

Produced by and for people with Asperger syndrome

# Asperger *united*

Edition 27 July 2001

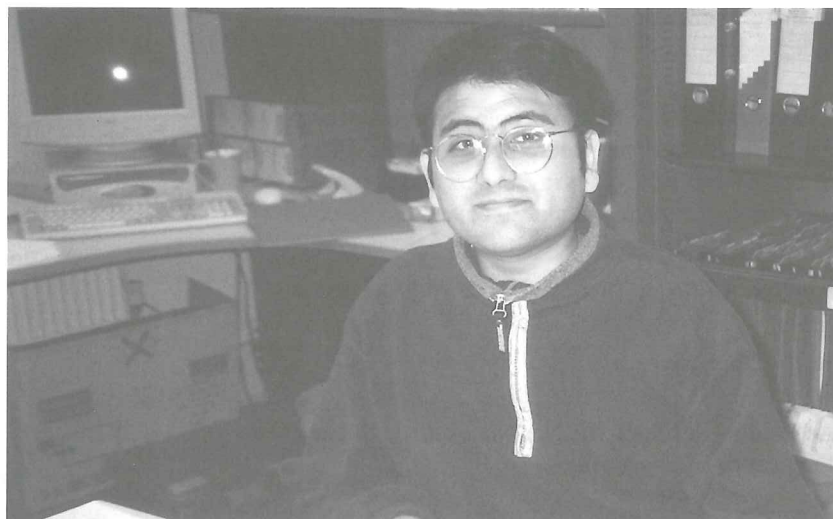
**M**y name is Jason Patel and I live in London. I have Asperger syndrome but it took a very long time before anyone came up with why I didn't seem to be like everyone else at my school.

More than anyone, my mum has been the key to getting me to where I am today. It was her sheer determination and hard work and constant drive that finally led to the correct diagnosis of why I didn't seem to fit in.

I am 28 years old now and live in East Ham, but it was just two years ago on 3 February 1999 that I was finally referred to Elliot House for a full one day assessment and where they immediately concluded that I had Asperger syndrome. Until then, I had been to a series of doctors and specialists but no-one had the answer.

But my mum never gave up, in spite of the fact that she went through a divorce when I was just four years old. She took me to endless private doctors and specialists and finally I got referred to Dr Reddy at my local hospital who referred me on to Elliot House. This was the beginning of finding out why I didn't start to talk as early as other babies and why at secondary school, even though I managed to study well, I was bullied.

I even went to Newham College of Further Education and earned a whole list of qualifications including a City & Guilds Communication Skills,



Word Power Foundation Level and a BTEC Foundation course, but I still didn't fit in.

The bullying started again at college and then finally, once everyone realised that the cause was my Asperger syndrome, I started to link up with all the right organisations who could really support me.

“ I had been to a series of doctors and specialists but no-one had the answer ”

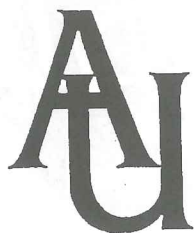
Back in 1991 I went for an assessment at the Job Centre, because they realised I might have learning difficulties. I was referred to Ellingham

Employment Service, based in Leyton, and through Ellingham I got work experience at Mencap. They also linked me up with a rehabilitation centre called Shaw Trust which managed to get me paid work at a travel agency called Flight Seekers – it was a great experience.

My qualifications have helped me to get jobs, but also the fact that I have done a lot of voluntary work. It's important to be proactive. I am currently working two days per week at the NAS HQ. I work with the Helpline team, doing general office duties and dispatching information packs and membership forms to people who call up and request them. I work from 10.30am to 2pm with a 45 minute tube journey in from East Ham, and enjoy the work immensely. I found this position by looking at the NAS website – I simply clicked

*continued on back page*





*Asperger United* is a self-help newsletter run by and for people with Asperger syndrome. The newsletter aims to put people with the condition in touch with each other and to share information so that they can lead more independent lives.

*Asperger United* is free to people in the UK with a diagnosis of Asperger syndrome. We ask for a contribution of £6 per year from overseas readers and £10 from professionals and institutions to cover postage costs.

*Asperger United* is produced by an editorial group.

**Editor** John Joyce

**Additional support** The National Autistic Society's Publications Department

**Please send all correspondence and subscription requests to:**

Asperger United  
c/o The National Autistic Society  
393 City Road  
London EC1V 1NG  
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Fax: 020 7903 3767  
Email: [asp.utd@nas.org.uk](mailto:asp.utd@nas.org.uk)

**Subscribing to *Asperger United***

Tel: 020 7903 3543  
Fax: 020 7903 3767  
Email: [asp.utd@nas.org.uk](mailto:asp.utd@nas.org.uk)

All we need is your name and address and we will add you to the mailing list – free of charge to people with a diagnosis!

Thank you to George Cox who kindly produced the illustrations included in the Pen Pal Network section.  
Thank you to Graeme Lawson for producing the AU logo.

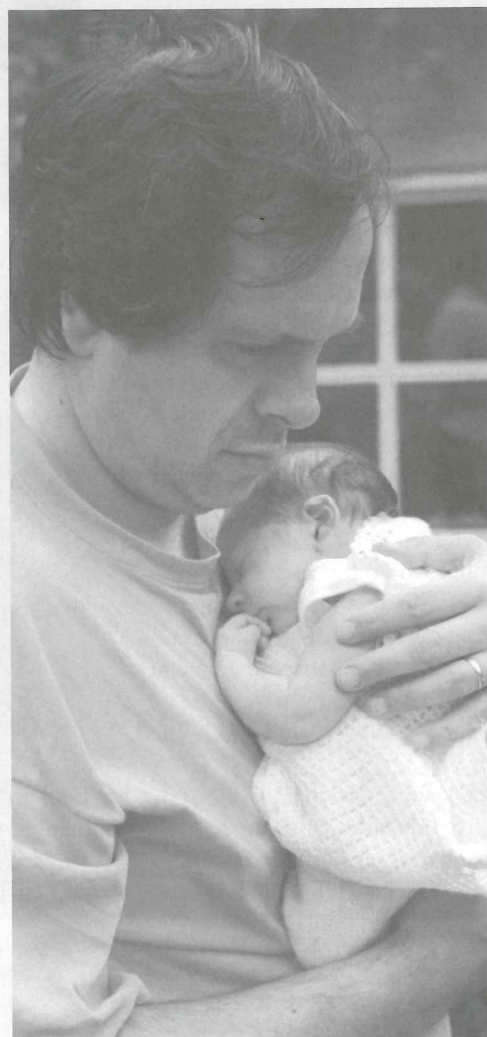
*Please note that the views expressed in Asperger United are not necessarily those of the editor, The National Autistic Society or those involved in the publication of the newsletter.*

## Baby news!

Our printer has become a dad!

Mike Dawson and his partner Deborah became the proud parents of Joseph, born 20 May 2001 and a whacking 9lb 2oz! Joseph has blue eyes, black hair and a lovely smile. He's a typical Taurus and sleeps like a log, which is good news for his proud mum and dad.

It also means that Mike will be able to make sure that *Asperger United* is printed and mailed out to the normal high standards!





Dear Readers

Greetings to you all. I hope you are all well and enjoying the summer and I also hope you all voted in the general and local elections held on 7 June.

Since our last edition I have had some unusual experiences. Firstly, I helped two charities by making house-to-house collections – Christian Aid and Amnesty International. We were donated money by about 40% of the houses visited.

During the elections, I assisted one of the candidates for a Sutton Council by-election in my ward. Sadly, he was unsuccessful, as was the same party's parliamentary candidate in Carshalton and Wallington here in Surrey, but the campaign was a worthwhile experience.

An even more interesting experience was the ordination of Kieran Conry as the new Roman Catholic Bishop of Arundel and Brighton, which I witnessed on 9 June in Arundel

Cathedral. The examination of the new bishop's faith was an unusual part of this ceremony, performed by his precursor, now Archbishop of Westminster, together with a number of other bishops.

As is evident from previous editions, Aspergerdom breeds talented writers, many of whom are poets of varying standards. In addition, we have many artists in other fields. To all of these and to the contributors to this edition go my thanks for providing the readers with such a varied diet. My job, together with Cathy at the NAS, is to make sure that this does not give you verbal indigestion. I hope I succeed!!

My thanks to all who have contributed to this edition and I hope you all have a happy holiday.

Your editor

John Joyce

## Contributions needed for the next edition of *Asperger United*

*Asperger United* will be published again in July. Please send in any stories, articles, poems, pen pal requests and letters.

### Contribute to your newsletter

We are always looking for new ideas and stories to fill the pages of the newsletter. We would like to hear any news, receive articles about yourselves, see your artwork and read your poems and short stories. If you can email us your articles we would be very grateful, see below for the address.

### Send all contributions to:

*Asperger United*  
c/o Publications Department  
The National Autistic Society  
393 City Road

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## Learning to write

I'm writing in response to Chris Rourke's piece in the last issue.

I'm 47 years old and was given a diagnosis of Asperger syndrome in April 2000 by Lorna Wing and Judith Gould. It didn't come as a great surprise, because I'd suspected it for a long time, but even so, knowing for definite has made a big difference to the way I feel about myself. For instance, it's a relief not to keep wasting energy trying to do things that are comparatively easy for many other people but a great struggle for me. Instead I can focus on what I'm good at and work to become even better.

" I have words running in my head a lot of the time but not the ones I need when I'm trying to puzzle something out "

One of the activities I enjoy most is writing, and I'm gradually coming to rely on it more as a way of conveying my thoughts.

Too often talking happens too fast for me – the words fall out of my mouth before I've had time to weigh them up and decide whether they're really what I want to say. Another difficulty is that many of my conversations with other people involve trying not to let them find out who I 'really' am, and somehow my own thoughts seem to hide themselves from me too.

I have words running in my head a lot of the time, but they're not necessarily the ones I need to hear when I'm trying to puzzle something out.

For all these reasons, and for the pleasure of using words for their own sake, I'm working to become a better writer.

For a long time I believed that writers were born talented, and that no amount of studying could impart a skill that a person didn't naturally possess. However, the experiences I've had with expanding and developing my own capabilities have changed that belief and a major factor in this change has been my discovery of the creative writing correspondence programme run by The Open College of the Arts (OCA).

" I first heard about the programme run by The Open College of Arts in 1994 through some handouts from a local adult education centre "

I first heard about this programme in 1994 through some handouts from a local adult education centre. The foundation course, 'Starting to Write' took me about nine months to complete and at the end my work was awarded an 'A' grade. My second course, 'The Experience of Poetry' also proved very rewarding and gave me the confidence to sign up for a week at a residential writing centre, as well as a term of 'master classes' with an established poet. Several of my poems have since been published after winning prizes in competitions.

Over the past three years I've gradually found myself moving from poetry into prose, and also from fiction into more openly personal writing. In December 2000 I enrolled on the OCA's autobiographical writing course 'Lifelines' and am finding it well up to the standards of the previous two. The OCA is an educational charity and is affiliated to the Open University.

All the tutors I've worked with have given me excellent support and the correspondence that I've had with them has been one of the most important aspects of my development as a writer. Much of the confidence that I have today has its roots in the fact that they gave me an opportunity to express myself and were able to listen and offer constructive feedback on my sometimes confused and apprehensive attempts to do so.

As well as creative writing the OCA offers a range of other arts courses, from painting to gardening to interior design. Anyone interested in finding out more can contact them at:

**The Open College of the Arts,  
Unit 1B,  
Redbrook Business Park, Wilthorpe Road,  
BARNSELEY, S75 1JN  
Tel: 0800 731 2116  
E-mail: [open.arts@ukonline.co.uk](mailto:open.arts@ukonline.co.uk)  
Website: [www.oa-uk.com](http://www.oa-uk.com)**

I'm a visual artist as well as a writer, and I'm hoping to produce some artwork for a future issue.

All good wishes.

**Angela Williams**



## The man in the middle of the book

**I**n November 1939 a man found himself in the middle of a book without knowing how he got there.

He had just gone to the library to borrow a book when suddenly, without warning, he found himself trapped inside one – a prisoner in the book he wanted to borrow. No matter how hard he tried, he couldn't escape from the book. 'Help! Get me out of this book!', he shouted.

The librarian heard his screams and tried to free him, but without success. He called the fire brigade who blew up the book and set the man free. But just a few seconds later a bookcase burst open and out came the books which then walked out. 'Quick! After the books!' cried the librarian to the fire brigade.

But the runaway books were too fast for the firemen. People fled from the library in fear of their lives as the escaped books came charging after them.

All of a sudden a savage library book snapped at a dog who had barked at it and then grabbed hold of him. The library book was stronger than it looked because it then threw the poor dog across the road. All of a sudden a great pile of words fell down on to the dog and one even pulled his tail. Passers-by saw the seven-letter word torturing the dog, tried to help and managed to rescue him. But then the words which, only a moment before, had showered on top of the dog, rose up and attacked the passers-by.

Nothing could stop the words who had escaped from a gigantic encyclopaedia as they threatened innocent passers-by. The shower of words went on for three days and three nights when finally they returned to their encyclopaedia – all except the big seven-letter word which had attacked the dog. It even swore at the escaped library books who charged after the mad word. It then got carried away with itself and shinned up a lamp-post. 'Get off!', cried the angry lamp-post, spitting light bulbs at the seven-letter word.

At that point the encyclopaedia spotted the runaway word and snapped it up.

Finally the army was called in. The soldiers handcuffed the books and brought them back to the library. The librarian then put barbed wire round the book cases to make sure the books never escaped again.

**Bernard Tisman**

## I, that special me

I, that special me who had to line his toy  
Soldiers in order of size,  
That man who would cry like a child if  
Shouted at in adult voice,  
I, that special me who sat for hours gazing at the  
Beautiful form of the primrose,  
Who would insist on being alone in the  
Company of others,  
I, that special me.

I, that special me who, when peers danced to pop  
Found solace in Vivaldi,  
Craving peace to hear my heart beat  
In the hectic world.  
I, that special me whose memory  
Surprised the teachers,  
Whose pen disobeyed the simplest of the hand's  
commands.  
I, that special me.

I, that special me, so quick to leave the  
Crowded room,  
The fear of cats that overwhelmed to the  
Point of despair,  
I, that special me, to whom the poem is a  
God-sent gift,  
Whose self-esteem grows as the  
Spelling mistakes vanish.  
I, that special me.

I, that special me, now the man who knew he was the  
Sore thumb child,  
No hiding from the day and all that comes  
Speeding past.  
I, that special me who can sit alone in fields  
Without the prying eyes,  
New, fresh me that has the reasons for his actions.  
I, that special me.

**Richard Longstaff**

## The next stage

Time has come,  
My problem for not being loud,  
Still a struggle for me  
But it has blown up  
From the time before.  
My mind is changing,  
Growing in confidence.  
I've always been quiet as a mouse  
But my problem  
Is vanishing in the distance.  
I have the power to overcome.  
I am an individual.

**Samantha Treadwell**



## letters to the editor

### **Asperger United too up-beat?**

May I, through your columns, express my concern about the way that *Asperger United* is developing.

A glance through your most recent issue shows a remarkably up-beat magazine, with lots of 'good news' articles, holiday advice and even a 'trivia quiz'. Any new reader may be forgiven for imagining that being an Asperger is indeed a jolly experience!

I'm not sure what the target audience is or indeed the overall purpose of the magazine. Where is the heavy-weight editorial campaigning for greater understanding of Asperger syndrome? Where are the articles by health specialists overviewing their latest research?

Not that there is anything fundamentally wrong with the magazine as it is. However, all froth and no substance sounds more like New Labour than the only organ available to Aspergers, old and young, who like myself are condemned to survival in today's confusing and fast-paced world.

Yours sincerely

**Andrew Weston-Webb**

*It is always interesting to hear readers' views, especially when they make us think about the content of Asperger United.*

*Could I point out that the NAS publishes a large number of serious books about autism and Asperger syndrome – 115 titles in our present catalogue, plus Autism Journal, an international research journal, so we are presenting the serious side of autism and Asperger syndrome elsewhere.*

*We get a lot of letters from readers and they are usually very enthusiastic about Asperger United, so it's good to get another point of view to get us thinking.*

*The last issue had a long article about bullying written by the victim so we can't agree that it was entirely up-beat.*

*Asperger United is written by people with AS for people with AS so the content is up to the readers!*  
**NAS Publications**

### **Contrived secrecy surrounding AU?**

Thank you for sending me copies of *Asperger United*. I would like to take the opportunity to say how much I regret the 'contrived secrecy' that surrounds the magazine.

I'd love to see *Asperger United* beefed up, with loads more content and glossy colour and put on the shelves of every newsagent in the country – not to mention overseas!

Until Aspies get their own society and start to represent themselves openly and publicly, we'll never make any headway in spreading the word about the condition.

I enclose a small donation for *Asperger United*.

Yours sincerely

**Elizabeth - Cornwall**

*Many thanks for your donation to Asperger United. We are sorry that you think that we create a 'contrived secrecy' round Asperger United. I assure you that this is not at all our intention. We too would like the magazine to be big and glossy and available in all newsagents but without more funding that is not possible.*

*At present Asperger United is sent free to anyone with a diagnosis of Asperger syndrome and our readership is just over 800. To expand would cost a huge amount and put the magazine beyond the pockets of most of our readers. The response from readers of Asperger United is generally very positive so I think that we are doing the right thing for people with Asperger syndrome within our extremely limited budget. The 'big glossy' magazine of The National Autistic Society is our membership magazine, Communication, which costs all readers £11 per year and institutions £27 – a huge difference!*  
**NAS Publications**

*Readers – what do you think about Asperger United? What do you think we should improve or change? Let us have your views!*

see page 8 for more letters





# How to reply to Pen Pals

- Please remember to let us know the full name (including surname) of the person who your letter is for.
- To contact a pen pal, please send your letter to *Asperger United*, c/o The National Autistic Society, 393 City Road, London EC1V 1NG.
- We will pass your letter onto the person you wish to contact. However, we cannot guarantee the person will reply as that is entirely their decision.

## Adrian from the East Midlands

I was diagnosed in March this year by Professor Digby Tantam and I've also had food allergy tests at the University of Sunderland Autism Research Unit. I'm now on a gluten, casein and IAG-free diet. I would like to contact any females (18+) in the East Midlands, Canada, America or New Zealand who are gluten and casein aware. My interests are films and reading (*Harry Potter!*), dogs, computer games and Christianity. I enjoy walking and holidays abroad. I want to make friends and will reply to all letters that I get.

## Kent calling

My name is Sheila, I'm 39 and have just been diagnosed with Asperger syndrome. I live in Kent and would like to hear from any males with Asperger syndrome from anywhere in the UK.

I like music, computers, sport, cinema, writing letters, walking, ten-pin bowling and going out with my friends for a drink.

I promise to write to anyone who writes to me!

## Marianne from Essex

My name is Marianne, I'm 13 and live in Essex – diagnosed with Asperger syndrome. I would like to have an e-mail pal who is diagnosed with AS or autism. I would like to hear especially from people who are from my area.

My interests are computers, science, drawing, origami and the internet.

Hope somebody can write to me soon!

see page 8 for more Pen Pal requests!

## Cameron from Canada

I'm in my early twenties and I've recently been diagnosed with Asperger syndrome. I want to correspond with people my own age – preferably by email.

## Richard of Manchester

I have just been diagnosed with Asperger syndrome and feel very isolated. I enjoy writing poetry, art, gardening, walking, films and reading.

I want to meet other people in the same position – please get in touch!

I look forward to hearing from you!

## Hello everyone!

My name is Gareth I am (15 - 7 + 3) 11 years old. I have mild Asperger (do they taste like hamburgers)? syndrome and attend Ysgol Plas Brondyffryn in Denbigh.

I study Shukokai Karate and like chemistry. I am also a fan of *Harry Potter*. I want a penpal because I want to contact people who think like me.



### Carla of Cardiff's pen pal appeal

I am now 17 years old and was diagnosed with autism at the age of 3 years. I would like to contact people with the same problem in Cardiff and Newport.

I would love to hear from anyone between 16-20, especially people who love karaoke! I enjoy singing, music, cinema, parties and driving.

I really liked my first copy of *Asperger United*. It cheered me up and gave me the opportunity to contact other people with autism.

### Richard of Bedford

I am now 34. When I was 29 the East Herts Clinic diagnosed me as having 'classic' symptoms of Asperger syndrome. I very much want to invite anyone over 18 with Asperger syndrome, depression or other problems to be my penpal! I want to be encouraged and to encourage others. I believe we must all work together to get the best possible provision for our different situations. I like clubbing, music and computer games.

I'd like to hear from anyone with Asperger syndrome in the 20-30 age group – especially single ladies!

I look forward to hearing from you!

### We need more replies!

Here at Asperger United we get a large number of requests for the Pen Pals network – so many that the original Pen Pals page has expanded and grown to a page and a half.

But not enough readers are contacting people who put in the requests and leaving lots of disappointed people!

So please – before you write to Asperger United asking for someone to write to you, read through other people's pen pal requests and see if there is anyone there you would like to write to!

NAS Publications

### Not alone anymore

Since reading Asperger United, I feel not alone, knowing there are loads of people out there who have the same problems as me. The magazine is really good.

Anna Levermore

### Fan letter!

I am diagnosed with Asperger syndrome and I was really impressed with Keith McKenzie's article about situational points in the last issue. These are exactly what I need as well!

I would be very grateful therefore for further details and a book, if Keith can be persuaded to write one.

Yours sincerely

George, Hull

*It's always good to have responses from readers, especially when they're as enthusiastic as this!*

NAS Publications

### The secret of inspiration

I really enjoy reading *Asperger United* and I want to support its positive culture.

I wish to congratulate George Cox on his beautiful artwork in *Asperger United*. I also have Asperger syndrome and, like George, I enjoy art – sketching and water colours. Yet I can only hope to aspire to George's beautiful sketches.

Please, George, write an article for *Asperger United* telling us the secrets of your skills!

With best wishes

From a long standing reader in Nottingham

*It is always interesting to hear readers' views, especially when they say such positive things about Asperger United. There is no problem about publishing your letter anonymously and the same goes for any reader who does not wish to have their full details published in Asperger United. However, we do ask that all articles are sent to us with full contact details so that we can get in touch with the author if necessary.*

NAS Publications

### Anna Cohen's letter about Prospects

I'd like to congratulate the young woman who appeared on the recent television programme, *First Sight*, about Prospects, the NAS supported employment service. She is obviously very talented in her art work, and particularly in her music.

She should go to a record company and try and sell the song I heard her play on her keyboard on *First Sight*. They're brilliant!



## Teenage confessions

**A**s a teenager, like most young men, I became very interested in girls, especially the beautiful Jean.

Being extremely immature at the time, I did some weird things to attract her attention. I took to visiting the shops as often as possible to catch a glimpse of her. I would stare at her until the shop keeper distracted me by gently tapping me on the arm. I would wait outside shops and give her a friendly smile as she walked past, or even the occasional wolf whistle.

If only I had had the front to talk to her then, half the battle would have been won!

I often asked my mother, 'What do I say next time I see that girl?'

She suggested 'Nice day' as an opening line – providing of course that the weather was nice.

One weekend, when I was home from boarding school, I saw Jean chatting to somebody along the high street. It was a young man and I got very upset, even before they briefly kissed. When she passed me afterwards, I again did not have the front to talk to her. Otherwise, with the right approach, I might well have persuaded her to come to the party that I was having that night.

That night at my party I spent a lot of time dancing with another very attractive young lady, Christine, but I'm afraid I squeezed her much too tightly and the poor girl must have been really frightened.

Again I was filled with jealousy when Christine and her boyfriend started snogging. I just felt that I wasn't good enough.

Shortly after leaving school in 1967, I tried other tactics to attract Jean's attention: ringing my bicycle bell and showing off a transparent bag with a picture of the Monkees, at the time a popular band.

One of the last attempts to win Jean involved walking towards the bus stop where she was standing. I hoped that she would board the same bus as me but Jean craftily got the one behind.

In conclusion, I'm very thankful that Jean and others tolerated my weird behaviour. If not, then writing this extract would have been extremely painful.

Michael Feldman

## Elephants

**A**s I left my house today, the elephants were singing in the trees. I tried to ignore them as I went past but one of them rolled a hedgehog into a ball and threw it at me to get my attention.

'What did you do that for?', I asked.

'Because', replied the elephant, 'I have a really good joke to tell you. Would you like to hear it?'

'Not now,' I replied. 'I've just heard sensational news.'

'Concerning what?', said the elephant.

'That the *Titanic* was sunk by a lettuce.'

'Rubbish,' replied the elephant.

'Oh yes it was. You see, the Captain complained to the Cook that his dinner was cold. The Cook, who was a strange man at the best of times, threw a lettuce at him, hitting him in the eye. So there was no-one to steer the ship. The rest of the crew decided to watch TV in the ballroom.'

'Rubbish,' interrupted the elephant. 'Televisions hadn't been invented'.

'That's not the point,' I replied. Eventually some of the passengers tried to steer the ship, but they went in the wrong direction, didn't see where they were going, hit something, and the ship sank. So you see, the *Titanic* was sunk by an iceberg, which is a type of lettuce.'

'Ha ha,' said the elephant, nearly falling out of his tree. 'I don't believe it. Listen to my story.'

'Well, hurry up because I must get home before my tortoise gets back from work.'

'Now listen. One day a lion woke up, got dressed and left his house feeling very cross. He met a giraffe and asked, 'Who's the king of the jungle?'

The giraffe said, 'You are, oh mighty lion'.

The lion was very happy and walked on. He met a zebra. 'Who's the king of the jungle?', he roared.

'You are, oh mighty lion', answered the zebra.

'Thank you', said the lion and he walked on asking other animals the same question, very fiercely to make sure he got the right answer. Eventually he met Colin, an African elephant and very impatient. He asked, 'Who's the king of the jungle?'

Colin gave a loud roar, picked up the lion in his trunk, whirled him around his head several times, bashed him against a tree trunk and threw him up into the tree.

The lion looked at the elephant and said, 'Don't get upset just because you don't know the answer'.

'Very funny,' Colin replied. 'Now how are you going to get down from that tree?'

'No problem', said the lion. 'I'll just sit on this leaf and wait until autumn'.

Stephen Gist

### A farewell from Greg Pasco, who until recently ran the London Contact Group

Dear Contact Members

I'm writing to let you know that I am leaving the NAS. However, the Contact Group will be continuing. Both Fleur and I will remain involved, and we will see you at various Contact Social and Political events. When the next Development Officer comes into place, he or she will be involved with the group, and will help to organise some of the activities.

In the meantime, all of the events listed in your last Contact Update will take place. Until further notice the social events will continue to take place in the Mitre Pub in Upper Street, Islington, on the second Wednesday of each month – we hope to see you there!

In September we will write to members again with further details of social and other events. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of you who have been involved with the Contact Group, and who have made our events so successful. I have enjoyed being part of this new venture, and have learnt much about the needs of adults with Asperger syndrome, not to mention all the historical facts picked up on the guided walks!

Meanwhile, to get in touch with the Contact Group, contact:

Judy Lynch

Tel: 020 7903 3557

Email: [jlynch@nas.org.uk](mailto:jlynch@nas.org.uk)

Best wishes

**Greg Pasco**

### An Asperger view on the environment

**I** am a 50 year old man who was diagnosed with Asperger syndrome four years ago. My Asperger syndrome has led to my thinking about environmental, political and social issues in a distinctive way. I will give some examples showing how the Asperger perspective is relevant to them.

Many of us with Asperger syndrome are very attached to things we love and are very anxious if we think they might be destroyed or taken away from us. This is similar to the current concern for the preservation of the environment and the concerns of those who want to preserve other worthwhile or beautiful things: buildings, the arts, minority languages and so on.

We Asperger people value our own freedom and find the outside world threatening. This is similar to the liberal suspicion of power and authority, particularly of the state, and the corresponding recognition of the need for safeguards. Our need for security points to law reform and greater respect for civil liberties.

We value our own security and need time and space to be ourselves. Hence, we should try to ensure that technology and the economy benefit people and the

natural world rather than dominating them. Those of us in work would benefit from reasonable working hours for all workers. We need support and services and have an incentive to campaign for better health care and social and support services for everyone.

Like many people with Asperger syndrome, my friends are very important to me, partly because friendship is so difficult to achieve. We can therefore play a role in promoting greater recognition of friendship by society as a whole.

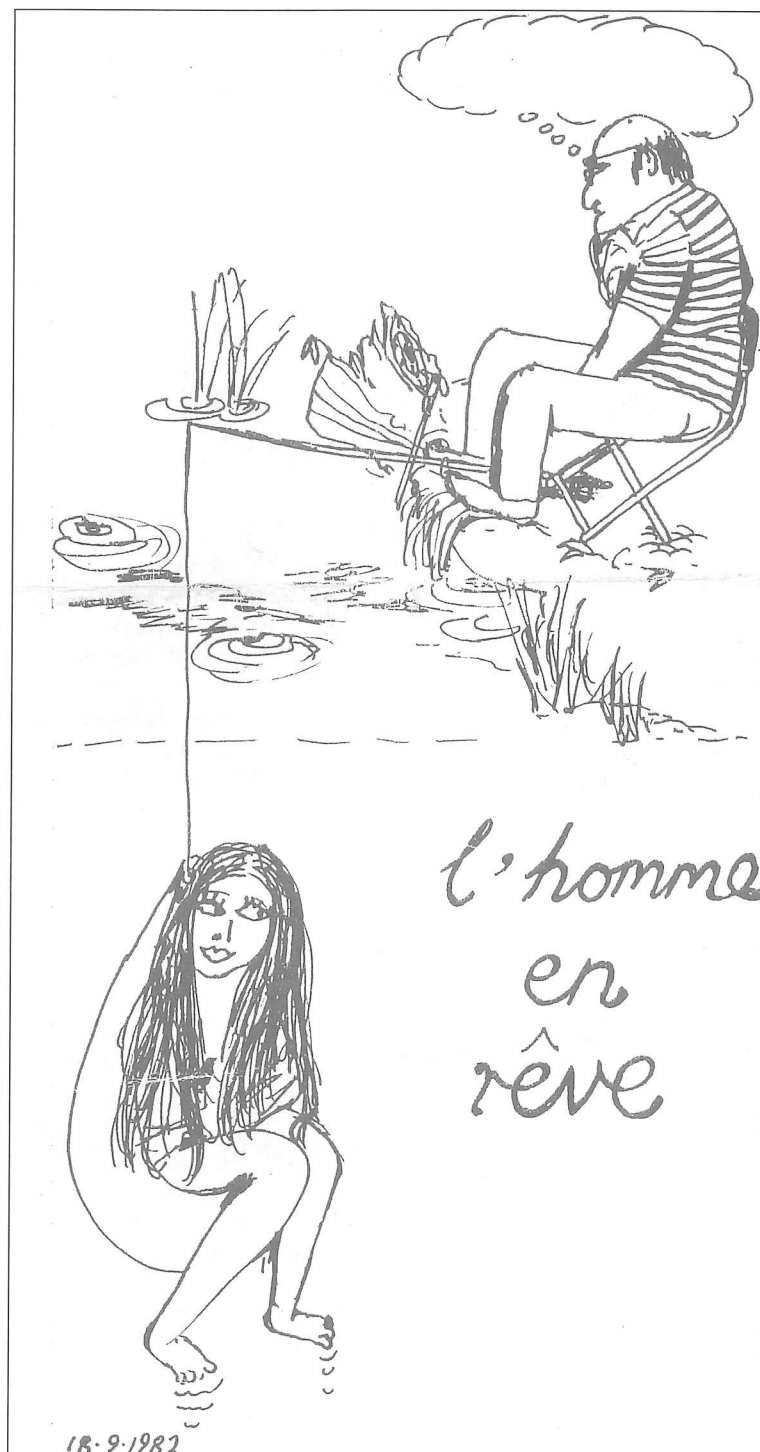
On all these issues, our Asperger outlook gives us a perspective from which we can contribute. More involvement by Asperger people in debate on such issues would benefit society as a whole, not just Asperger people.

The rights of those of us with Asperger syndrome or autism can be respected only if the rights of all are respected. Hence, in struggling for our own rights, we can advance the struggle for a better world for everyone.

**Robin Oliver**  
London



## A dreamy picture to get everyone in the holiday mood!



Stephen Gist

### July competition

*L'homme en rêve* is French for what?

Answers to *Asperger United*, together with your full contact details, by letter or by email. The lucky winner will receive two packs of Peter Myers' beautiful postcards.

**Closing date for entries: 31st August 2001**

### Competition results

Here are the results of the Peter Myers Postcard Competition from our April 2001 issue.

The question was: how much does a pack of ten Peter Myers postcards cost? The answer was of course: £2.00. We had dozens of entries but the **three lucky winners** are:

**Anna of Kent**

**Benny of South London**

**Paul of Harrogate**

They have all been sent two packs of Peter Myers postcards.

### New prize feature!

For details of our regular **\*Star\* Letter** prize, please see the back page!

### Special offer

By popular request we are continuing the special offer on the Peter Myers postcards until the end of September 2001. This offer applies to all readers of *Asperger United* who can buy their cards at just £2 for a pack of ten without paying any postage and charges – normally £3 for orders up to £20.

Please note that sadly we have to charge overseas readers for postage on postcards because of the costs involved. However, to minimise costs we only charge postage at cost. Apologies to overseas readers!

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on the volunteer button – and that's how I found out about the job.

Through an organisation in Stratford called the Working Well Trust I organised my CV. Another very helpful group called First Line helped me to call up the NAS and complete the application form. I had the interview in February and I've been here now since March.

Also on the internet I went to the web page of Prospects, the NAS supported employment service, and they are helping me too.

Elliot House suggested that I should go into supported accommodation. I have been very fortunate in getting a small flat in East Ham where I have been living for the past eight months. The neighbours are very friendly and everyone gets on really well. An added advantage is that my mum lives very close by and we still see each other regularly.

I'm a keen TV and music fan, especially *EastEnders*, and I also like listening to the radio, especially *Heart FM* and *Magic*. At the weekends I like to tidy up my flat (in case Mum comes round!). I have also recently got in touch with an organisation in Newham called Leisure Links who are going to get me started with playing badminton and tennis – I enjoy sport. Because I am involved in a rehabilitation team within the local Mental Health Services, an occupational therapist focuses on my daily living skills and they referred me to First Line. This organisation gets me involved in outings and I've already

been to the Planetarium, Madame Tussauds, Tower of London and we are planning trips to Hampton Court Palace and Kew Gardens.

My message to anyone with Asperger syndrome is to be as active as possible! So many organisations have helped me but I've also tried to help myself. The internet is a wonderful tool and has also helped me enormously. Life hasn't always been easy and I've suffered a lot from bullying on the way but I hope that the happy ending of my story can help other people with Asperger syndrome.

## Win packs of Peter Myers postcards!

In future, the person who sends in the best letter will have it published in the \*STAR\* spot on the letters page and will win a pack of Peter Myers' postcards

See p.11 for results of April's competition

## Corrections and clarifications

In the article on Peter Myers' postcards in our last issue we printed a design by Peter to which we gave the name 'daisies'. Peter has contacted us to point out that his picture was untitled and, if we must give it a name, he prefers to call it 'Fairy Clocks'.

Here at Asperger United we agree that this is a much better title!

## A poetic request!

Send it to me in verse or prose,  
When it appears God only knows  
But appear it will.  
This is your editor speaking,  
Your stories seeking,  
Pages to fill.  
Do tell us your troubles  
And your pleasures too.  
Perhaps we'll sort the problems  
But the joys we'll share with you.  
Show us the works of art  
That grip your heart.

John Joyce, Editor



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