

The Amican

The **AMICUS** Newsletter

No. 1, October 1994

The AMICUS Project; Help the Homeless

October 1994 sees the start of the first annual Amicus project. Entitled *'A Place to Call My Own'*, the project challenges all of you to find out about the problems of homelessness in the UK—and then do something to help.

You can be forgiven for thinking that homeless people are drunken beggars that sit around in large towns begging for spare change. Many of these people are indeed homeless, but this is only one, albeit very visible group of people who do not have a proper home. Did you know that there are many single mothers who are forced to live in bed-and-breakfast accommodation due to a shortage of council housing? Or that **Shelter** estimates there are 156,000 young people who are homeless in Britain?

Each AMICUS group will receive a video to stimulate discussion, and a programme pack (produced in conjunction with **Crisis**) that explores the real issues of homelessness. But that's just the beginning. As Christians, we cannot just sit back and watch the suffering of the world; we must do something to help. You may decide to raise money for a local or national project to support the homeless. If you're feeling more adventurous you might help out at a soup kitchen, and meet some of the people you've learnt about while using the programme pack.

Don't be a spectator—make a difference.

Welcome to *The Amican*

Welcome to the first edition of *The Amican*, the newsletter for everyone involved in AMICUS. As you will see, the project is progressing well with twelve groups now up and running and a further five with leaders about to undertake training. So by the end of session 1994–95 we shall have at least 25 groups on the scheme. That means lots of people submitting articles to *The Amican*. The magazine will become awfully tedious if all the articles are written by me!

I was talking to an AMICUS leader recently, who was recounting some experiences of being involved in this new venture. Generally, he felt things were going

well, but he wasn't sure the *amicans* themselves were totally enjoying it. Nor did he think they were as involved in managing the group as they should be. Later the same day I was leading a session about seniors' work at KGV1, the BB officer cadet training course. I started by painting a picture of the ideal senior section. I said that its programme should have a high thrill factor. It should be outgoing, not totally introspective. It should be participative, the members being fully involved in decision-making. It should have a relevant Christian development and discipleship programme and it should also be fun! I then asked every-

one if they were in a seniors' group like that, confident that it would be outside the experience of those present. To my amazement, one young man put up his hand and said "Our group is like that, but it's not seniors, its AMICUS". You can imagine how delighted I was to hear this, and even more delighted to hear he was from the group whose leader I talked to earlier in the day. So, how are *you* doing? As Bob Hoskins says in those dreadful BT commercials, "It's good to talk". Ring me, write to me, but do let us know when we're getting it right and when we're getting it wrong.

Gary Smith
AMICUS project manager

No Girls in the BB?

At Brigade Council in Manchester the motion to allow companies in England and Wales to admit girls was defeated. No doubt this will have major implications for the work of some BB companies. It will *not*, however, affect AMICUS groups, which have been set up under the authority of the Brigade Executive as a pilot project.

The AMICUS Weekend; You Can Make a Difference!

'You Can Make a Difference' is the title of the AMICUS weekend, the first national residential experience for AMICUS members. The event will take place on the weekend of 3-5 February 1995 at Felden Lodge, the BB's national HQ and training centre. Among the things already booked into the programme are a chance to sharpen up your video making or musical skills and to try your hand at back-woods cooking, as well as meeting people from AMICUS groups from all over the UK and swapping ideas.

But the AMICUS weekend is not just for AMICUS members; we want group leaders to come too. For leaders we are organising some special training ses-

sions, as well as a chance to sample the rest of the programme.

So be there. Or be sad. Its as simple as that.

The Seniors' Brochure

This was considered by many to be the best booklet the BB has ever produced. Unfortunately, the response from Seniors has been disappointing, with many events not happening, and many of those that went ahead being attended by very low numbers.

Any thoughts on why this was?

Firm Foundations '95

With Eden Burning, The Wades, GMTV's Steve Chalke, Rob Frost and Pete McCahon among the people booked to appear, this year's festival looks like it might be the best ever. Whilst obviously encouraging AMICUS groups to attend, it is worth noting that there are places available for just £15.00 for those willing to be involved in stewarding, counselling, catering etc. For further details contact Gary Smith.

Community

As an eager 15 year old I was expected to do community service for my Queen's Badge. At the same time Mark, an eleven year-old, was convicted of stealing a dumper truck and driving it into a workmans hut, as well as breaking into a factory. He was sentenced to 12 weeks community service. He was expected to scrub the floor of a school gym every Saturday afternoon, and I was expected to dry the crockery in an old peoples' home (while the person employed to do it put his feet up and had a fag!). The experience cured Mark of his criminal tendencies (He is now managing director of a security firm!) and put me off community work for years. How do we in AMICUS make work in the community relevant? We would be interested in your thoughts.

OUT and ABOUT and OUT and ABOUT

Leith

The group met throughout the summer. On the night Gary Smith visited them they were playing rounders on Leith Links much to the amusement of the local youngsters. The game was abandoned when the tennis-ball disintegrated! The group spent the rest of the evening planning a weekend residential at Loch Lomond.

Lowestoft

The AMICUS group in Lowestoft spent a couple of nights on the beach. Its a hard life! Seriously, though, they were working hard making a video serial for the Church's holiday club for children. Super-heroes

'Deck-Chair Man' and 'Wind-Break Woman' had to find the sea, which had mysteriously gone missing. There was, no-doubt, a very spiritual ending, but the first day's filming was pure farce.

The group has also organised a barbeque for the Junior Section and is doing a sponsored sleep-out for charity (more of which next issue).

King's Heath, Birmingham

The 6th Birmingham Company of which this AMICUS group is a part boasts around 20 seniors, only four of which have joined AMICUS. However, the AMICUS group has 18 members, most of whom joined to do the Duke of Edinburgh's Award.

THE AMICUS REVIEW

The Youth Bible

Yet another translation of the Bible. What makes this one different? Well, its primary audience is young adults, so it has an attractive cover and insightful information alongside the text. The New Century Translation used is most certainly flawed in some places, however, it is the uniqueness of the supplementary information that makes the Youth Bible a recommended read.

It has 400+ 'Life Files' on more than 60 different topics which are accompanied by 1,600 learning activities. They are equally suitable for personal or group use. The life files are mainly modern stories and reports which point the reader to the relevance of a scripture passage to modern life. In addition there are 100 'side lights' which provide relevant background information. Each book of the Bible has a Book Opener which sets the scene, provides goals and points to where the action is.

At the back of the Bible is a Topical Concordance and Dictionary which, although understandably not comprehensive, is very useful.

This publication is not only useful to AMICUS

members for their personal reading, but also to the leader who wants to bring the Bible to life in the 1990's.

THE YOUTH BIBLE

Nelson Word

£14.99 hardback, ISBN 0-85009-907-2

£9.99 softback, ISBN 0-85009-908-0

Album Review;

GOD IS ABLE, Ron Kenoly

The last Praise and Worship album Ron made, 'Lift Him Up' became the best-selling P&W album of all time. So why have so few people in the UK heard of him? Perhaps it's because we're so parochial in the songs we listen to, or are restricted to those in 'Song and Hymns of Fellowship'. In any event, 'Lift Him Up' redefined what a worship album was about. Gone was the indifferent choral singing and the bland accompaniment and in came a powerful exciting soul voice with musicians such as Chester Thompson, powerhouse drummer behind the Genesis live shows,

Abraham Laboriel the top session man and bass player on all Michael Jackson's albums and Alex Acuña and Justin Almora, both ex-Weather Report. 'God is Able' takes this tried and tested formula even further. Listen to the album, keep reminding yourself it was recorded live, and weep because they won't be in your church on Sunday!

Live: Steve Taylor at Greenbelt '94

Long-time contemporary Christian music favourite Steve Taylor made a long-awaited solo reappearance on Greenbelt's prestigious mainstage this year. The

opening number 'The Moshing Floor' from his latest album 'Squint' set the tone that this was going to be an evening to remember. His band were outstanding rock musicians but it is the persona of Taylor who moves like a man receiving shock therapy that makes the performance unforgettable. He makes Jagger look sedentary. Favourites such as 'Melt-down at Madam Taussauds', 'Jim Morrison's Grave' and 'I don't want to be a clone' were liberally sprinkled amongst material from 'Squint'. After the 60-minute set this hardened critic recognised this as one of the best gigs he'd seen in 20 years of going to rock shows. So sell your granny, pawn your hi-fi, but whatever you do, see him on his winter UK tour.

OP PRESS...STOP PRESS...STOP PRESS...STOP PRE

Steve Taylor is playing at Aston Villa Leisure Centre on Friday, 2nd December 1994. Firm Foundations is co-sponsoring the gig and can offer an exclusive deal of tickets for £8.00 (£2.00 saving on published price). Order them now from Gary. Cheques should be payable to 'The Boys' Brigade Firm Foundations.'

Address List

The following is a list of addresses of the leaders in charge of AMICUS groups that are currently meeting;

- Mr Paul Ashford, 76 Waur Fach, Pentwyn, Cardiff CF2 7BB
- Mr K M Burgess, 1 Chestnut Avenue, Bedhampton, Havant, Hants PO9 3QR
- Mr Duncan Daniels, 4 Oak Farm Road, Bournville, Birmingham B30 7ER
- Mr A A (Tony) Drury Smith, 210 Eckington Road, Coal Aston, Sheffield S18 6AZ
- Mr Patrick Evans, 9 Windward Way, Lowestoft, Norfolk NR33 9HF
- Mr John Fidler, 22 Mount Road, Wallasey, Merseyside L45 5JE
- Mr Eric Hudson, The Boys' Brigade, Keighley Central Youth Club, Central Hall, Alice Street, Keighley, Yorks BD21 3JD
- Mr Ian Kent, 26 Wester Drylaw Park, Edinburgh EH4 2TR
- Mr Graham King, 1187 Christchurch Road, Bournemouth, Dorset BH7 6BW
- Revd Graham Poole, 2 Redditch Avenue, Roseworth, Stockton-on-Tees TS19 9EG
- Mr Jeff Tarlin, 79 Deer Park, Harlow, Essex CM19 4LF