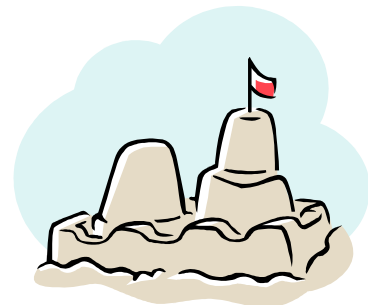
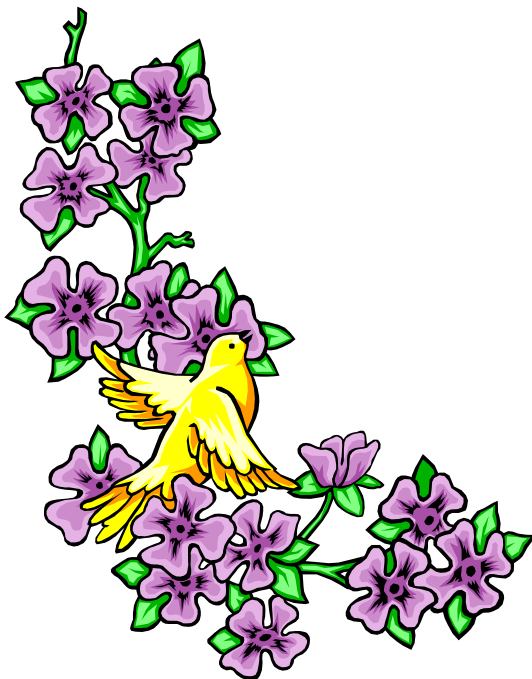


autism London

*providing support for those affected by autism
and Asperger's syndrome*

Bulletin

June-July 2006



autism london

Bi-Monthly Bulletin

1st Floor, 602 Chigwell Road
Woodford Bridge Essex, IG8 8AA

(Please note that we are unable to accept any visitors or personal callers to the offices without an appointment)

HelpLine

0845 603 7954

Fax:

020 8504 5205

Email:

info@autismlondon.org.uk

Website:

www.autismlondon.org.uk

In this June - July 2006 issue...

- Autism London News
- Support Services Update
- News from Salisbury Road
- Helpline Service Update
- Supporter's Forum
- Book Reviews by Louis Baworowski
- Notices & Conferences
- Supporters Subscription Renewal Form 2nd Reminder enclosed

Contributors:

Gordon Pownall, Dee King, Ethney Anderson, Nurun Ahmed, Monica Brewster, Desmond Meldrum, David Shamish, Sarabjit Singh, Louis Baworowski and Tanya Camilleri.

We would welcome any feedback related to information printed in this publication.

The views and opinions expressed in Autism London's bulletin are not necessarily those of the organisation.

Dear Member,

As you know the past two months have been a period where change has been on the horizon and very much chatted about. Our ALAG group meeting recently looked at how we cope with change and how we can make positive differences to get positive outcomes. I hope we are successful with an outcome we are seeking and this is the bid we have made to the Big Lottery Fund to support our work, as well as fund some new opportunities we hope to offer people with ASD and Aspergers and of course families and friends and professionals.

If we are successful, we will be able to maintain our existing community services as well as reach other people who may benefit from them, including people from minority communities who may be currently excluded from our services because they lack awareness of what we can offer, the resources to gain access to our services or need support to be provided in a range of languages.

Some ideas we have include providing a new more accessible e-mail and helpline service, providing more support groups and advocacy services in new locations in more London Boroughs, improve access by excluded individuals in hard to reach communities, expanding the operational hours of the Autism HelpLine service, offering evening and weekend services to callers across the Country as well as recruiting and training volunteers, including people with Autism / Aspergers, to provide helpline, advocacy, education and support services in their own communities.

All very exciting, as is the move to our new offices to Woodford Bridge near Ilford. Our lease at Floral Place ends on 30 June 2006 and as such, we needed to find a location that meets the needs of the staff team as well as making sure that we get the best value for the limited money we have available. Our new offices are really well suited to our needs and we move in on 5 July.

ALAG meetings will still take place in Islington. Dee and Ethney have found a great location near to Floral Place and all the details are in bulletin as well as on our website. We will also look during the next months at demand for ALAG groups in areas other than Islington as well. This will depend upon demand as well as funding – more news as soon as we know anything further.

For the next week or so, we will be settling in and getting things sorted out so if you need to get in touch, email is best (if you have access to email), as we need to get our telephone lines up and running before we can take incoming calls. This should be completed by 10 July 2006 at the very latest and all of our contact details will be on the website as soon as they are confirmed.

Our telephone HelpLine number will change as well. It will be [0845 603 7954](tel:08456037954). Our old telephone number will be diverted to the new offices or will have a message with the new number on it for a short while as well so please pass on this number to anyone you know and bear in mind it may be a week or so before lines are connected.

So here's to our new offices...do give us a little time to get everything unpacked and plugged in and we hope to be offering our full range of services from 10 July 2006. My very best wishes to each of you,

Gordon...

Gordon Pownall
Senior Manager East London

Hi to all our valued supporters,

As some of you may be aware, I am due to go on maternity leave in June, so this will be my last note to you all! I will miss the team and most of all I will miss working for Autism London.

I have enjoyed my time here and being involved with work for people affected with Autism and Asperger's. I hope that as members, will continue with your much appreciated support, in order for us to provide a ongoing service and to improve the service which will benefit you all.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you all for your support and kind donations we have received in the past year, please do keep it up.

So it's a heart felt goodbye from me for now and I will keep you all posted on the arrival of the little one!

Nurun Ahmed
Administrator

Support Service Update

A big hello to all Autism London Supporters,

I hope everyone has been enjoying the good weather we have had recently, and perhaps some of you will be looking forward to summer holidays.

This is a time of very positive change for us all as we are now going to be moving to our new location in East London. We know that this may be a little unsettling for some of you, but our services will be resumed as soon as we are settled in. ALAG continues in our new venue even nearer to Highbury and Islington Tube Station so we'll see you there on the 4th of July.

Our Helpline Support Officer Tanya is also moving on, and we wish her all the best for her future and good luck for herself and her family.

This is Dee signing off till next time.

Dee King

Support Officer

Dear Members,

By the time this bulletin reaches you, we will be closing the doors at Floral Place and saying goodbye to that tranquil little corner of Islington, tucked away from the hustle and bustle of a busy part of London. We are excited by our move as well as continuing to provide support and advocacy services to our service users from our new offices in Woodford Bridge. Once we have settled into our new premises, we will inform you about our plans for Family Support meetings and other new services which will hopefully be available and of course building upon our successes in Islington. We are also working closely with Salisbury Road to develop Person Centred Plans for those who live there so it is an exciting time there as well...

I recently attended a meeting at the newly refurbished Lough Road Centre where Dame Denise Platt, who Chairs the Commission for Social Care Inspection, visited the centre to meet and chat with parents of service users. This event highlighted the plans for new disability services and improvements in Islington. We look forward to sharing more information with you as we receive it, as well as continuing to signpost and support parents and professionals to ensure access to support services wherever in London you may live.

So here's to pastures new and an exciting time for all of us. Take care for now and whatever you do, enjoy the lovely weather!!

Ethney Anderson

Support Officer

News from Autism London's Residential Home at Salisbury Road

Things are still going well here at the Residential Services. Re-decoration of the communal areas is in progress.

Service users continue to attend their weekly activities such as college and community based activities. In house activities are also on going, for example, aromatherapy, cooking with service users, and art. Autism London are helping us develop Person Centred Plans for those who live here as well.

Some service users recently had a night at the Beautiful Octopus Club in North London. This was an enjoyable night for them. Three of our residents will be taking a week break in May with the support of three staff. The staff team remains the same and staff are still working on their NVQ's.

That's all for now from us here at the Residential Services.

Thank you all for your continuing support.

Monica Brewster

Deputy Manager



Helpline Service Update

Dear Reader,

A big thank you to everyone who have completed their feedback survey forms as well as all membership renewal forms. We appreciate your response in doing so, and big hello to both our subscribers and our new members to Autism London.

N.B If you have not yet renewed, you should find a reminder with this bulletin. Please note we can only continue to include paid-up members on our bulletin mailing list. If you have paid your subscription for this year (06/07) please discard the form.

I recently attending a talk by Mr Paul Shattock, MRPharmS DipAgVetPharm O.B.E. held at Centre 404, the topic ***Biomedical Approaches To Autism***, was well attended by a audience of both parents and professionals.

Paul is currently director of the Autism Research Unit and also a father of 32 year old son with Autism. He spoke about the multitude of diseases and disorders, which can afflict mankind, autism is one of the very few which are still defined in terms of the symptoms, which are observed. Thus it remains a "syndrome" with no clear explanation for its causation or existence at all. Over the years, there have been many attempts to determine the underlying causes but, as yet, there are no universally accepted explanations. Psychiatrists, psychologists, geneticists, anatomists and electro-physiologists and other groups have provided explanations based upon their own understanding. Each of these groups has provided valuable insights but an intellectually satisfactory explanation remains tantalisingly out of reach.

If you are interested in finding out further information about the Autism Research Unit please go to <http://osiris.sunderland.ac.uk/autism/index.html> or contact the unit on: 0191 510 8922

A Fond Farewell

I would like to take this opportunity to say goodbye to you all. I have been working at Autism London for the past four years and have enjoyed every minute of it. My role as the HelpLine Officer has made me more aware of the disorder and also helped me as a parent of a child with ASD to be able to cope and understand the spectrum more, even though there is still much to learn. As Autism London moves to new offices, I wish the organisation all the very best success for the future – I know some exciting plans are in progress including a bid for Lottery Funding so my fingers are crossed...!

I have enjoyed working with all the service users, organisations and services who have been able to assist in helping those who have come into contact with Autism London. I would also to thank me colleagues for putting up with me!

May I wish you all the very best for the future in whatever you strive to do, thank you so much for making my job satisfying, rewarding and most of all a pleasure in doing so. With my very best wishes for success...

Tanya

Tanya Camilleri

Help Line Support Officer

Family Support Meetings

Family Support Group meetings have been put on hold for a little while. We will be announcing our new plans for Family Support Group meetings in August.

The ALAG meetings will continue on the first Tuesday of each month at a new venue in Islington.

The address is:

Highbury Baptist Church

40a Highbury Place

London N5 1QL

Please see flyer enclosed for further details. Directions to the venue are on the reverse.

Supporters' Forum

THE FAMILY OUTING

A group of people is preparing for an outing.

The group consists of various members of a family with friends, one member (Jack) of this group having Asperger's syndrome. This is something which many of his companions are unaware of.

In fact they are unaware of the existence of the condition.

Suddenly one of the ladies in the group (Mrs Brown) realises, as she is about to leave the house, that she has left her handbag in one of the upstairs bedrooms.

It so happens that Jack (the person with Asperger's syndrome) is standing near her when she makes this discovery.

Below is the dialogue between Mrs Brown and Jack.

Mrs Brown: *Jack, would you please go upstairs and see if my handbag is in the bedroom*

Jack runs up to the bedroom where he sees the bag but does not bring it down

Mrs Brown: *did you find it then?*

Jack: *yes*

Mrs Brown: *where is it then?*

Jack: *in the bedroom*

Mrs Brown: *why didn't you bring it down?*

Jack: *you didn't ask me to*

Desmond Meldrum

Since I was diagnosed with Asperger's syndrome and other related conditions. I have been active in various autism projects. For example I have always offered my support to various autism charities. I spoke at the institute of psychiatry in London about living with Asperger's syndrome. I helped contribute to a leaflet entitled what Asperger's syndrome means to us for the national autistic society. I have sat in on interview panels for Autism London and joined various projects concerning minority communities affected by autism spectrum conditions.

Due to having a autism spectrum condition and having trained as a social worker. I am in a good position to advice other service users about their welfare rights and anything to do with social services. I have always support those who live with autism.

Recently I got chosen for a Asperger's syndrome high achievers award by the NAS.

I feel it is important to highlight despite living with AS we can go onto contribute positively to society. My dream is that one day all social services departments will offer Asperger's syndrome specific services to us. I shall work towards that dream as recently in the press there was a case where an mother of an autistic or fragile syndrome X child committed suicide with her son. I hope such a tragedy will never happen again and that social services and health professionals start to take our needs more seriously instead of hiding behind excuses.

By Sarabjit Singh

Supporters' Forum

Jewish perspective on Asperger's Syndrome

I was born on March 12th 1957 in Surrey and lived there until 1994. My grandparents brought me up for the first five years of my life. They had come to England with my mother (then 13 years old) from Austria in February 1939 to escape Hitler. My mother gave me to my grandparents, as she was busy teaching German at a Grammar School. They all spoke German to each other but I never picked it up. English is the only language I can speak.

My grandparents died over twenty years ago. My father died suddenly on Sunday, March 26th 2006 aged 85 of a heart attack. I had seen him the day before when I visited my parents in their house in Surrey. I had thought of delaying the visit to my parents and going to Synagogue that Saturday instead, it is very lucky I did not delay my visit to my parents. He was born in Manchester in September 1920.

I was brought up on stories about the Holocaust. My grandfather had spent three months in Dachau Concentration camp before he came to England. I also had a cousin called Eric whom I visited in West Park Hospital when I was small. He had a bad time in Austria and broke down in England in May 1940 and landed in a mental hospital and stayed there until he died in 1983 aged 68. Perhaps if he could have had a settled life in Austria with his family he might not have developed schizophrenia. Hearing those stories about the Holocaust and visiting Eric must have affected me. At school children told me if I did not become Christian I would go to hell. In my last school the boys kept referring to our Head Master as Jew Boy although he was not Jewish. All this also affected me to a certain extent.

In 1989 I started employment training and they urged me to keep secret the fact I was Jewish to avoid problems with the other trainees. I refused; as for one thing it was necessary to explain why I could not eat pork. I was nearly chucked out of the scheme and I felt no one should have given me useless advice or orders to keep the fact I was not of English descent. People in the street sometimes know I am Jewish, and I have a Jewish surname so I could not keep it secret even if I wanted to. In the end they gave me New Year Cards and on the last day they teased me for coming in on Jewish New Year's day. People do not seem to understand that being Jewish is not just a religion. In fact some people feel Jewish who keep nothing or even go to church.

In January 1994 I moved to a Jewish Group Home in Willesden Green where from day one I was able to go to many Jewish meetings advertised in the Jewish Chronicle. In 1996 I moved to my own flat near Golders Green and as well as Jewish activities I have two Jewish Day Centres to attend, I also enjoy composing Jewish Poems and reading them out and I have had Jewish articles and a poem published on the Autism London Web Site. I also belong to a Reform Synagogue.

In 2001 I took part in research at the Maudsley. The researchers did not seem to think my back ground relevant and quoted an example of someone who also has Asperger's Syndrome and is not Jewish. I know all that but I do not know what stress he had when he was a child. I rang up the next day the head researcher said that no child would have liked my background whether they had Asperger's Syndrome or not.

I say that, although it did not cause my Asperger's Syndrome it must have made my symptoms worse, probably because I found my life situation difficult to cope with. It is true that all those activities, which I do in the Jewish Community help me.

I am also a frequent visitor to the National Autistic Society, Autism London, amongst other places. I do not say that these activities are a complete solution to my problems.

(I have not worked for years which is another subject.)

I think it is important to take backgrounds into account in connection with Asperger's Syndrome.

David Shamash

BOOKS

By Louis Baworowski

LOUIS BAWOROWSKI'S career has included social work, academic research and journalism. For several years, he also worked as a volunteer writer for the National Autistic Society, preparing abstracts (summaries) of scientific and general articles on ASD for the Society's database. He is the father of Osian, a 24 year-old with autism. The aim of this regular column is to cover works of interest to readers of *Autism London Bulletin* irrespective of publication date. Where non UK-English spellings appear in titles, names or quotations, it is due to the spellings employed in the relevant sources.

Temple Grandin and Catherine Johnson, *Animals in Translation: Using the Mysteries of Autism to Decode Animal Behaviour* (London: Bloomsbury Publishing Plc, 2005 ISBN 0-7475-6668-2 Hdbck. edtn.

Some readers will remember that I reviewed Temple Grandin's *Emergence Labeled Autistic* in a previous issue (Aug-Sept 2002). I will leave it to others to argue about whether she is best regarded as someone with high-functioning autism or as having Asperger syndrome. What is clear, is that hers is far more than a merely personal success story. With a deep understanding and love of animals, and an attitude which does not distance herself from her animal subjects, she is an associate professor of animal science at Colorado State University, and one of the world's foremost experts in livestock handling. This has taken her into places which most people prefer not to even have to think about: slaughterhouses. Through her design of handling facilities and animal welfare control procedures, she has reduced the stress and suffering of farm animals in the meat industry. Half the cattle in the United States and Canada are handled in systems she has designed. (p. 7)

Animals in Translation draws on 40 years spent in the company and study of animals, especially farm and domesticated animals such as cattle, pigs, horses and dogs. It is a highly readable work, written in a pleasing and straightforward style. Although it is primarily about animals, it does make connections between the ways that animals perceive and experience reality and the abilities and disabilities of autistic people, including autistic savants. Dr. Grandin states that her autism "made school and social life hard, but it made animals easy" (p. 1). She feels she relates to prey animals like cattle as strongly as she does because of her own emotional makeup (p. 191). She believes that animals and autistic people have mostly simple emotions, which is why people with autism are described as innocent (p. 89). Both persons with autism and animals have "hyper-fear systems" and cannot "talk themselves out of fear." (ps. 193-4).

Animals are "capable and communicative beings" and cleverer than we given them credit for (ps. 283 and 7). They have, "astonishing abilities to perceive things...[and] their sensory worlds are so much richer than ours"(p. 57). Some have special or unexpected talents – the Clark's nutcracker, for instance, a type of crow, can bury as many as 30,000 pine seeds in an area of 200 square miles in the autumn and find over 90 percent of them during the winter (p. 263). We are told about a parrot which asked questions; prairie dog colonies using a communication system that includes nouns, verbs and adjectives; and a white-breasted wood wren singing the opening notes of the composer's famous Fifth Symphony! (ps. 251, 273 and 279)

But animals, like people with autism, are detail oriented and not good at abstracting and generalising. We are given the example of an autistic boy who, having learnt how to spread butter on his toast, was stumped when faced with peanut butter (p. 295). Hyper-specificity is a key characteristic that animals and autistic people have in common (ps. 31, 33 and 303). Normal people don't become conscious of what they are looking at until after the brain has composed the sensory bits into wholes. People with autism are "much more focused on details than on whole objects" and have privileged access to lower, "rawer" levels of information (ps. 33 and 299). Like animals, they "don't see their *ideas* of things; they see the actual things themselves" (p. 30, authors' italics). In reversal of a popular notion, Dr. Grandin agrees with the psychologist Allan Snyder that it is normal and not autistic people who are, "living inside their heads. Autistic people are experiencing the actual world more directly and accurately." (p. 300)

Dr. Grandin considers normal people to be too “abstractified” (p. 27, her term). Rejecting “abstractification”, her own approach has been to literally place herself in the position of animals when necessary. By actually getting inside the places through which livestock pass in abattoirs and even taking photographs there, she has been able to notice and eliminate the details that can frighten animals and make them balk, such as shadows or chains (p. 19). To obtain the viewpoint of pigs at a particular spot through which they had been reluctant to pass, she got down on her hands and knees and noticed, “lots of tiny, bright reflections glancing off the wet floor” (p. 34). The problem was solved by simply moving the overhead lights, resulting in the place in question ceasing to be site of special fear.

Charlotte Moore, *George and Sam* (London: Viking, an imprint of Penguin Books, 2004) ISBN 0-670-91441-X

The subjects of this story are both on the autistic spectrum and their mother, Charlotte Moore, is an established author and former *Guardian* columnist. Unsurprisingly, therefore, *George and Sam* is an engaging work, giving the reader a very good impression of the children’s relatively privileged life at their family’s Sussex farmhouse. At the time of the book’s completion, the boys were aged around 13 and 11 respectively. This is an unusually upbeat and laid-back account – indulgent, at times humorous, and almost wholly lacking in any sense of oppression or torment. Following a description of an episode in which Sam had wandered or run off, we are blithely informed that police helicopters, “have been called out on several occasions” (p. 132). On the subject of George’s eating habits, the mother cites an entry in his home-school book: “G. has eaten nothing except a small tube of Parma Violets.” (p. 160).

In part, the book is a parent’s heartfelt tribute to autistic children in general and her own sons in particular: “... autistic children... often look younger than they are; perhaps their faces, never distorted by the base emotions such as...malice and guile, retain that unclouded purity that is so attractive in babies... [their] angelic faces perfectly express their innocence and strange integrity. I find the boys’ looks a huge compensation and solace. I never tire of gazing at them... Their behaviour often leaves much to be desired, their appearance never does...it’s interesting – if frustrating – to try and work out the reasons behind their oddities...If you have to have a child with a disability, at least autism is an interesting one...Some people take the you-poor-thing-it-must-be-so-hard-for-you approach, and while I appreciate their concern I respond much more favourably to people who take an interest in George and Sam, who praise them, find them funny, interesting and beautiful, as I do.” (ps. 238, 240-1 and 247)

Notwithstanding my good opinion of this book, I do not regard it (or for that matter *Animals in Translation* either) as being wholly free of questionable generalisations. Charlotte Moore informs us that with autism one cannot look for reciprocity (p. 235). This view is too much of a caricature. It is certainly not true of all those with a diagnosis of autism, at all stages of their development. Nor, for that matter, is it safe to assume that having been diagnosed and having the condition is always the same thing. Many people who have been labelled as autistic do not accord with stereotypes of “autistic aloneness.” I am reminded, for instance of Rachel Tams’s research, in which parents perceived their autistic children as more affectionate and less withdrawn than typically portrayed: “Parents’ Perceptions of Autism: A Qualitative Study,” in J. Richer and S. Coates, *Autism: The Search for Coherence* (London: Jessica Kingsley, 2001). Moore’s opinion on reciprocity in autism may be excessively influenced by her experience of her own children – despite the fact that they are still young with every chance of progress.

Notices & Conferences

Research – NAS

The National Autistic Society are doing research into people with Autism coming from Ethnic Back grounds. Development Officer Prithvi Perapa of the BME project is conducting this research. For further information contact Prithvi Perapa on: 0207 704 3806

Autism Research Centre

The Autism Research Centre, Cambridge is hosting a fundraising concert and art exhibition entitled 'Autism: Art and Music' to take place on 17th September 2006 at West Road Concert Hall, Cambridge. This concert of music, and exhibition and auction of visual art consists of work solely by people on the autistic spectrum.

For further information contact Sally on: 01234 328 330 or email sally@arc-conference.com web site details: <http://www.arc-conference.com>

Autism Speaks

Details: Following on from last year's storming success, on the 2nd of July Autism Speaks (formerly NAAR UK) will be hosting its second sponsored walk in The Great Park, Windsor.

For more information please contact: Lyn Hart on 01491 412 311 or email:

Lynn.hart@autismspeaks.org.uk

Research Study

Details: I am currently looking for people to participate in a study I am carrying out at Goldsmiths College, University of London. The study is looking at social perception in children and adults with autism. We are looking how these skills develop and how they are used. Participants need to fall into the category of high-functioning autism or Asperger's and be seven-years-old or over. I would like to hear from anyone in the UK and especially those living in or near London.

All participants will receive a fee for their help. If you are interested I would be happy to answer any questions you may have, you can contact me at: Steven Stagg MSc, Psychology Department, Goldsmith College, New Cross, London, SE14 6NW, Tel: 020 7919 7171 ext 4389 or email: S.Stagg@gold.ac.uk

HARINGEY AUTISM @ SOMERFORD GROVE ADVENTURE PLAYGROUND

Details: Two hours of autism friendly play in a brand new adventure playground with large climbing structures, sand, water and indoor play, bikes, computers, soft play and art.

This is a play session organised for families who have a child with autism or Asperger's. There will be a number of play workers and volunteers on site but parent/carers must stay on site and are responsible for their children while at the playground - you may bring your other children too.

We hope that this will be a really special time that we can make enjoyable not just for our children but parents and siblings too.

For more information about the clubs please contact: Julia Wilkins on 0208 889 8422

Dance/Movement Therapy

Details: A weekly class at Expressions studio in North London called Hop Step Jump.

The class is a dance and movement therapy session for children with autism.

For more information about the clubs please contact Erin McMahon on: 07968 778 757 or email: emcmahon@lambeth.gov.uk

Notices & Conferences

Keen London

Details: Providing free sports and recreational activities for young people with special needs in the Islington and Camden area.

For more information contact Abigail Fisher: 0207 354 2431

Hyperactive Children's Support Group - Workshop

Details: Autism: A Nutritional Approach with Research and Insight.

For information contact: Nick Giovannelli on 0208 544 1100 or email: workshophacsg@aol.com

Autescape 2006

Details: Autescape is a retreat-type conference organized for and run by autistic people. After the well reported success of last years event we are repeating the conference at the same popular venue. Autescape is a conference that really turns the tables on the usual autism conferences!

For more information email: autescape@gmail.com or visit the website: www.autescape.org

Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) and Bullying

Details: We are inviting you to take part in a study of bullying in school. We are an NHS service that specialises in the diagnosis and treatment of children with ASD, which includes Autism and Asperger's syndrome and related disorders of social behaviour and communication.

The programme will run for 10 consecutive weeks and each session will last 2 hours including a break. The content of the programme will focus on pro-social and coping strategies for bullying. We will use discussion, modelling and role-play. We would like to invite parents to become involved in supporting their children and helping them to practise some of the strategies.

For more information contact the Related Disorders Team at the Michael Rutter Centre, Maudsley Hospital, Jenny Ronayne on: 020 7919 2535

NAS Regional Convention

Details: The Convention offers an annual opportunity for parents, service providers, voluntary organisations and professionals who work or care for people with autism to share good practice.

The focus this year is on regional education and leisure services for young people with high functioning autism and those with Asperger's syndrome.

For information contact: Judy Lynch on 020 7704 3800 or email: judy.lynch@nas.org.uk

Battersea park Fun Day

Details: Organised by the Variety Club, will be on 13th July.

If you want to join in this extravaganza contact Centre 404 Family Team on: 0207 697 1325

Hop, Skip and Jump

Details: Dance class for autistic children 5-12 years old, every Thursday 5pm-6pm at Jackson Lane Archway.

For information contact Nevin Penny on: 0207 281 7712

Many thanks to all those who contributed to this bulletin

ASPITALK

By Desmond Meldrum, an adult who has recently been diagnosed with the condition

Desmond Meldrum is available to give talks on his personal experiences as well as general advice in coping with Asperger's syndrome to organisations and support groups for a negotiated price on application.

Desmond has over three years experience in communicating to groups and organisations on this subject and has also written a book published through Autism London which shares his observations and experiences of the condition.

Excerpt from book

'I started developing strange habits such as standing in the playground with my head cocked sideways and my mouth wide open staring into space, thus attracting even more attention. I also used to jump about in a peculiar manner while indulging in a fantasy world of my own'

Since 1993, Desmond also has been an active volunteer in the field, providing much valued support to the work of Autism London and on 2001 became a member of Autism London's management committee.

For more information please contact Desmond Meldrum at Autism London, email :- desmond@autismlondon.org.uk