

NOT WRITTEN OFF 2



Evening Courier, Friday, May 27, 1983

When the stroke of a pen means new hope

By JULIE CRABTREE

A GROUP of adult students in Calderdale aim to give new hope to other people with difficulty reading and writing.

Although many people are ashamed to admit they are illiterate, students on basic English courses organised through Calderdale Adult Education Service want to share their experiences and benefits they have received through joining courses.

Helped by tutors and volunteers they have produced a newspaper entitled "Not Written Off" which is being sold in Calderdale, Bradford, Blackburn and London to students on similar schemes and anyone who is interested.

"We want to send it as far and wide as possible," said the Halifax adult literacy organiser Miss Gillian Frost. "We hope if other people with problems with reading and writing see the newspaper it will encourage them to go and join special groups."

Students from all over the district have contributed to the first newspaper.

Most of the material came from a writing weekend held in Todmorden last summer which was attended by about 60 people.

A newspaper-making weekend was held in March at Horton House, Halifax, to read through

the material and choose what was to be used.

"We had masses so we couldn't read through everything," said Miss Frost.

At Todmorden some people who attended did not have the confidence to put pen to paper and used tape recorders.

"To start with people tend to be ashamed about having problems with reading and writing but once they become involved and find out they can do it it is amazing how much they produce," she said.

The layout, photographs and illustrations were prepared by students and volunteers.

A new magazine editorial group has been set up. It meets once a week to read through articles for the next paper which is due out at the end of term.

Some of the students are writing their life stories and extracts have been published in the first newspaper.

One of them is Tina Walters, an Italian, who came to England in 1950 but has been attending English classes for just over a year.

"Before I hadn't time to come to classes because I had family responsibilities," she said.

"I depended a lot on other people to help me fill in forms and things. I always wanted to be able to read and write English and now I am on my own I am trying to catch up on what I have missed."

See back page

From Start To Finish.

This magazine has been done from start to finish by people who have difficulty with reading and writing. It is for anybody, of any age. It's the people who are writing these stories who are doing the magazine.

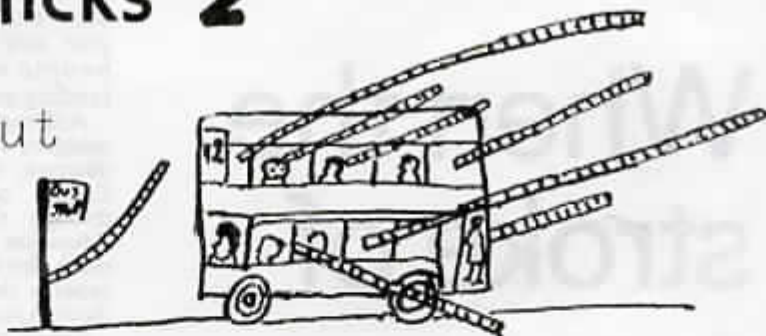
Some of us have got together to read the articles. We have enjoyed them, talked about them and thought about them. We have put some of what we said under "our comment".

We hope you too will read them, enjoy them, talk about them and let us know your comments on what you have read. We would like to put some of your comments in the next magazine.

We meet at Horton House on Thursdays, 1.30 - 3.30 p.m.
Anyone is welcome to come and join our group to do the next magazine. It starts on September 22nd.

Alans Family Tricks 2

I used to play about
on the buses.
I used to
hang on the back
and run along with it.
This lad I know
got on the bus
and pulled all the tickets
out of the ticket box
and all the tickets
were all over the place.



Alan Henley

Inside the man would say "udge up" and push more children on the seats. Then pictures would start and kids would shout. The serial would come on - everyone would shout and stamp their feet and every week it would finish just as it was getting exciting till next week. We'd run home playing cowboys and indians - riding our horses and shooting all the way home. We had roast beef and gravy, and stand pie for tea.

Leonard



I HAVE ALWAYS SAID,

"AND I WILL NOT"

by Lynn Lee.

At the Home the old people would not get no visitors at all. One old woman thought that I was her son. I have looked after Mrs. Brown - she owned a removals firm, and Mrs. Haydn - she owned a piano shop, and I remember Mr. Roberts of Roberts sweets - I could have killed him myself.

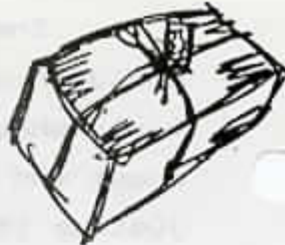
The one thing that got me out of all of it was that when they were dying the relatives would stand outside the door of the bedroom and decide who was having what when they died.

People like that have no conscience or soul.

I have always said I would not put my mum in a home.

I WILL NOT.

Mychristmas story



It was Christmas Eve and there was one child, a boy, waiting for Father Christmas to come. But first the boy's mum said, "Get in the bath and then have your tea and then bed".

Well, Christmas day come. The boy got up first, before his mum and dad. He opened all his presents. Among them there was a box. There was nothing inside the box but black inside. He did not think nothing about it until his mum and dad got up and the boy asked them, "What is it for?" They said they did not know, nor did they put it there. Well, they all looked inside the box and they all did not know what it was for. Well, they thought nothing about it for a week later.

Then, one day the boy got the box out and looked inside, well a good long look, and he heard a lot of people inside the box. The people were saying, "Do not look inside the box as it will take you inside the box".

Well, he shut the box and went to tell his mum and dad, and they told him, "Do not look inside the box".

The boy's dad took the box and put it under the stairs in a cupboard, so that the boy could not find it.

Well, months had passed, the boy had found it and he had a long look inside the box and he ended up in the box. He asked all the people why are they in the box.

"Well," said the people, "we got the box on Christmas Day and each in our turn got the box for Christmas, and we all took a long look in the box and then we could not get out of the box. We can look out of the box but when you are outside the box you cannot see us inside the box. You can hear us in the box but you can not see us in the box".

The boy's mum and dad do not know where the boy is and they do not know how to get the boy out of the box.

So if you get a black box do not look inside the box.

Margaret Pickersgill



OUR DOG

L. Peel.

We used to have a little Yorkshire Terrier called Jacky. We bought it to re-sell but we got so fond of her that we decided to keep her. She had been rather ill-treated by her first owner, as she was only interested in breeding dogs, but this one was too small to breed from.



When it came it was really frightened and shy. But she soon livened up and became a very lively little dog. She used to sleep in a shopping basket. I used to brush her hair every day and she used to get a bath every three weeks. She really loved her life. She followed me everywhere. She followed me upstairs she even followed me into the bath, she would sit there until I had finished.

She was so little that she couldn't go down the steps by herself. When I went out she would go to sleep on my slippers until I came home. She always made a big fuss when some-one in our family came in. One day my husband came home from work early so he picked her up to say 'Hello' and by accident she slipped out of his hands. She must have fallen very badly on her head, the poor dog was dead. We were all very upset and we all cried. We buried her in a nice spot in the garden. I missed her for a long time. I don't think we will ever forget her. She seemed a very special dog, and she seemed grateful for her stay with us.

WASH DAY

My Mam used to
do the washing
on a board.

I think she did it
in the sink.

She used a soap powder
that's never heard of now-
Oxydol.

I remember when
she used to
put a big bowl
on top of the cooker.
She used to dye
all her own clothes-
woollens and that..



Being A Diabetic

by Miss Joyce Capstack.

It was at the end of January that I had called into the chemist to have a prescription made up, and while I was waiting, I happened to mention about always being thirsty and drinking plenty of water. The Chemist heard me and advised me to go and see my doctor, so as soon as I arrived home I rang to make an appointment. I went to the doctors and took a urine sample, the doctor told me that they had found sugar in the test. He gave me a letter to take down to the infirmary to make an appointment to see Dr. Heath, the Diabetic Consultant, and I was given an appointment for the 10th February.

On my first visit I was given a thorough examination. I was also weighed which was 30 kg. which for my height (5ft. 1 inch) meant I was like a little barrel and walking always made me very puffed, and I always rode on the bus. I was put on a sugar free diet and low in carbohydrates, and cut out all fried food and sweets and cakes. I was given another appointment for 2 months time, before each I had to go and have a blood test, then I was weighed and saw the Doctor. Keeping to a strict diet within the month I had

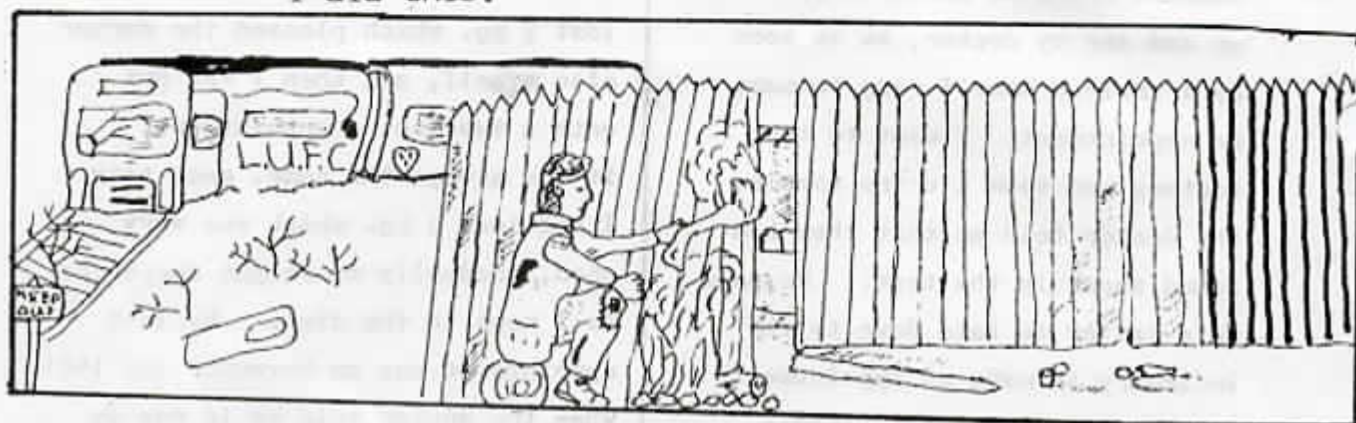


lost 5 kg. which pleased the doctor also myself, and then I was put onto a two months appointment. It was always the same, each time I had lost 5 kg. which was very good, gradually my weight decreased as I kept to the diet. My last appointment was on November 3rd 1981, when the doctor told me to see my own doctor, as I need not visit the clinic again. Since then I have kept to the diet and weigh between 9 st. and 9st. 3 lbs. but I have to test my urine every week and if the colour changes I must contact my doctor and let him know, but I do not have to have Insulin or tablets just be careful what I eat. With the loss of all the excess weight I have gone down from a size 20 clothes to a size 16 and I can get around a lot better and I do not get puffy like I used to. I feel alot better in myself as well, so really a good thing has come out of it. I have lost weight and eat better, so it is better to do as one is told and keep up the diet.

TEENAGE PRANKS

There were three of us and we made a small fire by the railway fence. This fence was made out of old railway sleepers. Once we got the fire going Declin said, "I'll climb over. You [pointing to me] pass some lighted paper through the fence. Then I'll light the grass on this side and I'll put it out before it gets out of control".

I did this.



Unfortunately it got out of control. I then climbed over and tried to put it out with my duffle coat. Then I looked up and saw a lot of people rushing towards the fence on the other side of the railway. I climbed back over the fence and ran with the other two. We soon reached the back of the Prison Club and Declin started to cry saying, "Don't tell anybody".

We didn't.



WHY I THINK READING AND WRITING CLASSES ARE GOOD FOR YOU

I am of Italian nationality. I am 54 years old.

In my spare time once a week I decided to start English Classes at Horton House, Halifax because my English Writing was very poor.. With the help of my teacher I am doing better. I do love it.

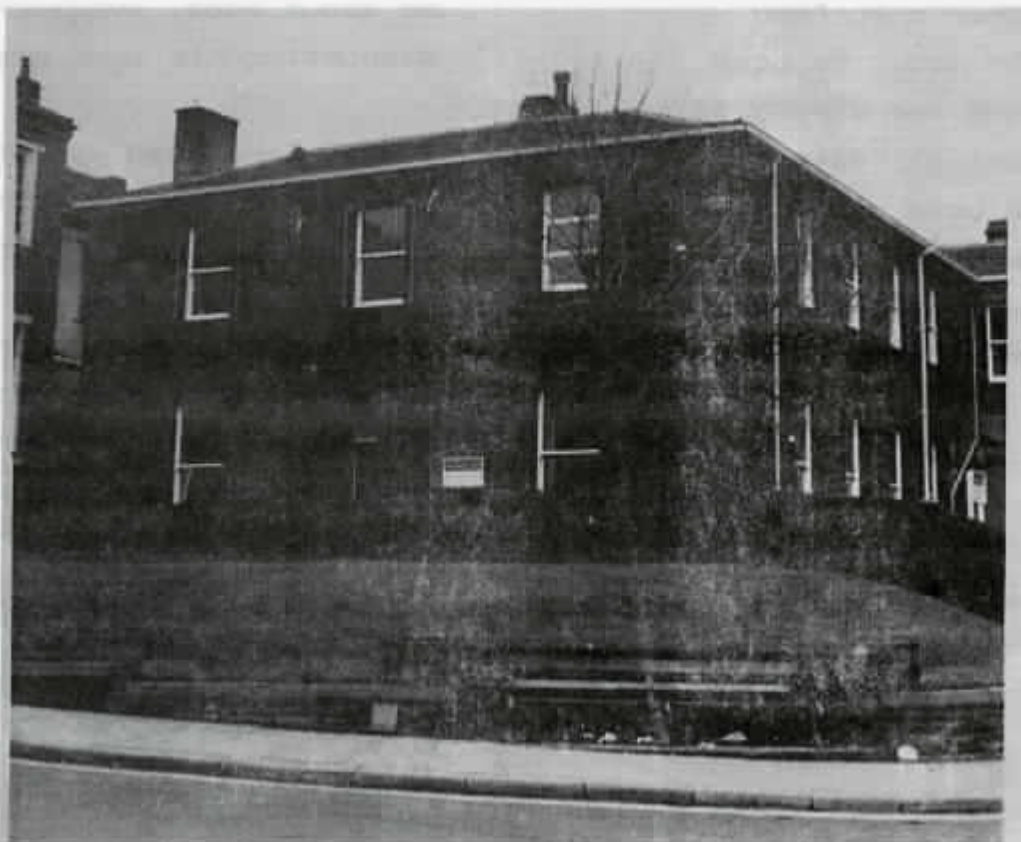
Every Tuesday afternoon I started writing my true stories of my life, my roots, for my grand-children because I think that when a person like me comes from abroad it is nice to let the children and my grand-children know my past and about my younger days. I could not write this before because I had family responsibilities.

Now I am by myself and it is never too late

At Horton House the teachers are very nice.

I would advise everyone in my position to come along.

Tina Walters



MY DAD TALKING

When my dad came home from work in the morning, before I went to school, he told me what he had been doing the night before. He worked on different machines like the milling machine or the boring machine. He was a turner by trade, in the heavy side of engineering, and used things like micrometers and callipers. To measure the thicknesses between two points he had feeler gauges. One night he'd be making part of a casting, the next he'd be reaming out a hole, that means smoothing out a hole.

He also had spirit levels to see whether a surface was level or not. He used fractions and was very good with the decimal system. Other tools used were chisels, hammers, mallets, compasses and screwdrivers to name but a few. A slide rule is self explanatory. He used a lot of emery paper. He used to talk about having to wait for the crane to come to lift one job out of the machine, then waiting for another job to be put in.

He used to take corned beef sandwiches for his "jock". Then if one of the lads went out to the fish shop my dad got fish and chips. He had a break at midnight and one at four a.m.

My mother used to say to him, "I don't know why you tell her all that. You're wasting your time, she doesn't understand you".

Today I can discuss how to do jobs round the house with my husband, I know about wood-joints. I can judge what kind of screws, nails or tacks to use. I can saw wood. All this is due to my father talking to me about wood, woodwork and discussing his work with me.

I have inherited my father's interest in snooker but like him have no interest in cricket. I also share his interest in motor-racing. Although we have an interest in Rugby Union he doesn't share my passion for Association Football or Rugby League.

M. SHORTER

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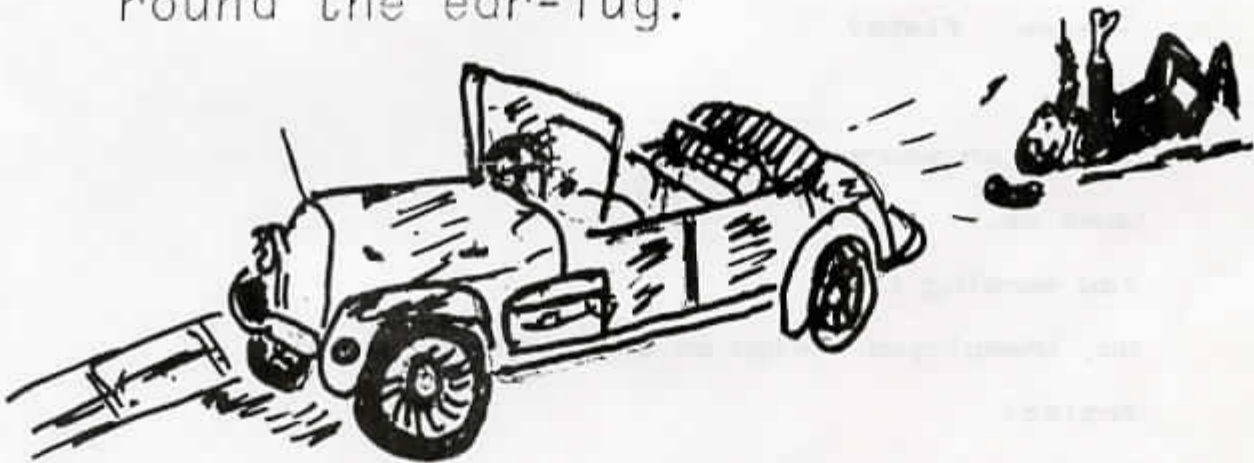
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M. SHORTER

Alans Family Tricks 1

ALAN HENLEY

My Father had an old car.
I remember when
I went with my dad
to the garage
and I were sitting
in the front,
playing with the hand-brake,
and it started rolling
and there were a man
underneath it.
I got a clout
round the ear-lug!



I HATED SCHOOL

I used to go to school
in Halifax.
It was a school
where you could not learn
even if you wanted to
because the school
was like a doss house
so all we used to do
was doss.
It was an English teacher
I hated worst.

He used to take the mickey
out of me.
So we all did not like him
so we just did no work
in the fifth year
and I did not like school
at all
so me and my mate
did not go at all
in the Fifth year.

Just No Hopers ?

HOW THE TAPE WAS MADE

This is an extract from a conversation between Albert and me [Gary]. We went into a room with a tape recorder and just started to talk. Before this we had not actually sat down and talked to each other. [There may be words in this piece that may not be to your liking].

EXTRACT OF CONVERSATION

Albert and Gary

Albert Do you live down here now?

Gary I do now, yeah. I live - you know, where the Bridge Pub is or where it used to be.

A Yeah.

G It's there - in there - been turned into Flats.

A ----- Flats?

G Yeah.

A You're on yourself like?

G Just me.

A You working like?

G No, unemployed - sign on the old Rock 'n Roll.

A Artist?

G Yes.

A I didn't know. Yeah. I were going to do one on them. But the point is I think if you're on the dole - like if I was on the dole I wouldn't bother getting out of bed. I wouldn't bother looking for jobs whereas on the milk round I can. I've finished and I've got all day to myself and I can go and look. I look in the papers but nowts in.

G There's bugger all going.

A Oh, there is. Sometimes there's some in and it's experience, experience, experience, experience, experience, experience.

G They all want sodding experience - experience or training.

A And you're lost then. There's no point.

G Nothing doing.

44

A Funny - there was one in the paper last week - a butcher wanted. I rung up - I says - about this butcher - he says you do so and so - I says Oh well, I don't want it then - mopping up after what they done - sweeping up - it probably wouldn't pay much anyway.

G Butcherings not bad if you can get into it.

A if you can get into training bit, yeah - in meat.

G - but if you're just a general dogsbody it's not worth having.

A That's why I thought Army's really only place you can go.

G It's about the only secure job at the moment.

A It teaches you guns, then it teaches you -----

G How to kill.

A How to kill, yeah - but it teaches you driving. When you come out you've got a chance - sommat - to drive, anyway.

G I wouldn't bank on being taught to drive in the Army.

A They teach you.

G Ah, they do teach you but the waiting list there is so bloody big.

A Oh, Ah. Our Michael were alright.

G You might as well get your pay packet and go outside. Once you're in the Army. You're getting so much money anyway. You can do that. That's what my brother did anyway. He asked - I don't know who he asked - one of them. He said well you're better off going outside - civilians and they'll teach you - sodding waiting list.

A Well our Michael was in a couple of weeks and they taught him.

G What was he in?

A He's in the Infantry.

G In Infantry?

- A And he got in and he got in straight away and he's driving now. He's in three year. He's doing three year. He's doing two year in Northern Ireland now. First time he went in they taught him to drive nearly straight away.
- G Sounds like Transport Corps.
- A And when he did he come home and he says there were one bloke - he were learning to drive and he stood in way and this lorry hit him and he laid on floor and next minute lorry drove over him - he reversed back and rode over him. So it don't matter where you are you die everytime. And I thought well that's put me off.
- G Bloody marvellous in it.
- A I'm not going in Infantry. I'm going in Medical Corps anyway so - it's not that bad.
- G I wanna go in Transport.
- A You wanna go in Transport?
- G I don't care where I go as long as I've got something to drive. Something that makes me big. Shift everyone else out of my way.

Seeing in print, what was said

After reading it through it seemed very bitter when talking about unemployment. Me, in very plain words and Albert, in repeating the word 'experience' five times; and where Albert was talking about the Army - where he was saying 'so it doesn't matter where you are, you die everytime'. If I was seeing this thing in a book I'd think those guys are just no hoppers.

I don't know if that's how I am. I'm out of a job. I do the best I can. I vary my day if possible. I come to these classes, it all helps to break up the routine of just doing nothing - watching the television or wahtever. When I read it back it makes me think - Is this what I am? It makes me think - Did I say that?

If this is how I am there doesn't seem much to do but just top yourself.

By Gary

Alan's Family Tricks

3

Once, me and my sister
went running
round the Mixenden reservoirs.
My mother was looking
out of the landing window,
and she saw these children
and she recognised my run.

She called my dad up
and said,

"Is that our Alan
over there?"

And he said, "Yes it is."

She said, "I'll kill him.

Bring him here!"

When my dad came for me

I was climbing

over the fence,

and I got some barbed wire
stuck in my head.

I couldn't play out
for three days.

ALAN HENLEY



132 Cousin Lane,
Illingworth,
Halifax.

Dear Prince Charles,

I love Princess Di. I met Prince Charles
in Birmingham in June he shook my hand. One
day I hope to meet Princess Di.

From David



I LOVE WORKING

I used to work at a big carpet factory.
I started there when I was fifteen.
I used to do odd jobs
like clearing the drains
and helping the joiners.
I used to sweep up the wood shavings
and keep the place clean.
I was given a radio once,
for keeping the place so clean.

I enjoyed my job.
But one day the factory closed down.
That was nearly two years ago.
I love working.
I wish I could get another job.

Sam Hirst



Our Comment

I'd been working a long time.
Even if you've been working a week
and are made redundant,
you feel depressed you know.
It's only since I started coming here *
I got my senses back again.
Before I came here
I was kicking the dog
and kicking the cat
and kicking the wife
and kicking everything you know.
I was fed up.
I'll be more livable with anyway.
I can be tolerated now.
For six months
I couldn't be tolerated at all.

* Adult Education English and Maths
classes

From front page

"It is never too late to learn and I would advise anyone in my position, especially foreign people, to come along."

"At first I was so shy I would not dare look at anyone but I was given so much encouragement I have gained confidence, the teachers are really good and work hard. I feel like I have come out of a dark room into the light."

She is working on two books, her life in Italy and her life in England, so her grandchildren know their roots.

"I can also write letters now to my daughter in Australia," she said. "I am proud of what I have learned." One of her articles has been published in "Write First Time", a national paper produced by students trying to improve their reading and writing.

Another student, Lee Boothroyd, is now helping other people with their English and reads in church, which he never did before going to the classes.

He joined to improve his chances of finding a new job after being unemployed for seven months.

Students Jim Birtle and Joe Flanagan joined the classes after being made redundant.

Both found time dragged

when they were at home and decided to brush up on their English.

"It is surprising how much you forget since schooldays," said Jim. "For anyone who has been made redundant this is a good way of using their time. It keeps your brain moving and gives you a lot more confidence."

Joe said he had benefited from the classes and felt it was something that should not be kept quiet.

Lynda Timewell, now 31, admits freely she could not join her handwriting or write her name properly before joining classes at Friendly Fold, Halifax.

When she lost her job two years ago she joined a range of adult education classes and has developed many new interests. She also completed and passed an Open University course on "Health Choices".

Sixteen-year-old Robin Capon, who is on a work experience scheme at a nursing home, is released from his scheme to attend basic English and maths courses without losing his pay.

"When students first come to classes it takes so much courage but when they are inside they really enjoy it," said Miss Frost.



This magazine has been produced by the Horton House Basic English Magazine Group, with help from staff of Calderdale Adult Education Service and Gatehouse Project. All views expressed are those of the individual writers and do not necessarily reflect those of the Calderdale Education Authority. Thanks are due to Calderdale Education Dept., for permission to reproduce the articles.

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BUCKINGHAM PALACE

5th November, 1981

From: Miss A. Beckwith-Smith

Dear Mr O'Neill,

The Princess of Wales has asked me to write and say how touched she was by your message sent to The Prince of Wales.

The Princess was delighted to know that you met His Royal Highness during his visit to Birmingham in June and hopes that it will be possible for her to visit your area sometime in the future.

Again many thanks.

Yours sincerely
Anne Beckwith-Smith

Lady-in-Waiting

D. O'Neill Esq.,

OUR COMMENT

I wouldn't swap places with them,
even on the dole
I wouldn't.
Even the clothes she likes to wear,
she can't.
She's as much a prisoner
as any prisoner in gaol.

MY CAT TRIXIE

Lynda Timewell

I have got three goldfish now
but I had only one fish
in a bowl
and when Trixie was a kitten
she put her feet in
and ran it round in the bowl
so I got a top with a hole
in it
so I could see it
but that did not keep her
from chasing it
round the bowl
and I had to hit her
to stop her from doing it.
One day I saw her
with all four feet on the top
so I said to her,
"Will you get down!"
but she slipped in bottom
first
and the fish went on
swimming round
so I lifted her out
and dried her off.



Brought Up In A Home.

I was brought up in a home. There were fourteen girls in a cottage. We used to get up and make our beds and clean up before we went to school. We all went to a different school. We had two foster mothers to look after us.

When we came home from school we had to peel potatoes and veg and put them in an enamel bucket for the following day.

We had two dormitories one with 8 girls in and one with 6.

Some had uniforms and some didn't. We used to get our clothes from the stores. We went on holidays at Maske, between Redoar and Saltburn.

We used to play in our own grounds. On Saturdays we could go out with our pocket money. We had 1 shilling. Out of that we had to save

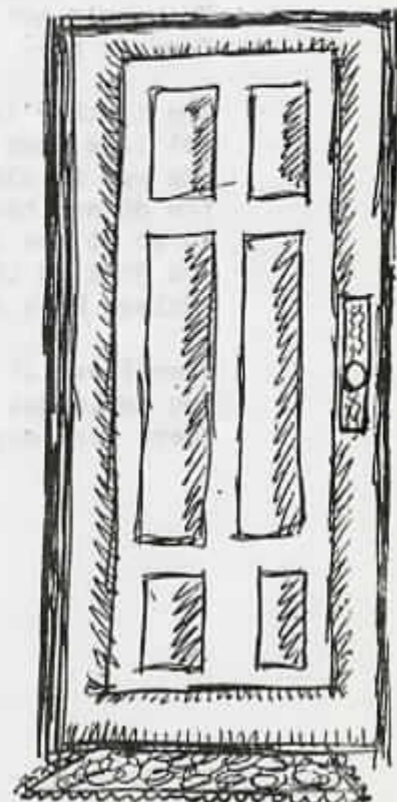
6 pennies. I found out that my Dad was selling ice-cream outside the pictures and got some free.

On Sundays we have to go to Church 3 times. After Sunday School the foster mother used to like to rest, we had to go for a walk. I used to go to the cemetery to my mother's grave.

In the home Christmas time was the best as we didn't have to work.

We used to get up and line up at the sitting room door. From the youngest to the oldest. We were only allowed to have 10 shillings to buy a new toy.

Mary



A DAY OUT

BY LYNN LEE

Today is Saturday 19th June. I've come for a day out and for work as well at Todmorden College.

It is a big place
just like school
- a classroom full of people -
what to say
what to do -
just like school.

People with different faces
- friendly or hostile?
Never find out -
not on a one day visit.

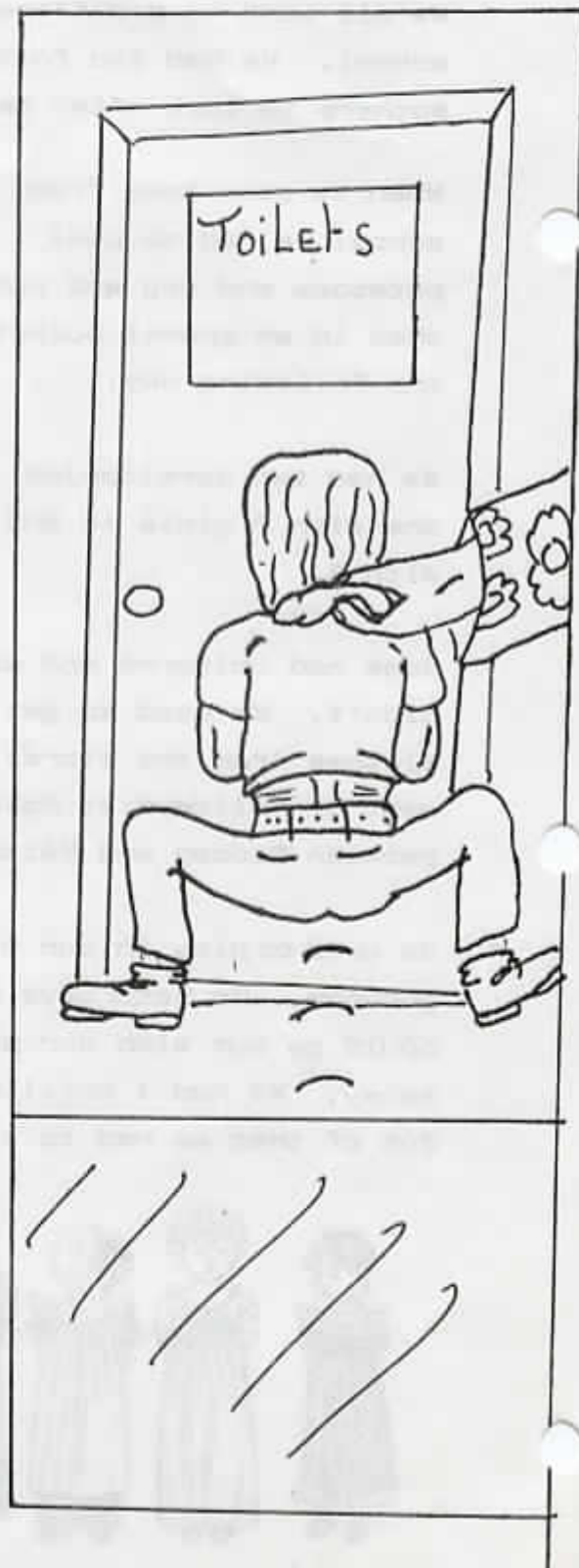
The paper is just like school paper.
Everything is just like school.
It is a very funny feeling
scaring
bringing back memories.

I never thought that to come here today
it would be like this.
I would have stayed at home.
Safe there.
Funny but the more I think about it
the more frightening it becomes.

Not like school really.
You could not smoke in school.
You can here.

The teacher is a good sort really
not like when I went to school.
She was an old battle-axe.
You do not have to put your hand up
to go to the loo.
You just go there.
(Unless Ness collars you).

When I was at school
you could not go to the loo.
There were more wet seats than work.



THE BUG HUT

It is just like at school
go straight to the back of the classroom,
sit down,
and look as if you are working.
Watching the clock for playtime,
making sure the teacher does not see you
looking at the clock.
The one thing that is missing
is your mates to have a laugh and a giggle.

I keep expecting the teacher to come
and say get on with your work or else -

Funny it is as if I am not married
with two kids.
They just do not exist.

When I was at school I spent my
time day-dreaming
not now.
I feel as if I could write all day.
I hope she doesn't come up with
maths and all the rest.

It will not be long before its home time
then I will come back to
'today' way of thinking.
Go back to the kids
and not home to mum.

This is just like an essay at school
I could not do them then.
I wonder what marks I would have got for this one.

THERE GOES THE BELL AT LAST!

✓ 20
20

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making sure the teacher does not see you
looking at the clock.
The one thing that is missing
is your mates to have a laugh and a giggle.

I keep expecting the teacher to come
and say get on with your work or else -

Funny it is as if I am not married
with two kids.
They just do not exist.

When I was at school I spent my
time day-dreaming
not now.
I feel as if I could write all day.
I hope she doesn't come up with
maths and all the rest.

It will not be long before its home time
then I will come back to
'today' way of thinking.
Go back to the kids
and not home to mum.

This is just like an essay at school
I could not do them then.
I wonder what marks I would have got for this one.

THERE GOES THE BELL AT LAST!

✓ 20
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