

# Yeldall newsletter

**A Christian response to Addiction**

Summer2011



(c) Penny McLaughlin

## Open Day Fun, Food & Fellowship

**We invite supporters old and new to our Open Day on Sat 9<sup>th</sup> July.**

This annual event is a great chance to enjoy the grounds of Yeldall Manor and learn more about the work here whilst all the family can have fun taking part in the activities that are on offer.

Entry is free and gates open at 1pm, so that we can enjoy lunch together. You can buy a hog roast lunch or, if you prefer, bring your own picnic. Drinks and ice-creams will also be available.

From 1pm there will also be stalls and activities for all ages. You can bring & buy homemade cakes or Christian books. Younger visitors might enjoy the bouncy castle, birds of prey and puppet show (2.30pm) or, if you're feeling sporty, try your hand at the coconut shy, penalty shoot-out, golf game or skittles.



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At 3pm, the Celebration in the marquee includes uplifting worship and inspirational testimonies of how God has worked in the lives of some of our ex-residents since overcoming their addictions.

After that, from 4.30pm, we can enjoy delicious strawberry teas on the lawn - more time to catch up with friends old and new whilst enjoying the sound of a live jazz band. Please join us!

**We were delighted to welcome Jackie Pullinger** to Yeldall Manor in June, when she spent an evening speaking to residents, staff and others.

She said to the residents, "God hasn't brought you here to get off drugs or alcohol - that's a small thing! He's brought you here to prepare you for the work He has for you; to share His love with thirsty people... God's not looking for the world's idea of 'success' - He wants people who have fallen down, but know His grace, who can say, 'When I was a sinner, He died for me; when I fell, He lifted me up.' "

Jackie and a team from Hong Kong and ISAAC-UK went on to minister in Woodley and other towns across the UK, touching many lives on their ten-day tour.



## Life beyond Yeldall Manor - life is s

**Anyone who has had involvement with Yeldall Manor knows that life after rehab is not easy. So often the stresses and strains of life end up pushing someone back to the coping mechanism that they know best - the pain-numbing effects of drugs or alcohol. But, for many, especially when they accept Jesus Christ as their Lord and Saviour, their time at Yeldall really can herald the beginning of a new life.**

At the age of 13, Colin Paletorpe, or 'Scouse', started using soft drugs then gradually progressed onto harder drugs. By the age of 21, he was addicted to heroin and, in order to support his habit, had gone down the road of crime.

In a chance meeting in a café, he met a guy who was a Christian, but who had been an addict and had completed a Christian rehab programme and told him about a place called Yeldall Manor. A few months down the line, Scouse was facing prison and, remembering the conversation (plus wanting to stay out of prison) he applied to Yeldall Manor, arriving in 1983.

Scouse was accepted onto the programme and, although he found it difficult, he did complete the programme and gave his life to Christ whilst at Yeldall.

This was the turning point in Scouse's life and from there he trained as a Plumbing and Heating Engineer, ran his own business, and then returned to Yeldall to work for 6 years, initially looking after the grounds and then becoming responsible for the guys on what we now call the Resettlement stage of the programme.

He married Trisha in 1991 and they have two boys: Danny (18) and Scott (14). In 2007, the family moved to New Zealand for a better quality of life for their boys.

Scouse works as a plumber and they have been enjoying life there until recent events, which Trisha writes about below.



### Trisha recounts the dramatic events in Christchurch:



cracks and the ones we had from the previous quake are wider. We know that the garage will have to be pulled down and we have cracks in our foundation. This is of most concern as, if the assessors deem it to be unrepairable, then they will bowl our house down. We are still waiting for the assessment as there is not one house in Christchurch without damage.

"The city as a whole really needs your prayers - people are nervous and traumatised. Almost 200 people died, and others lost everything they own. Some whole areas will be demolished and cannot be built on again due to the liquefaction. There continue to be aftershocks - over 10,000 since September - which add to the fear and uncertainty. Yesterday (13<sup>th</sup> June) our cylinder split in a 6.0 quake so we have water everywhere and only just got power back. Things are not easy in Christchurch, but we continue to give thanks that we are safe and sound."

"It was lunchtime on 22<sup>nd</sup> February. Our home city of Christchurch was hit by a 6.3 magnitude earthquake. The damage was much, much worse than the previous quake - buildings fell, roads collapsed, water pipes burst, power went out, there was sewage and liquefaction (when the earth liquifies due to the shaking) everywhere.

"Our family was blessed that none of us was hurt. However we lost pretty much anything that could break - the TV was smashed, glasses, china, crockery, pictures, ornaments etc - it was a mess. The house has new

## or - life is shaky but God is faithful



### Ex-resident, Gary Hawes, tells his story:

"My mum said, 'You're just like your father!' I'd never had much of a relationship with my dad because he used to come home from work and go straight to the pub. He died when I was 15 due to his alcohol use, and I didn't show any emotional reaction at all. I felt like I hadn't really lost anything. In reality, I'd never had a father figure. In my early twenties, I was following in his footsteps.

"I'd started drinking when I was 13, hanging around with the wrong crowd and skipping school. I liked the effects of it: going into your own world where your problems just went away.

"When I was 26, I met a girl and we were together for 11 years. We had a daughter and, for a couple of years, I stopped drinking. But then, with stress at home and at work, I started and quickly got the taste for it again. Soon, I began drinking in the mornings too. I'd have half a bottle of vodka in the morning, some cans at lunch and another bottle in the evening. I ended up drinking three bottles of vodka a day for about ten years and eventually my partner and I split up, which was an excuse to drink even more. I haven't seen my daughter since.

"I went back to my mum's and was in the pub one day, when the police rang me to say that mum had had a heart attack. I got to the hospital and, three hours later, she died in my arms. Her last words to me were "Do one thing for me – get off the drink." But I carried on. Then I had the idea to do a robbery to get more money for drink. I walked into a shop armed with a knife, completely drunk. I was arrested for armed robbery and got sentenced to three years in prison.

"In prison, two other guys persuaded me to go to chapel and I was struck by how the Prison Fellowship visitors had smiles on their faces; they had a joy I didn't have. I did the Alpha course and, on the Holy Spirit Day, I got prayed for and had a real experience of the Lord. I got baptised on 25<sup>th</sup> January 2009 and that day completely changed my life.

"The prison chaplain encouraged me to go to a Christian rehab when I came out, and my funding came through in a week, which was definitely a miracle. On 21<sup>st</sup> August 2009, I left prison at 9.30am and arrived at Yeldall Manor at 1pm.

"It's not an easy programme, but it's also not a hard programme. It's entirely up to you what you put into it. Some people just coast through it, but you have to be open to talking about your problems and addressing them. If you want to, you can change.

"I moved to the Lodge and I started to get stressed about things but I didn't talk to anyone. Three weeks later I had a relapse. I was really fortunate to be readmitted to the Main House for seven weeks and, from there, I moved to Hope House in Reading.

"It's a Christian discipleship house for six residents and it's like being part of Jim and Heather's family. It's an amazing place; there is never a dull moment and rarely a sad face. It really suits me and I've learnt more about the Lord and what He can do. I know now that in my recovery I have to concentrate on the Lord and talk with Him every day – He is never too busy to listen to us!

"In September, I'm doing the Three Peaks Challenge [see back page]. It's my chance to give something back to Yeldall and help to put someone through the Main Programme or the Lodge and to get the support and understanding that I got. It's an amazing chance."



Gary at work in Yeldall's kitchen

## Government Strategy shifts in favour of Rehabilitation Programmes

### External Relations Manager, Andy Partington, reports:

At Yeldall Manor we have always been committed firmly to the goal of recovery – to seeing our residents living drug/alcohol free long-term.

Over the past ten years or so, this commitment has not sat comfortably with the Government's emphasis on minimising the harms which addiction causes (by prescribing methadone as a heroin replacement) rather than getting to the root of the problem and tackling the addiction itself (by providing places in rehabs). Indeed, the low occupancy we (and many other rehabs) have experienced over recent years can largely be attributed to this emphasis.

In this context, we were eager to see what impact a change of government

would have on our work. In December, the coalition government published its drug strategy and we were encouraged by what we read.

In her foreword, the Home Secretary, Theresa May (our local MP), writes:

*"A fundamental difference between this strategy and those that have gone before is that, instead of focusing primarily on reducing the harms caused by drug misuse, our approach will go much further and offer every support for people to choose recovery as an achievable way out of dependency."*

Only time will tell how much political and financial investment the coalition government will put in to make this vision a reality. We have certainly not yet seen an increase in funding for residential rehabilitation



places though, remarkably (given the state of the economy), there has been no decrease.

The government's drug strategy suggests that, as a residential rehabilitation centre committed to recovery, we can look to the future with a cautious and prayerful confidence.

Please join us in praying that the government's vision will become a reality and that all who want a way out of addiction will get the support they need to find freedom.

### Putting their best foot forward

After some last minute changes due to injury, two staff members (Rachel and Ben) plus two of our overseas volunteers (Nathaniel and Simon) took part in the Reading Half-Marathon to raise funds towards residents' leisure activities including a possible activity holiday.



Rachel, Simon, Ben & Nathaniel

Not wanting to be outdone by staff, the residents have organised their own sponsored event - a five-mile walk through the local countryside on 22<sup>nd</sup> June to help pay for other fun, team-building activities.

Walking somewhat further (26.5 miles) will be a team of staff, ex-residents and supporters who are undertaking to climb Ben Nevis, Scafell Pike and Snowdon on 3<sup>rd</sup>-4<sup>th</sup> September. They will be raising money for the Good Samaritan Bursary Fund. Thanks to this fund, two men have already been able to start the main Yeldall Manor Programme and a further three able to finish the Lodge Resettlement Programme.

### Forthcoming Events:

In addition to Open Day, featured on the front page, please join us for:

#### Prayer Meetings:

A time to hear the prayer needs of the residents and to pray together for them. 8pm on the first working Monday of every month.


#### Celebration:

Time to praise God and hear news and testimony about the work here. Followed by tea/coffee. 7.30pm, Friday 30<sup>th</sup> September

#### Carol Service:

Join the Yeldall family for a short service of carols and readings followed by coffee and mince pies. 7.30pm, Friday 9<sup>th</sup> December

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