frost-free, and then you can sow seeds of some salad and flowers now. Insulate frames and greenhouse to keep out the cold.
- You can now start to 'chit,' start your potatoes sprouting, in a frost free place
- Finish the rough digging of your veg garden, which will allow the frost to penetrate to kill any bugs, and incorporate manure/compost as available. This will also allow for better drainage and for the weather to break the soil down, making it more friable.
- Take cuttings of chrysanthemums now.
- Some bulbs will be flowering and, to prevent any slug damage, place some pellets around, but use sparingly.
- Check for any water need of over-wintered plants in the frame/glasshouse.
- Prune late-flowering clematis and any other shrubs and trees as necessary. Do not prune spring flowering plants or they won't flower!
- If there is a mild period then pruning of roses can take place.
- Complete pruning of apples and pears and also winter wash to kill any over-wintering bugs in the bark.
- If the soil is frost/snow free you can now plant flowering trees, shrubs and fruit.
- Before any plants are in full growth apply a preservative to wooden trellis and fences and repair as necessary

Enjoy your garden whatever the season!

Alan Doick

Who'd be a volunteer?

well, fortunately for us, quite a lot of people; here's one:



Jenny Harvey and her husband, Chris, used to have a boat moored in Chichester Marina and, when they came down this way from their home near Croydon, they would regularly pop into Apuldram for cake and eggs. She says that 'it always seemed like a cheerful place' and she decided that if they were ever to move to this area, she would like to become a volunteer.

When the school at which Jenny worked as a laboratory technician closed down, she and Chris took retirement and moved; that was six years ago and, true to her word, Jenny started volunteering at The Centre six months later.

Jenny is usually found helping in the craft work-room or with the plants, depending on the season; she considers that helping set out the sensory garden last summer was a 'very enjoyable'

Jenny and Chris have two children, Nicola and Paul; Nicola has a nine-month old son, Woody, and Paul has Sienna, 19 months. They do not live locally but they are in regular contact via Skype

Jenny enjoys walking and she and Chris have spent two years walking the South Downs Way and are now starting on the Jurassic coastal path. She is also keen on archaeology and gardening, is a Chichester Harbour Conservation volunteer, and is a self-confessed bookworm; she belongs to a book club which meets bi-monthly; the most recent book which they all read and enjoyed was *Espedair Street* by Iain Banks.

Along with some other volunteers, Jenny joins Caroline, Adam, Heidi and Anna in a Pilates class in Apuldram's Common Room every Thursday morning.

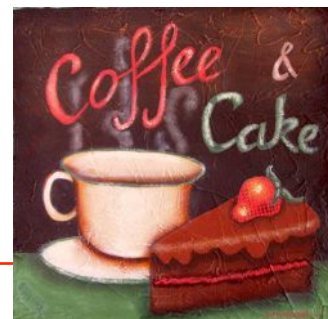
When asked what she likes most about being a volunteer at

Apuldram, Jenny said 'the tea-break rock cakes are a big plus!! but mainly it is the sense of cheerful friendliness. I always come away with a buzz.'



Jenny with Caroline Goody

There have been a number of not-too-subtle references in the Newsletter to the goodies on sale in Apuldram's shop, including - but not restricted to - the yummy fruit scones, rock cakes, cheese scones and much, much more. Apuldram is a lovely place to come for coffee and a cake or cookie; bring your friends and impress them, too!



What's in a word? Quite a lot! Clients? Service Users? Change is in the air.

Paul Reed writes about the current thinking

Around 30-odd years ago, when we were setting up the Chichester Gateway Club, the phrases 'mental handicap' and the one-colour-paints-all 'the mentally handicapped' were the accepted (i.e., non-challenged) terms for the people who we now describe as having a learning disability. Fashions in descriptive words evolve in what we hope is a progressive way. Certainly the use of 'mental handicap' was infinitely better than the words used previously although it, too, can be seen as offensive. It's also likely, perhaps inevitable, that 'learning disability' will be replaced by something reflecting other values over time.

When we talk about specific individuals who come to Apuldram, for example, we use their first name (or the name they choose to be called; Lily, as a case in point, has had three distinct periods of favourite names for herself in the few years that I have known her; Lily is simply the last incarnation.)

When we refer to a *group* of the adults with learning disability who come to Apuldram, we have traditionally used a number of words, the most recent being 'clients' and 'service users'. I had never felt that either term was wholly appropriate and it was this feeling that led to a conversation which I had with Alex Fryer, Apuldram's Supported Living manager last year, a conversation in which we discovered a common wish to look for alternatives.

What we came up with - and the observant readers of Apuldram's Newsletter may well have noticed this over the past year - is not a perfect solution, what could be? It is, however, a 'next step' inasmuch as it recognises the individuality and self-determination of each of the members of the group to which it refers. The words we lighted upon are 'TRAINEES' and 'TENANTS'.

Trainees picks up on the fact that Apuldram is, to quote all of our publicity, a 'Horticultural and Craft *Training Centre*...'; it also gives a proper status to those who choose Apuldram as a learning and training centre for part of their lives. For some time now there has been a great emphasis on empowering adults with learning disability to make their own decisions, sometimes with appropriate support to do so.

Tenants gives proper recognition to those for whom we provide Independent Living support, whether in houses we own or manage on behalf of other owners; they *are* the tenants of their homes and the word recognises that status.

We have been road-testing these words for a while and have not found a situation where they jar. We *have* found many situations where they are clearly and demonstrably more accurate than previous terminology.

So, **tenants** and **trainees**, it is now agreed, are the accepted words to be used. It'll take a bit of getting used to for some people, we know that. Alex and I have been using them for many months and so we've had the opportunity to get used to them. We're confident that you will, too.

Laura's Zumba

Every Wednesday Laura Herniman can be found throwing some impressive shapes at her Zumba class at Westgate, which she loves. "I enjoy it very much. It's the pop music I like and the moves. When I first started it was quite hard but now I know the moves. And I feel fitter doing it," she says. Laura (27) goes to the gym there too on a Wednesday. Go girl!

SG



Apologies for the quality of this photo but Laura was moving around so much and so fast that I found it impossible to get a sharp picture as well as 'cropping out' the other participants in the original.

PR

A day in the life of...

Pam Porter

Apuldram's office manager/administrator

Another in our regular slot which looks at a typical working day of one of our staff. As told to Sue Gilson:

Pam is now in her 11th year at Apuldram. She came here from an office manager's role at a horticultural centre, looking for something different. There was no computer or even a typewriter when she arrived and everything was done by hand in ledgers. She has seen Apuldram's trainees and tenants grow from 26 to 60 and members of staff from 8 to 14. The site has developed too and Pam has overseen the building of Common Lodge, the erection of the biggest greenhouse, a new potting shed and more.



8.30am: I unlock the filing cabinets and reconcile the takings from the previous day. Make a coffee, check emails, deal with post. The trainees queue up and pay for their drinks. I deal with staff queries – is yoga on, is music on, is drama on, that sort of thing. There are a lot of phone calls, and a footfall of about 20 people coming in and out of the office. It's pretty constant in the morning for the first hour or so. I work through my coffee break. I always have my phone in my pocket in case of calls.



1-2pm: Lunch, which is quite often interrupted by more phone calls!



On a Friday the trainees get their money so there are 20 odd people to pay.



2pm: I catch up on all the jobs I haven't done in the morning. The banking, any other monies that have come in.



4pm: I should leave at 4pm but it's usually after that!

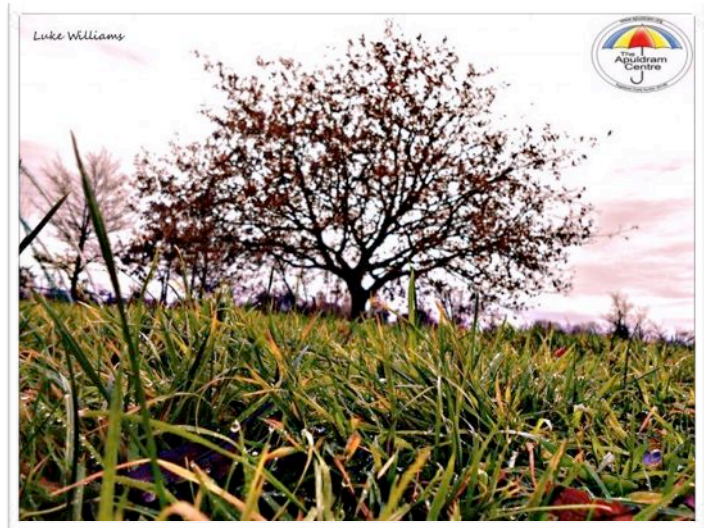
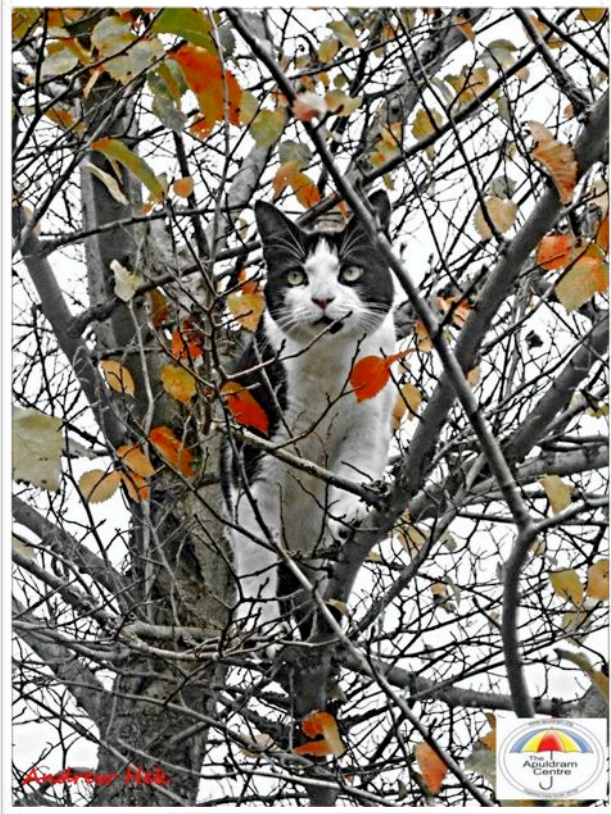


Every day is different and you never know what it's going to hold. There are so many little things that touch you too. When I lost my mum two years ago, so many of the trainees were tender and caring. If you have been on holiday or ill, they tell you they've missed you. It is a good crowd we have here. The day holds challenges but we have a lot of laughs and fun.



Apuldram Photography has been set up on the apuldram.org website to showcase the world and local surroundings through our trainees' eyes. They have been encouraged to take photographs when out on trips and of the local area. They can then edit their photos themselves with a little help from a staff member to create a unique masterpiece.

Clockwise from left: George Fripp, Emma Harris, Luke Williams, Emma Harris, Alka Patel and Andrew Hek



It's now very simple to make a donation to Apuldram; just follow this link: www.apuldram.org/support-us/.