



NEWS

April 2011

Interview with Phil Carpenter

We are at Phil Carpenter's house in Worthing to discuss plans for 'Working 50+' Brighton's leading group for people over fifty.

He is a man of many facets, Phil ran a Swedish fashion company for 35 years. He is a member of the philanthropic 'Lions' organisation, and as a social worker counsels young offenders.

How did Working 50+ come about?

When funding stopped for the formative group, Mr Carpenter took charge and with three others formed a group: Working 50+.

"My vision", he says, 'is for a group of people who have all had different lives to lead, to come together and help each other, they have many different experiences to bring to the group', he adds: "different people could get together in the same situation and help each other." Working 50+' is just that, a self help group for people over fifty.



**Phil Carpenter Chairman
'Working 50+'**

Meetings take place every first and third week in the month, on Tuesday

mornings at 11.00 in The Cornerstone Café upstairs at St John's Church Hove. Meetings are structured, introductions for new members, the minutes of the previous meeting and then there is usually a speaker. Like the group members, guest speakers come from all walks of life. Represented careers in Working 50+ are IT professionals; teachers; business people; graduates, authors and proof readers among others. No-one needs to feel left out. Phil tries to make speakers non-political and harmonious with the groups needs. After discussion sandwiches and hot drinks are provided.

Other activities include trips out, The Houses of Parliament perhaps, or Leeds Castle, to give but two examples. " There are about ten 15 regulars who have allocated roles for themselves, e.g travel arranger, Phil says 'There are also loyal members Jean the treasurer and Terry the secretary for example, who have been with Working 50 + from the beginning..

. "But, as well as regulars coming in to Working 50+, I also like them to move on."Phil says '

Social Benefits - Working 50+

Phil feels that people who are on Social Benefits for a long time because of age or infirmity, become dependent and therefore cope less well than those who stay at the cutting edge of their lives by continuing in the market place of work.

Editorial

This is the first newsletter from Working 50+, the local self help group for people 50 years young. It has been fun to produce-all the copy was to be based using a desktop publishing system,until it was realised we didn't have one and we could combine computer and colour photocopier using cut and paste techniques which seemingly went out of fashion in the late 1980's.

Thanks to everyone who helped out Jean, Phil and Terry and Jo.

If you have any material you would like to see in future issues , pictures, copy personal insight etc. Please bring them to a meeting.

John G .Scott

Brighton & Hove Community & Voluntary Sector



Val Cane of Working 50plus has been elected to serve as a voluntary representative for older people as part of the Community Volunteer Sector Forum. This is an independent charity which represents about 500 organisations in the City of Brighton and about a 1000 who are not represented. Over the next year they will be approached for enrolment. "I've been elected to serve for 18 months" she said. "During this time I hope to enhance the profile of older people in the town and disseminate ideas tried in Working 50 plus to help build confidence. This is to help both people returning to work or to enhance the quality of their lives".

Phil Carpenter-The Interview

Continued....

'Whichever way round, the person over 50 has a lot of experience, And, some because of their unemployment status have had to learn a new way of life which is potentially destructive to them. Phil says, "For example, people go to the pubs every night and if you say to them 'there is a 50+ group', they say 'I'm quite happy going to the pub'. You're trying to change people's behaviour."

He expected things to run more smoothly regarding the management. But despite setbacks has great plans for the future. "I want the concept of the group to be publicised and utilised by some other groups. Looking at a concept like 'The Big Society'-our group is a good representation of what that is." When we started it was decided not to advertise too much because too many people might come, and nobody came-it's one of those things".

Plans include introducing younger persons. "The vibe I'm getting from the kids of today is that they're not educated enough-and that this is a universal problem. They're not given the knowledge they need to lead a harmonious life-and I think that the older generation can help them, if they were to join a group like Working 50+."

"So, would there be an opportunity to invite people along to the group?" I ask. "That is what we are trying to do with the intergenerational project at The University of Sussex." He adds, "I also work with young offenders, why do they commit crimes, robberies etc-it's because their parents didn't say 'no'. They didn't give them any structure in their lives. They were left to go out, down to the pub".JGS

Working 50+ Takes to the Water

Members of the 50plus group enjoyed a great day out in London. The weather was sunny and warm which helped a great deal as the main purpose for this outing was to go on a Thames cruise.

After breakfast in the Westminster Cathedral crypt we made our way to Westminster Pier to catch the Greenwich Ferry.

Quick thinking on behalf of one member enabled us to use some discount coupons- saving 50% on the fares!

Of course foreign students made up most of the passengers, but with a bit of a squeeze our launch got underway down the Thames.

After a short stop at Tower Bridge to take a few more on board we meandered down river to our destination at Greenwich Pier.

These Thames cruises no longer employ 'couriers' but are manned by locals who are more than able to give

not only an accurate and informative history of the Thames and London itself, but introduce typical Cockney humour to the commentary.

This particular cruise takes just over an hour to get to Greenwich Pier

The group made its way to the newly refurbished pub/café which used to be the site of old stables.

The more adventurous made the steep walk up to the Observatory where spectacular views of East London can be seen.

We all caught the boat (a more modern one for the return journey) back to Westminster Pier and enjoyed once again a lively commentary on the history of the South Bank.!

I must say the group can heartily endorse these invaluable cruises as they are not only good value for money. But the wealth of history gained is invaluable and we all agreed - that this is one of the best outings to learn about our Capital City.



Pictures and Words Terry West

A Novel First

I first started thinking about my novel in 2002. I was living in Izmit in Turkey. My husband was working in Ankara and very few people in the town spoke English. I had no access to English speaking television. I suppose I began writing out of boredom.

When I returned to England I didn't think about it anymore. I wrote an article about living in Turkey that was published in a woman's magazine. I was paid £450.00. This small success made me consider the novel again.

I lacked confidence and to overcome this I completed an M.A. in Novel writing at University Manchester.

I learned a lot but I had one of my bipolar breakdowns towards the end of the course. However, I did pass but was disappointed with my novel.

A novel formed the dissertation part of the M.A.

From 2006 until this year was an unsettled time for me. I had to give up my job as a Staff Nurse in Psychiatry. After spending a month in Millview Hospital last year my motivation to write returned. I finally finished it, but as the novel is hand written, I now have to word process it.

I am submitting it to a publisher who only publish work from people with mental health problems.

They pay next to nothing, but I am interested in inspiring other people with similar problems more than making money.

I'll let you know if they accept it. Fingers crossed!

GLENNIS .



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