

June Project II

England!

for pleasure and purpose

The city of Omaha, Nebraska, has long been in the forefront of doing creative things for special people, and one of the special people in Omaha taking a big part in things is Thomas Houlihan. For one thing, Houlihan has been very active in Project II, a vibrant organization which believes people with handicaps can serve as their own advocates. He has received awards for "Most Ideas for Project II" and "Contributing Most in Getting Money for Project II". Reprinted here from GOARC Gazette is Thomas Houlihan's write-up of his recent trip to England in which he combined the pleasures of sightseeing with speaking up and out about DS.

I really love England. I left my heart in England. I stayed with four or five different families. I did a lot of sightseeing as well. I saw downtown London, and I was really impressed with the office of the Campaign for the Mentally Handicapped. We visited a Social Services Department which takes care of a section of London. It was very impressive also. Some of the sights we saw were Big Ben, Tower of London, St. Paul's Cathedral, The Houses of Parliament, and quite a few London pubs.

Some of the people I stayed with were Alan Tyne, Mr. and Mrs. Wald, Paul Williams' family, a lady named Oxana, and Hugh Firth and Melinda Shaw. They live in several different cities. We also visited Anne Shearer and Chris Heginbotham of the Campaign and the Seymours from Goring. The Seymours have a daughter with Downs Syndrome and they belong to a very active organization called Downs Syndrome Association.

I gave several talks while I was in England. People responded pretty well. They seemed very impressed at times, at times they were shocked, and sometimes they didn't seem to care what I said.

They were shocked most when I asked the parents what would happen to their sons and daughters after they are gone. Most of them were too scared to answer, because they don't know what will happen. One lady gave me a big hand when I said that she said it was an important question.

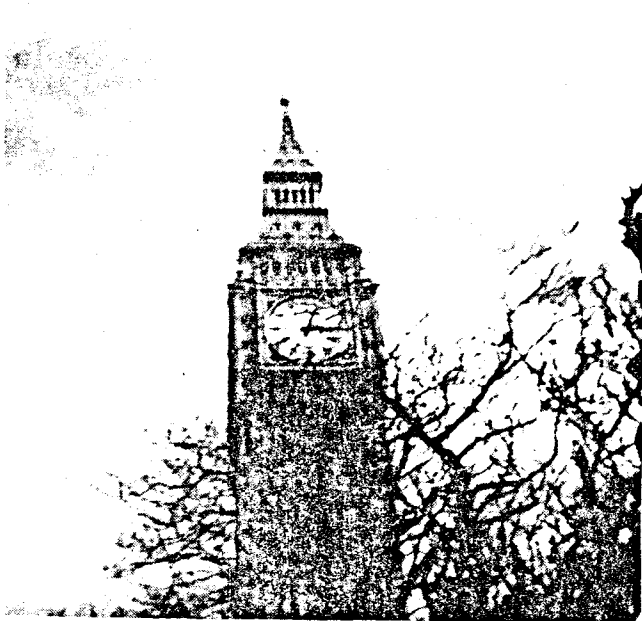
We took a lot of pictures. We had some rain, but the weather was sunny most of the time. We were very lucky, because England is usually cold and rainy. The scenery was beautiful.

Another thing that was funny was that I could never get iced tea over there. All I could get was hot tea. They eat a lot of the same food as we do, but they also eat different things, like Shepherd's Pie and Hot Pie.

On the last leg of the trip I met Vince Gorman, who lives even further north. We were unable to visit his home because our trip was too short. The last thing I want to say is that the people were very, very friendly toward a person who has Downs Syndrome. Like I said before, I left my heart over there.



This is me on the plane.



*This one is Big Ben
in London, England.*



*This is me with
Mr Paul Williams The
young lady is Bonnie
Security in downtown London.*