



## ANNUAL REPORT

### CHAIRMAN'S FOREWORD

I am pleased to present this the Fifteenth Annual Report of the Society, and my first as Chairman.

It would be remiss of me not to put on record our thanks to our Vice Chairman, Geoff James, who resigned during this last year having served the Society for many years. When Geoff left it had been planned for a long time. He brought to the Society a wealth of management experience. He will be missed, and we wish him well.

During the last year we said farewell to one of our loyal and long serving members of staff. Our Office Manager at Cavendish Street, Theresa Postlethwaite, has taken early retirement. Theresa through her dedication and commitment contributed greatly to the smooth administration of the Society. We wish her well in her retirement.

During 2010 we have made progress in improving our finances despite the recessionary state of the nation's economy. As with all other charities our fund raising efforts are suffering from the decline in people's disposable income. One symptom of this is the abandonment of promoting shows at the Coronation Hall, falling attendances having made the presenting of shows not viable.

Further we have been hit by the Central Government cut backs in funding Local Government resulting in the Cumbria County Council deciding not to increase the rates they pay for Residential Care. This at a time when we face substantial increase in the cost of utilities i.e. electricity, gas, and water, and increases in costs for other essentials for providing good quality care.

The good news is that at Ostley House, under the guidance of our Registered Manager, Helen Winward, we have reduced costs while the hard working and dedicated staff continue to provide the high standard of residential care for which we are renowned.

We are continuing to provide a valuable service in the community with our Welfare Team. Led by Jackie Richards the team is working through a programme that will ensure that our blind and visually impaired clients and their families have the essential support they need to live comfortably and safely in their own homes.

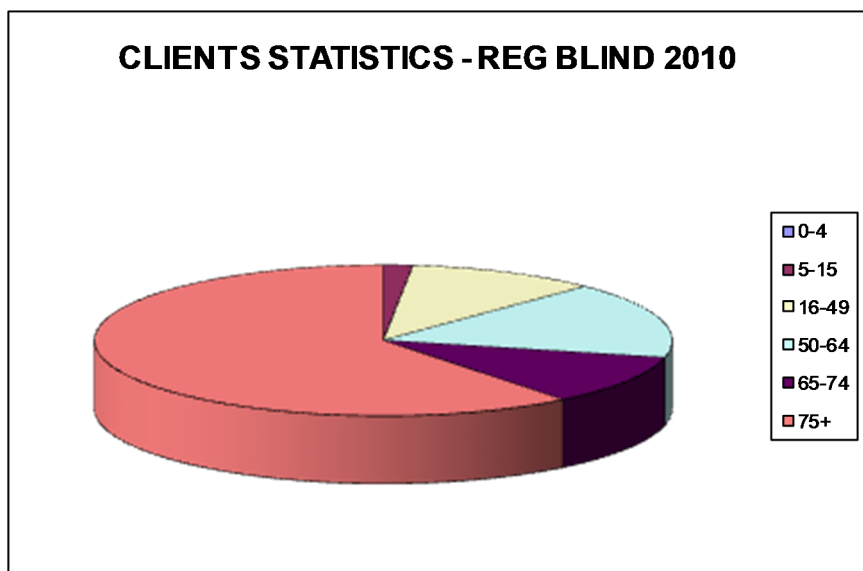
Thank you to Wilf Proctor our Company Secretary and Finance Director Alan Todd who continue to steer us successfully through these difficult times. Wilf Proctor in addition to his administration duties spends many out of office hours fund raising and 'flying the flag' for the Society for which we are grateful.

Finally, thank you to my fellow Board Members, who voluntarily give their time to maintain and further the objectives of the Society.

*Neil A McKinnon*

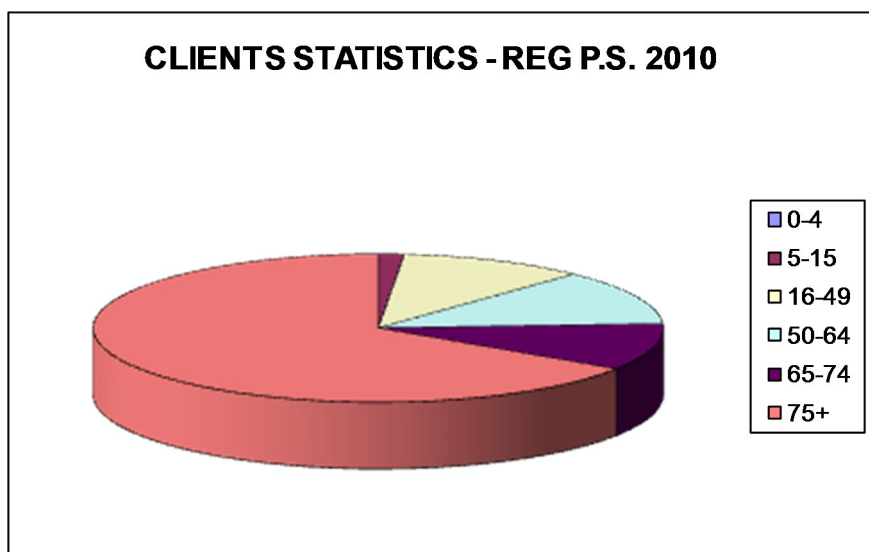
### REGISTERED BLIND

|                                 | Male | Female | Total |       |
|---------------------------------|------|--------|-------|-------|
| Barrow Borough Council          | 72   | 90     | 162   |       |
| Copeland Borough Council        | 15   | 10     | 25    |       |
| South Lakeland District Council | 25   | 32     | 57    | = 244 |



### REGISTERED PARTIALLY SIGHTED

|                                 | Male | Female | Total |      |
|---------------------------------|------|--------|-------|------|
| Barrow Borough Council          | 71   | 112    | 183   |      |
| Copeland Borough Council        | 8    | 10     | 18    |      |
| South Lakeland District Council | 27   | 46     | 73    | =274 |



# Donations

|   |        |
|---|--------|
| Amicus/Unite  | 100.00 |
| Anonymous   | 399.70 |
| Armstrong, Mrs D.H.   | 50.00  |
| Askam Womens Institute  | 20.00  |
| Austin, Mrs M   | 10.00  |
| <br>  |        |
| Baird, Mrs A (in memory of the Late JF Baird)                   | 302.57 |
| Bargh, Mrs M D  | 50.00  |
| Barrow Tangent Club   | 20.00  |
| Barrow, FM Esq  | 150.00 |
| Bell, Mr & Mrs J  | 20.00  |
| Boon D Esq  | 15.00  |
| Booth, Mrs M  | 50.00  |
| Bremner, Mr JD in memory of the late Mrs Ethel Marjorie Bremner | 260.00 |
| Broughton Womens Institute                                      | 20.00  |
| Brownlee, Mrs CH  | 50.00  |
| <br>  |        |
| Cairns, Mrs E   | 20.00  |
| Cambridgeshire Raffle   | 30.00  |
| Carter, Mr I in memory of the late Mrs May Carter               | 78.83  |
| Charities Aid Foundation - Anonymous                            | 15.00  |
| Clampton, Mr D in memory of the late Heinz Otto Hohmann         | 40.00  |
| Coffee Morning, Coronation Hall                                 | 323.30 |
| Cooke, Mrs E in memory of the late Mrs M L Davis                | 373.00 |
| Cotton, M Esq   | 10.00  |
| Coutts, R Esq   | 50.00  |
| Creagh, E Esq   | 2.00   |
| Crellin, Mrs B  | 51.00  |
| <br>  |        |
| Devlin, Mrs M   | 240.00 |
| Dryden, MD Esq  | 100.00 |
| <br>  |        |
| Evans, P Esq  | 20.00  |

|   |        |
|---|--------|
| Fenton, Mr & Mrs RE   | 5.00   |
| Fraser, Mr G in memory of the late Mrs N Turner               | 149.50 |
| Furness Golf Club   | 32.00  |
| Ganet A Platform  | 250.00 |
| Geere, Mrs N  | 40.00  |
| George Hall & Son in memory of the late Mrs M Gahan           | 150.15 |
| George Wood Memorial Benevolent Fund                          | 250.00 |
| Glasgow, Mrs M  | 150.00 |
| Glaxo Smithkline Charities Fund                               | 195.00 |
| Goldthorp, Mr T & Family in memory of the late Mr R Goldthorp | 250.00 |
| Green, TJ Esq   | 6.00   |
| Hadwen, Mrs L   | 33.64  |
| Hamilton, Mrs M   | 12.00  |
| Hartley, Mrs M  | 89.00  |
| Hayward, Mrs ME   | 7.00   |
| Hill, Miss K G  | 20.00  |
| Hilton, D Esq   | 100.00 |
| Hind, J Esq   | 5.00   |
| Holland, Mrs D  | 50.00  |
| Holy Family Primary School                                    | 90.00  |
| Hughes, Mrs CH  | 270.00 |
| Income Tax Recoverable - Gift Aid                             | 398.87 |
| Jackson, M Esq  | 50.00  |
| Jefferson, Mrs B in memory of Mr D Helme                      | 366.25 |
| Joiners Workshop and Upholstery Class                         | 40.20  |
| Jones, Mr R in memory of the late Mrs J Jones                 | 71.00  |
| Jones, Mrs J in memory of the late Mr S H Jones               | 15.80  |
| Keeper's Cottage, Furness Abbey                               | 46.00  |
| Keswick to Barrow Walk  | 700.00 |
| Kite, Mr R in memory of Mrs M Kite                            | 58.00  |
| Lantern Charity Shop, Allithwaite                             | 300.00 |
| Lowick Fellowship   | 25.00  |
| Mallinson, DH Esq   | 50.00  |
| Marsh, J Esq  | 200.00 |
| Mason, M Esq  | 20.00  |
| May, W Esq  | 10.00  |
| McBurn, Mrs   | 10.00  |
| McDougall, T M Esq  | 200.00 |
| McKay, CP Esq   | 10.00  |
| Milburn, Mrs J  | 121.00 |
| Millard, Mrs M A  | 450.00 |
| Mumford, Mr & Mrs E   | 20.00  |

|   |         |
|---|---------|
| Murchison, DS Esq   | 120.00  |
| Murrell, Mrs M  | 20.00   |
| Nicholls, Mrs M   | 30.00   |
| Nicholson, J Esq  | 30.00   |
| Order of the Eastern Star                                   | 50.00   |
| Padley, WA Esq  | 10.00   |
| Palmer, L Esq   | 30.00   |
| Paton, Mrs E  | 80.00   |
| Penn, Mr & Mrs R in memory of the late Mrs V Penn           | 100.00  |
| Powell, Mrs F   | 130.00  |
| Ramsay Park Social Fund                                     | 118.00  |
| Rotary Club of Furness                                      | 130.00  |
| Rotary Club of Ulverston                                    | 50.00   |
| Rowley, Mrs D   | 28.00   |
| Rudd, Mrs M   | 366.99  |
| Rushton, Mrs T in memory of the late Mr H Rennie            | 10.00   |
| Scott, C Esq  | 2.80    |
| Sharp, Mrs S  | 30.00   |
| Smith, Mr W in memory of Mrs M E Hartley                    | 43.10   |
| St Mary's Church, Walney in memory of the late Mrs A Walker | 76.40   |
| St. Cuthberts Nursing Home                                  | 10.00   |
| St. George's Church of England Primary School               | 25.00   |
| Steele, Mr R in memory of the late Mrs A Steele             | 84.64   |
| Stollers Furniture World                                    | 500.00  |
| Stowell, Mrs E  | 5.00    |
| Tait, DHM Esq   | 30.00   |
| Taylor, Mrs K M   | 20.00   |
| Thomas V Esq  | 30.00   |
| Thompson, D Esq   | 10.00   |
| Thursday Morning Communion Fellowship                       | 40.00   |
| Ulverston Golf Club   | 3340.00 |
| Ulverston Probus Club                                       | 50.00   |
| United Reform Church - Womens Guild                         | 350.00  |
| Walker, Mr ET   | 50.00   |
| Walker, Mr G in memory of the late Mrs A Walker             | 30.00   |
| While Mr & Mrs PJ   | 100.00  |
| Whittaker, D J Esq  | 50.00   |
| Whittaker, Miss S   | 70.00   |

|                        |       |
|------------------------|-------|
| Whitwell Walker, Mrs P | 40.00 |
| Williams, Mrs R        | 31.00 |
| Winder, J L            | 20.00 |
| Wood, Mrs A            | 11.00 |

**14538.00**

# Ostley House

|                         |         |
|-------------------------|---------|
| Anonymous               | 10.00   |
| Cumbria County Council  | 1000.00 |
| Milburn, Mrs J          | 59.00   |
| Robertshaw, Mr & Mrs TB | 100.00  |
| Rowley, Mrs D           | 100.00  |
| White, Miss C           | 45.00   |

**1314.00**

## LEGACIES

|                     |         |
|---------------------|---------|
| Noall, Mr W D       | 8000.00 |
| Corr, Mrs VM        | 819.37  |
| Palin, Mrs C S P    | 1000.00 |
| Wormleighton, Mrs C | 500.00  |
| Drake, Mrs C        | 39.44   |

**10358.81**

## SOUTH WEST CUMBRIA NEWSTAPE

|                      |              |
|----------------------|--------------|
| Quackenbush, T R Esq | <b>93.30</b> |
|----------------------|--------------|

## EMPLOYEE CONTRIBUTIONS

|                        |       |
|------------------------|-------|
| Barrow Borough Council | 13.65 |
| Cumbria County Council | 97.06 |

**110.71**

# Fundraising

|                                      |         |
|--------------------------------------|---------|
| Anonymous                            | 57.50   |
| Asda Store Collection                | 578.05  |
| Booths Store Collection              | 510.79  |
| Cambridgeshire Raffle                | 2992.93 |
| Cartmel Races                        | 558.03  |
| Forum 28 Christmas Party Raffle      | 188.75  |
| Grocery Hamper Raffle                | 500.12  |
| Lowick Agricultural Show             | 84.77   |
| Millom & Broughton Show              | 148.78  |
| Morrisons Store Collection           | 1054.38 |
| Morrisons Raffle & Collection        | 1020.55 |
| Ulverston Auction Mart Hamper Raffle | 272.35  |
| Salthouse Pavilion Bingo Raffle      | 81.50   |
| Tesco - Millom                       | 402.99  |
| Tesco Express - Ulverston            | 88.54   |
| Tesco Extra - Barrow in Furness      | 889.31  |
| Tesco Hamper Raffle                  | 229.69  |
| Tesco Metro - Roose                  | 436.63  |
| Tesco Store Collection               | 870.65  |
| The Blind Shop Hamper Raffle         | 126.00  |
| Top Ten Bingo Raffle                 | 52.00   |
| Trade stand                          | 63.22   |
| Ulverston Market Raffle              | 31.75   |

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11239.38

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## FLAG DAYS

|                   |        |
|-------------------|--------|
| Barrow in Furness | 987.71 |
| Dalton            | 247.65 |
| Millom            | 349.20 |
| Ulverston         | 477.35 |
| Coniston          | 145.89 |
| Hawkshead         | 130.75 |

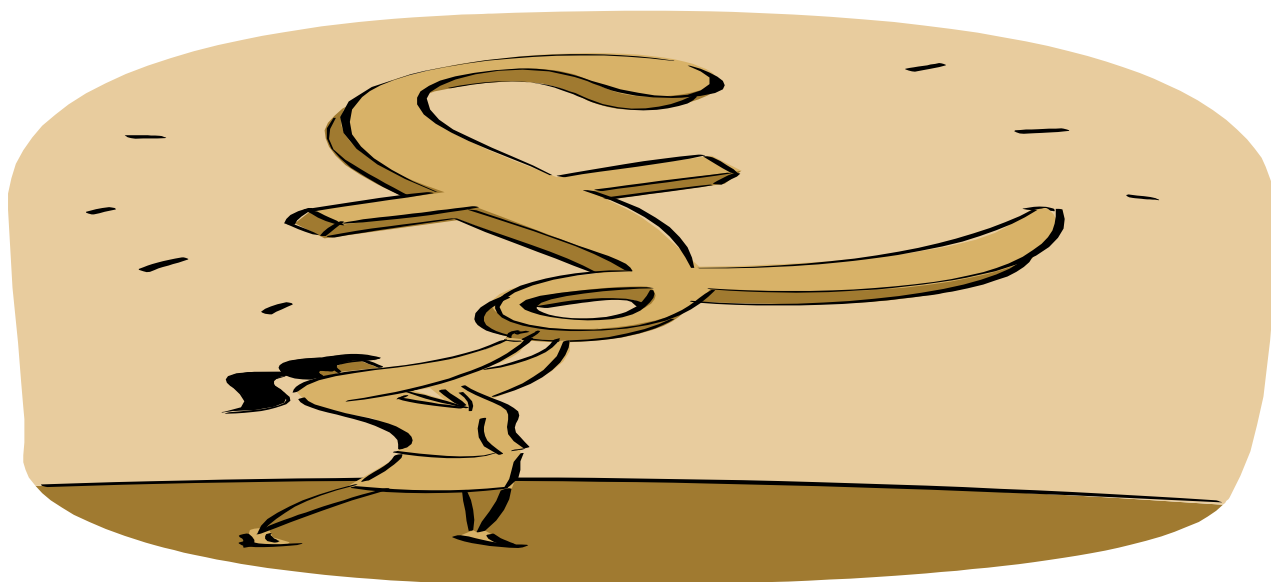
**2338.00**

## SUNDRIES

|                     |         |
|---------------------|---------|
| The Weather Lottery | 365.88  |
| Loose Change        | 916.85  |
| Boxes               | 1911.03 |
| Appeals             | 170.26  |

**3364.02**

**TOTAL FUND RAISING ORGANISER**  
**£19208.15**



BARROW ENVELOPE COLLECTION

|                               |         |
|-------------------------------|---------|
| Ackred, Mrs G                 | 6.68    |
| Bamber, Mrs SM                | 57.54   |
| Bark, Mrs S                   | 60.34   |
| Bond, Mrs R                   | 24.70   |
| Boyns, Mrs PN                 | 23.86   |
| Cahill, Mrs T                 | 37.23   |
| Danson, Mrs A                 | 43.55   |
| Eccles, Mrs H & Irvine, Mrs H | 43.08   |
| Gaydon, Mr & Mrs R            | 50.00   |
| Harwood, Mrs J                | 9.51    |
| High, Mrs C                   | 169.54  |
| Keleher, P Esq                | 39.90   |
| Lackey, Mrs M                 | 19.32   |
| Leat, Mrs J                   | 38.85   |
| Lindal Wives Group            | 354.47  |
| Mackay, Mrs CM                | 42.91   |
| Manvell, Mrs M                | 26.60   |
| Milligan, Mr & Mrs ML         | 49.02   |
| Myers, Mrs L                  | 25.98   |
| Newton, Mrs J                 | 81.31   |
| Parker, Mrs N                 | 43.43   |
| Parkinson, Mr K               | 17.34   |
| Proctor, W Esq                | 110.98  |
| Reid, Mrs JA                  | 16.34   |
| Rowley, Mrs D                 | 96.26   |
| Southall, Mrs A               | 27.69   |
| Sturgeon, Mr & Mrs            | 95.11   |
| Timmiss, Mrs L                | 16.99   |
| Turner, Mrs E                 | 18.85   |
| Turner, Mrs SM                | 74.57   |
| Walker, Mrs B                 | 84.08   |
| Warriner, Mrs B               | 13.59   |
| Wells, M Esq                  | 24.24   |
|                               | 1843.86 |

MILLOM ENVELOPE COLLECTION

|  |        |
|--|--------|
| Brown Mrs J, Tyson, Mrs J & Carmel Mrs S | 142.51 |
| Crabtree, Mrs I                          | 120.45 |
| Maggs, Mrs M                             | 34.94  |
| Walker, Mrs B                            | 125.09 |
|  | 422.99 |

# THANK YOU

A Very Big Thank you goes to all the people who were generous enough to donate either their time or their money to the Society during 2010.

The Society works hard to ensure that we maintain our services to over 500 Visually Impaired people in the Furness area and to enable us to continue to do this.

**YOUR HELP AND SUPPORT  
IS VITAL**

# **BARROW AND DISTRICTS SOCIETY**

## **FOR THE BLIND LTD**

Registered Charity No 1051674

67/69 Cavendish Street, Barrow-in-Furness, Cumbria, LA14 1QD

Telephone: 01229 820698 – Fax: 01229 826064

Email: [info@barrowblindsociety.org.uk](mailto:info@barrowblindsociety.org.uk)

### **HOW TO INCREASE YOUR CONTRIBUTION TO THE BARROW AND DISTRICTS SOCIETY FOR THE BLIND LTD WITHOUT ADDED COST TO YOURSELF**

Any subscriber to the Barrow and Districts Society for the Blind Ltd who is an INCOME TAX PAYER, may become a "Gift Aid Donator", and by observing certain simple conditions, may thereby enable the Society to claim from the Inland Revenue a sum equal to the Income Tax that has been deducted from the donation. With Income Tax Standard Rate at 20 pence in the £ (as at present), the figures are:-

| Subscriber's<br>Annual Payment | Income Tax<br>Recoverable by Society | The Society<br>actually receives |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <b>£5.00</b>                   | <b>£1.25</b>                         | <b>£6.25</b>                     |
| <b>£10.00</b>                  | <b>£2.50</b>                         | <b>£12.50</b>                    |
| <b>£15.00</b>                  | <b>£3.75</b>                         | <b>£18.75</b>                    |
| <b>£20.00</b>                  | <b>£5.00</b>                         | <b>£25.00</b>                    |
| <b>£25.00</b>                  | <b>£6.25</b>                         | <b>£31.25</b>                    |
| <b>£50.00</b>                  | <b>£12.50</b>                        | <b>£62.50</b>                    |
| <b>£100.00</b>                 | <b>£25.00</b>                        | <b>£125.00</b>                   |

**If you would like to make a donation to the Society under the Gift Aid Scheme please see overleaf for Gift Aid Declaration Form**

# GIFT AID DECLARATION

I \_\_\_\_\_

(Name in full)

Of \_\_\_\_\_

(Address including the postcode)

\_\_\_\_\_

HEREBY DECLARE that I wish the following to be treated as **GIFT AID** enabling Barrow and Districts Society for the Blind Ltd to reclaim \*tax on my donation:-

- The enclosed donation
- The donation of £\_\_\_\_\_ which I made  
on \_\_\_\_\_
- All donations I make from the date of this  
declaration until I notify the Society otherwise
- All donations I have made since 6th April 2000  
and all donations I make from the date of this  
declaration until I notify the Society otherwise

\*You must pay an amount of Income Tax or Capital Gains Tax equal to the tax deducted from this donation.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Ostley House Home for the Blind



**OSTLEY HOUSE** is an attractive Victorian house, situated in its own grounds, on the outskirts of Barrow, approximately two miles from the town centre. The Home has been extended and improved to offer first class residential accommodation. Ostley House provides specialist care facilities for up to 44 residents of either sex with a sensory impairment over and under 65 years of age. We also offer residential accommodation for older people without sensory impairment.

The original building is a three-storey construction, containing two lounges, kitchen and nine single bedrooms, all with en-suite facilities. They are accessible by both stairs and a passenger lift. In addition, there are three ground floor wings. “**The Abbey Wing**”, was opened in January 1990 by Viscount Whitelaw and contains seven single bedrooms with private facilities, a purpose built bathroom with an Arjo bath with electric seat and a large lounge with a television and modern sound system. We also have an induction loop installed for those who are hard of hearing. This lounge provides access to two patios and landscaped gardens.

**The Croasdell Wing**”, was officially opened by Her Royal Highness, The Duchess of Kent, in March 1995 and contains eight single bedrooms with private facilities and also a large bathroom with an Arjo bath with electric seat for the comfort and safety of the user.

**The Harriett Tyson Wing**”, was officially opened on 30<sup>th</sup> April 1998 and contains seven bedrooms with private facilities and a purpose built bathroom with a medic bath. Three of these bedrooms have been designed to accommodate two residents (e.g. a married couple) should the need arise.

**The Nan Tait Suite**” was officially opened on 29<sup>th</sup> January 2002 by the Mayor of Barrow-in-Furness, Councillor Mrs P J M Smith. The suite comprises two single bedrooms with specially adapted en suite facilities in which a new design has been installed for the greater comfort of residents. Dedicated to the late **Nan Tait OBE**, who was for many years Chairman of the Society. The suite provides much needed bedroom space. Included in this development was the addition of a new entrance and staff offices.

**The Dorothy Rowley Wing**”, our most recent completed development, opened in January 2008, providing a further eight bedrooms at first and second floor levels, increasing the capacity in our Home to a maximum of 44 places. Within this latest development came the creation of

**“The Dennis Noall Activities Centre”**, which has enabled staff to expand our range of activities, thus encouraging the residents to maintain and extend their skills. Within the Activities Suite, there is a large projector screen and also specialist IT equipment, which is voice prompted. A loop system is also in place, to assist those residents who are hearing impaired.



The dining room was extensively refurbished in January 1995, since then further refurbishment has also taken place. Recently, the furniture in the dining room has been renewed. A number of chairs with "easy wheels" have also been purchased, to assist with our residents' comfort. We provide a welcoming environment in the dining room and ensure that mealtimes are pleasant unhurried occasions providing opportunities for social interaction as well as nourishment. Three meals are provided each day, including a cooked breakfast. There is a regularly changed menu for lunch and the evening meal and residents are always offered a choice of meals. We cater for special and therapeutic diets, as agreed in the individual residents care plan. Our care team are available to provide discreet, sensitive and individualised assistance with eating and drinking for those who need it. Hot and Cold drinks and snacks are available at all times. If residents wish to eat in the privacy of their own room, they are welcome to do so. Food preferences based on ethnic, religious and ethical observances are respected. At Ostley House we believe in purchasing quality products for our residents. For example, our meat products are locally produced in Cumbria and supplied by Lake District Farmers Ltd, who also supply restaurants owned by Gordon Ramsay, Marco Pierre White, Raymond Blanc, Nigel Howarth and Richard Branson.



### Mealtimes are as follows:

|                |                 |
|----------------|-----------------|
| Breakfast      | From 8.30am     |
| Morning Coffee | From 10.00am    |
| Lunch          | From 12.00 noon |
| Afternoon Tea  | From 2.00pm     |
| Tea            | From 4.00pm     |
| Supper         | From 6.00pm     |

All bedrooms have T.V. points with Freeview facility. Also sky, which can be accessed for a connection charge together with a rental charge depending upon the amount of channels viewed. Arrangements can be made to have a telephone installed. Residents are encouraged to bring their personal effects and small items of furniture with them. We have a modern Nurse Call System and security cameras are installed throughout the home. The Home also has full central heating. The pictures below demonstrate some of the typical rooms within the home. If you would like further details or a brochure, please contact Ostley House on 01229 823566 or the Blind Shop on 01229 820698.



**EXTRACT FROM THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED  
31ST DECEMBER 2010**

|                      |          |
|----------------------|----------|
| Surplus for the Year | £146,392 |
|----------------------|----------|

**Summary of Balance Sheet**

|                       |            |
|-----------------------|------------|
| Fixed Assets          | £1,817,605 |
| Investments           | £23,137    |
| Current Assets        | £177,368   |
| Current Liabilities   | £99,232    |
| Net Current Assets    | £78,136    |
| Net Pension Liability | (£77,000)  |
|                       | £1,811,940 |

**Represented by**

|                      |            |
|----------------------|------------|
| General Charity Fund | £1,811,940 |
|----------------------|------------|

It is hereby confirmed that:-

- A. The extract from the Society's accounts for the year ended 31st December 2010 is not the statutory accounts but a summary of information relating to both the Statement of Financial Activities and the Balance Sheet.
- B. The full audited accounts, which were approved at the Annual General Meeting held on 24<sup>th</sup> June 2010, have been delivered to the Registrar of Companies and to the Charity Commission.
- C. The said accounts have an unqualified Audit Report.
- D. A full audited copy of the accounts is available on request from the Company Secretary

Signed:     *A.S. Todd*     Finance Director

# RETINITIS PIGMENTOSA

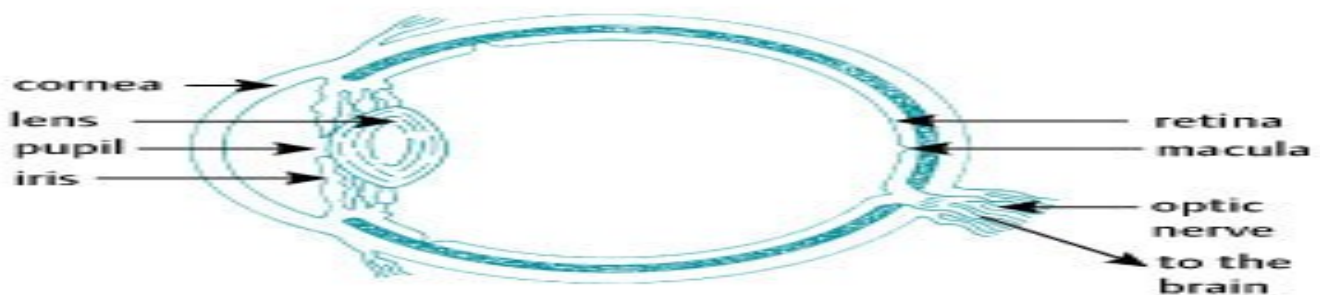
## About retinitis pigmentosa:

Retinitis pigmentosa (RP) is the name given to a diverse group of inherited eye disorders. These eye conditions affect a part of your eye called the retina. RP causes permanent changes to your vision but how quickly this happens and how it changes differs between people. These changes may include difficulty with vision in dim light or the dark and the loss of your side or peripheral vision.

If you have RP, sight loss is gradual but progresses over a period of many years. Some people with RP might become blind but most people with RP keep some useful vision well into old age.

## How your eye works:

When you look at something, light passes through the front of your eye, and is focused by the lens onto your retina. The retina is a delicate tissue that is sensitive to light. It converts the light into electrical signals that travel along the optic nerve to your brain. The brain then interprets these signals to "see" the world around you.



## Causes:

All types of RP affect the retina. The retinal cells gradually stop working and eventually die. In most cases, the peripheral rod cells are affected first and RP later affects the central cone cells. The symptoms you experience depend on the way your retina is affected by RP and can be very different from person to person. Almost all types of RP are inherited, caused by a fault in the genetic information passed down from a parent. The genes we inherit contain the instructions that tell our body how to grow, repair and renew. When a gene is faulty these instructions are faulty and the cells using those instructions do not work as they should. In RP, the faulty genes cause the retinal cells to stop working and eventually die off. Researchers have found many of the genes which, when faulty, cause RP but there is still work to be done to discover them all. As there are many genes that can cause the retinal cells to stop working, there are many different types of RP. This is why RP is described as a group of inherited retinal disorders. RP is often mentioned alongside other eye conditions with similar genetic causes and effects on vision, such as Leber's Congenital Amaurosis, cone and cone-rod dystrophies, and Choroideremia. RP can also be associated with other problems such as hearing loss. These rare conditions are referred to as RP syndromes.

## Symptoms:

### Early symptoms:

In most of the more common forms of RP, the first symptoms occur between childhood and the age of 30. The first symptom you usually notice is that you find it difficult to see in poor light, such as outdoors at dusk, or in a dimly lit room. This is often referred to as "night blindness". While most people find it takes their eyes about 20 minutes to adapt to dim light, if you have RP it will either take much longer or it won't happen at all.

A second symptom is the loss of some of your peripheral vision or peripheral visual field. This means that when you're looking straight ahead you become less able to see things either to the side, above or below. Difficulty seeing in low light and loss of peripheral vision are a sign that the peripheral rod cells are being affected by RP.

For some people, the early loss of peripheral vision may mean it is no longer safe for you to drive. You are required by law to report a condition which might affect your sight and you need to report a diagnosis of RP to the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Authority (DVLA) so they can carry out regular tests.

In some RP-related conditions, central vision is lost first because the central cone cells are affected first. You might

In some RP-related conditions, central vision is lost first because the central cone cells are affected first. You might find it difficult reading print or carrying out detailed work at this time. In these types of RP, peripheral vision is affected in the later stages.

## Later symptoms

All RP conditions are progressive, but the speed and pattern of deterioration of sight varies from one person to another. For most people, the first effect of RP is the gradual loss of peripheral vision. This means that you can start to miss things slightly to the side of you or trip over or bump into things you would have seen in the past. Most people with RP eventually have a very restricted visual field, leaving only a narrow tunnel of vision.

Most people with RP retain useful central vision through their twenties, which means the ability to read and recognise faces is not greatly affected. By 50 years of age most people's central vision is affected to the extent that reading is a problem without the help of a magnifier.

Many people who have RP find the glare from bright lights and sunlight becomes an increasing problem. The retinal cells become less able to adapt to changing light levels and it becomes more difficult to use your vision when you move between a light and a dark room.

## Eye tests

Most people first experience problems in low light levels and this may prompt them to see their optometrist (optician) or general practitioner (GP). Because the onset of the various symptoms vary from person to person, some people may have their condition diagnosed at an early stage while other people's RP may go undetected for many years.

An optometrist can examine your retina to detect RP. By looking into your eye with a piece of equipment called an ophthalmoscope, an optometrist can examine the back of the eye. Normally, they would see the orange red of the healthy retina and the blood vessels that supply it. When someone has RP, the shape of the blood vessels is affected and the orange surface is interrupted by tiny clumps of black or brown pigment. This is quite an early sign.

The types of RP which cause loss of central vision tend to be detected by a routine eye test at an early stage. Loss of central vision makes the letter chart harder to see. The more common symptom of peripheral field loss, or loss of side vision, is not so obvious and this can only be detected by a field of vision test. Most optometrists can carry out this test but may not do so routinely. If you have any concerns about your peripheral vision then you should ask your optometrist for a field of vision test. If you have a family history of RP or you have had problems with your vision in the dark, or when moving from light to dark, you need to make this clear to the person testing your eyes. This will help them to devise the most appropriate set of tests for you. If after an eye test there is cause for concern the optometrist can refer you to a specialist eye doctor (ophthalmologist) at a hospital for more detailed testing.

## Treatment

Currently, there is no known cure or treatment for RP or associated retinal disorders. Many research groups around the world are working on different aspects of the condition with the aim of developing treatments. Many of the genes causing RP and related conditions are being discovered (or mapped) and it is this understanding of where the faults occur in the genetic information that may enable potential treatments to be devised. It is possible that eventually one or more treatments may be devised which will combine the knowledge gained from some of the following avenues of research. Most of the work so far has only been carried out in the laboratory.

## Gene therapy

Once a faulty gene causing RP has been identified, gene therapy aims to replace the faulty gene within the affected retinal cells with new genes that work properly. The new genetic material, usually carried by a harmless virus, is injected directly into the affected area of the retina. The hope is that the cells then begin to work correctly and the damage is either stopped or reversed. This method relies on the gene causing the problem being known but in many cases of RP the faulty gene or genes are yet to be discovered.

**Being diagnosed with any eye condition can be very upsetting. You may find that you are worried about the future and how you will manage with a change in your vision. All these feelings are natural. Sometimes it may help to talk your worries over with someone outside of your immediate circle and this is where Barrow & Districts Society for the Blind can help. If you think that this will help you, please do not hesitate to contact us on 01229 820698**



## Finance Director's Report 2010

**Dear Friends**

### **Achievements and Performance.**

Last year we identified the need to improve the level of surplus funds generated by the enlarged Ostley House Residential Home. Since the addition of eight new bedrooms that became fully operational in 2008 we have been disappointed with the level of profit as increased income was being offset by much higher overheads.

The Management Team led by Helen Winward have altered systems and taken positive action that has both increased income and cut overheads. The full impact of these changes was not seen until the latter half of 2010 but even so the surplus increased from £29,245 to £94,705. This has not been at the expense of residents who continue to enjoy an efficient and caring service.

Secretary Wilf Proctor has a part-time accounts clerk that gives more time for supervision and she also has additional hours used to contact clients on the telephone to say hello and see if they need the services of our Social Welfare team. Another area of service that has changed from a new initiative to a routine service is the link between our staff and Furness General Hospital. Newly registered visually impaired people visit our Activity Centre where they can talk to our staff and see and try a full range of specialised domestic aids displayed at the Resource Centre.

Social Clubs, Craft Classes and the Men's Club use the Activity Centre and at last we have advertised for a Centre Manager after obtaining valuable funding from the Sir John Fisher Foundation. The successful applicant should be in post by the end of June.

### **Financial Review.**

#### **Income.**

Legacy income at £26,415 was down by £220,000 compared with 2009 but we have always regarded the generosity of our benefactors as a bonus and do not depend on this support during our annual budgetary deliberations. Ostley House income has increased by £36.7K but this has been offset by a reduction in fundraising income. We have reduced the number of shows promoted at the Coronation Hall, Ulverston; and would presume recessionary factors have had an adverse effect on fundraising as in line with other retail outlets our Cavendish Street shop has certainly suffered.

Excluding legacies our total income has increased by £20,790.

## **Expenditure.**

We are pleased to report a general reduction in all areas of expenditure with the exception of Christmas Grant payments that thankfully have increased for the first time for many years. Overall our costs have reduced by £38,220.

## **Summary.**

2010 has been a rewarding year in that the gap between income and expenditure at Ostley House has been widened as income increased by £36,677 and expenditure reduced by £28,783. This has been achieved, even though remedial measures introduced by Helen and her new Management team have only been fully effective for the last six months. This is a very important issue as we depend on the surplus generated by Ostley House to fund the work of our Social Welfare Team.

From an operational point of view 2010 has been another year of consolidation with no nasty surprises despite national recessionary conditions. I feel progress achieved will be reflected in the 2011 accounts when the true value of 2010 achievements should become more apparent.

## **The Balance Sheet.**

There has been very little change in the value of our fixed assets after depreciation. Investments show a £10,000 reduction after the sale of some shares that were retained in 2007 when our investment portfolio was encashed to finance the cost of new bedrooms and the activity centre at Ostley House. At that time they were valued at less than the purchase price.

Current Assets and Liabilities are similar to 2009 except that Net Current Assets have reduced from £92,412 to £78,136. This is more than offset by the £18K reduction in creditors falling due after more than one year (The Charity Bank Loan). In addition to normal monthly repayments we were able to repay a further £10,000 last year.

The only other large figure that merits comment is the £237,000 Pension Fund Reserve. There was an actuarial review as at 31st March 2010 and latest figures show a funding level of 92% with a shortfall of £114,000. Corrective measures are being discussed with Pension Scheme representatives.

## **Investment Policy.**

No change.

## **Reserves Policy.**

Our objective to maintain cash deposits at or above £150K remains unchanged but as forecast last year progress during 2010 has been slow. Cash flow has been much better during the first quarter of 2011 and I am optimistic that cash reserves will be in excess of target by the end of that year.

*Alan Swinburne Todd*

Finance Director



*COMPANY  
SECRETARY'S  
REPORT  
2010*

**BARROW AND DISTRICT SOCIETY FOR THE BLIND LTD**

**COMPANY SECRETARY'S REPORT**

**TO 31<sup>ST</sup> DECEMBER 2010**

There have been further changes in our Trustee's. Our Vice-Chairman Mr G M James retired in November. His successor has yet to be appointed. It would be remiss not to record our grateful thanks to Mr James for his invaluable contributions especially in respect of staff matters.

We welcome Mr Craig Anderson as a new Trustee and look forward to his help and support.

There has been a major change in staff at Cavendish Street, Mrs Theresa Postlethwaite our Office Manager retired in March after almost eighteen years loyal service. May I extend my grateful thanks to Theresa for her help and support and wish her a long and happy retirement, however as one door closes another one opens and I am delighted to welcome Mrs Elaine Rollinson as Theresa's successor. I am sure that Elaine will help take the Society forward.

**Audio Services**

We continue to struggle for volunteer readers for our Talking Newspaper, yet somehow we manage to produce a fortnightly edition of approximately 150 CD's. Our thanks, once again, to the team who make it happen.

Now to the Talking Book service, which this year celebrates its 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary. I give below a very brief history published by RNIB.

**1922:** Ian Fraser, dynamic leader of St. Dunstan's who lost his sight in the First World War, has a dream. As he later says: "In those days, there were no regular radio broadcasts, and a blind man's world was silent as well as dark unless there was someone to talk to him."

Throughout the 1920's, experiments with recording speech at slower speeds take place – often in the shed of Sir Ian's garden in Regent's Park. With the advent of electrical recording, reproduction quality improves, and the first viable recordings on disc are made in Sir Ian's shed. They're also the very first long-playing records (LP's), with a playing speed of 24 rpm.

**1934:** The National Institute for the Blind and St. Dunstan's set up the Sound Recording Committee, beginning to build up the Talking Book Library with the help of a senior recording engineer from the Decca Company. The name 'Talking Books' comes from America, where similar experiments are underway.

**7 November 1935:** The first Talking Book gramophone machine – as big as a desk- is sent out. By the end of 1936, almost 1,000 machines have been distributed. First titles include St. John's and St. Luke's Gospels, selections from Shakespeare, and works by Thackeray, Buchan, Hardy and Agatha Christie.

**1940:** Disaster strikes when the recording studios in London are destroyed by a bombing raid – then temporary studios set up to replace them are also destroyed. But the 'Dunkirk spirit' comes to the fore, and recordings begin again in 1941.

There have been many changes from the 1950's to date which encompass membership increasing from 7,000 to 40,000 and with vast improvements in technology from cassette tapes which held 12 hours of recorded material to a digital system using compact discs.

This Society is instrumental in making the Service available to over two hundred members. This is made possible by entering into Service Level Agreements with RNIB Talking Book Service and Cumbria County Council.

### **Residential Care**

Is provided in Ostley House an attractive late Victorian House situated in its own grounds on the outskirts of Barrow, approximately two miles from the town centre. The Home has been extended and improved to offer first class residential accommodation only. Ostley House offers specialist care facilities for up to 44 residents of either sex with a sensory impairment over and under 65 years of age. We also offer residential accommodation for older people without sensory impairment.

The original building is a three-storey construction containing two lounges, kitchen and nine single bedrooms all with en-suite facilities. They are accessible by both stairs and a passenger lift.

Since 1990 we have added four ground floor wings namely the Abbey Wing, the Croasdale Wing, the Harriett Tyson Wing and the Nan Tait Suite. In 2008 the Dorothy Rowley Wing was opened increasing capacity to a maximum 44 beds.

The Philosophy of our Home is based upon the belief that the residents are entitled to be treated as individuals. We encourage independence, individual choice, consultation about services within the Home and maintaining social choice e.g. the right to vote.

The residents are given the opportunity to take part in a wide range of activities and interests.

The rights of our residents are our primary concern and so our philosophy of care reflects this in the services and environment we provide and in our encouragement of the residents to exercise their rights to the full.

This would not be possible without a dedicated staff led by our Registered Manager Miss Helen Winward. We can, and do provide five star accommodation, but without staff to match this we would not be meeting our obligations. To all staff we offer our gratitude and thanks.

### **Welfare Department**

All our Group Activities have continued and attendance levels whilst not increasing dramatically are satisfactory. All activities in Barrow use the Dennis Noall Activities Centre, proving what an asset we have.

Next year will see the appointment of a Centre Manager, thus the opportunity to expand activities will beckon (once additional volunteers have been sourced). Exciting times.

Support for the Group Meetings, weekly in Millom and Ulverston and monthly in Grange-over-Sands remains flat, but all participants derive benefits from their involvement.

For the first time, due to the Arctic Weather we cancelled the Christmas Parties in Millom and Ulverston. Barrow survived and was well attended. Entertainment and food was, as ever excellent. We shall, as compensation arrange Spring Parties for our Millom and Ulverston clients.

2010 has seen a further change in the team, Jane Gay moving on and Gill Cooney replacing her. Thanks to Jane for her contribution and welcome Gill.

### **Acknowledgments**

As ever to say "Thank you" seems inadequate, however to all you help by raising money or providing support at our Group Activities we are in your debt. Next year will no doubt bring fresh challenges. We will be ready to deal with them.

**Will you continue to support us?.**

*Wif Proctor*

# Legacies

There is one thing certain in life ... and that is death! None of us relish the prospect and as a result the majority of us do not make a Will, or even keep it up to date. Many of us assume, sometimes quite incorrectly, that our loved ones will get everything but making a Will not only guarantees who will get our money but it can also be of huge significance to a favourite charity whose work we have supported, perhaps through attending events or visiting friends or relatives being looked after in residential care.

The charity sector relies heavily on legacy income: indeed the major national charities have legacy income running into many millions a year and without that income valuable research and support work would simply not happen.

However, for smaller local charities legacy income is even more important as it can provide a source of additional funds for special projects, and permanently commemorate someone's generosity.

Recently, I have been privileged to be the executor for several clients who have recognised the very valuable work that the Barrow & Districts Society for the Blind does and it has been a great pleasure to send significant sums of money to the Society. I know from the conversations I have had with my clients just how strongly they felt about the good work that is done locally to help those with sight problems.

I would like to encourage all supporters of the Society to consider including a gift in their Will in order to help the work of the Society. If just 25 supporters left legacies of £1000 each that would mean an ultimate extra income of £25,000: 25 supporters leaving £5000 each would mean £125,000!

Making a Will is not an expensive process and any experienced solicitor who is a member of the Society of Trust & Estate Practitioners will be able to give good advice on whether a gift to the Society should be of a fixed sum of money (which probably needs to be reviewed every few years to take account of inflation), or an index linked sum. You might also think about leaving a specific item which might be useful to the charity or sold in order to raise money, or indeed a share of your estate if you have no close family. It is important that the legacy to the charity is properly worded and that the Will is correctly signed and witnessed in order for it to be valid.

Having seen and heard of the work that the Society does, and having been privileged to forward significant sums of money on behalf of clients to the Society, I would encourage all supporters to include a legacy in their Will and really make a difference to the Society.

*Richard Roberts is director of Gedye & Sons Solicitors Grange-over-Sands, and also Chairman of the Lakes & Lancaster Branch of the Society of Trust & Estate Practitioners. He can be contacted on*

**015395 32313.**

# Voluntary Services



## On the Lookout for Volunteers

The Society values the contribution volunteers have made over the years and are always on the lookout for people who could spare a few hours daily/weekly in making life a little easier for somebody dealing with visual impairment.

If you feel that you could help in any way please get in touch.

For further information, please contact the Society on telephone number 01229 820698

**YOU COULD MAKE A DIFFERENCE**