

Ken Carter's FYD (Friends for Young Deaf People) Testimonial

1. Early relationship with Denis Uttley - Founder of FYD

When I was training to be a Teacher of the Deaf at the Institute of Education, University of London in 1967, I was sent on one of my teaching practices to the Old Kent Road School for the Deaf. It was there, that I was assigned to work with a certain "Mr. Uttley". It was before this teaching practice that I was seriously thinking of giving up work with deaf children and returning to the world of Sport and Academia as I didn't see myself grappling with the complexities of deafness, very low levels of achievement and I was somewhat disillusioned with the University course which I was attending. The very first class I observed was breath taking and I knew that this man Denis Uttley was going to change my life for ever through his passion for teaching and wanting the very best from his pupils who were not only deaf but had multiple disabilities.

It was whilst I was on this "aspirational" teaching practice that I went with Denis on his famous London walks with his deaf children learning about Chaucer, Dickens, Shakespeare, Wordsworth and all the people who have made a difference, to not only London, but to the rest of the world. It was at this time that FYD was being established that he started taking children down to Romney Marsh in Kent and to places in Europe using his famous "FYD Vans" which were driven by parents and teachers. He wanted to "open their minds" to the wonder of history and the universe so that they became "natural & self-motivated learners".

2. Motivation to tackle "illiteracy" by Denis Uttley and FYD

During the early years of FYD, deaf children were rarely referred to, or even presumed illiterate, as their low standard of reading and writing was often accepted by parents and those professionally involved and put down to deafness. Denis passionately wanted to change this situation for the sake of the next generation. He knew that deaf children were cut off from most of the common communications that provides conversation (chat, over-hearing, small talk, discussions etc.) tapes, records, music, theatre, cinema, telephone and sadly conversation and discussion within the family.

3. Learning from the Founder of FYD

I realised, that through FYD and the early work of Denis and his small army of volunteers, there was a need to involve far more people, deaf and hearing, to provide the background of effective communication and open up opportunities for children and especially for young deaf people to work together on educational experience type projects and activities. More "Friendship" and "Integration" were of paramount importance to create the right environment for tackling age old segregated and "blinkered" thinking.

4. Deaf & Hearing FYD Pioneers (1966-1989)

It has been extremely important for me to remember the main FYD (Friends for the Young Deaf) deaf and hearing pioneers from 1966 to 1989. They were Denis Uttley, Morag Rosie, MBE(Director), Evelyn Carter, OBE,(co-Director) Diane Kenyon, Ken Carter, Barbara Hofschoer, Margaret Moore, Hamish Rosie, Cubitt Eagling, Susan Pyper, Libbie Morton, Sally Spayne, David Rose, Phillip Howard, Marlene Swift & John Leaworthy. I need to do more research to "dig out" other names from the archives.

5. Some prominent FYD leaders

It is with great pride, that I mention some of the most outstanding beneficiaries: Damian Barry, Craig Crowley, MBE, Mandy Crump (nee Loach), Stuart Harrison, Chris Radcliffe, John Walker, Fiona Brookes (nee Rosie), Sue Barry, Rachel Williams, to name but a few.

I can't speak too highly of the above deaf role models as they have "ALL" been outstanding in one way or another. Craig has, of course, been honoured with an MBE for his services to "Deaf Sport". I was very fortunate to have him as an outstanding and celebrated student at Bulmershe College of Higher Education where he became President of the Students Union as well as helping me to organise a "European Deaf Students Can" Conference at the University of Reading. I don't have space to mention the attributes of others mentioned above but will leave Morag & Stuart to do that for me. They are all first class in my eyes !!

6. FYD responsibilities held by Ken Carter

When I went to my personal records, I found the following positions (they need to be checked?) that I have held within FYD over the years:

1974 - 1979	Secretary/Treasurer of Friends for Young Deaf People (FYD)
1979 - 2002	Trustee of FYD
1992 - 1996	Chair of FYD Trustees & FYD Council
1996 - 2000	Vice-Chair of FYD

It has given me a great deal of satisfaction personally to have witnessed the tremendous progress made by FYD over this period. However, I was saddened at the time when FYD was taken over by the NDCS due to financial reasons but I did fight at

the time for FYD to be merged with Deafax but this was not possible due to financial and legal implications beyond my/our control.

7. Involvement with FYD Projects /Activities

It pleases me immensely that I was able to support Morag Rosie, Evelyn Carter and others (Damian/Craig/Mandy/Penny/Stuart/Chris/John etc.) with the following highly successful projects:

- Communication Management (National Leadership Training-emphasise on Team work/Skills)
- Educational Research Project (Language perception/learning skills/sound & visual perception)
- Recreational Projects (Communication through Sport & recreational courses-day/weekend/week)
- Leisure/Exploration Projects (Art/Drama/Exchange Visits/Expeditions.)

8. Millfield Village of Education Holiday Courses

Due to having attended Millfield School on a Sports Scholarship, I was in a good position to discuss with John Davies, the main organiser, the prospect of a group of young deaf people coming to join in with the Millfield Summer School. He fully supported the idea especially if FYD could help with organising the recruitment/ administration including communication facilitators etc. So Morag & I were able to get things going for Residential Integration Courses for young deaf people and their families. These courses proved to be outstanding in so many ways. It increased each person's ability and enthusiasm to communicate with other people, deaf and hearing, by broadening experience, boosting confidence and self-esteem and improving course member's skills in communication.

9. Funny, but serious moment, at the Millfield Swimming Pool !!!

As there were opportunities to use the swimming pool before our evening meal, it was important that one of the FYD adults should supervise due to health & safety reasons. When I was on duty one evening, one of my daughters, who will be nameless, was really larking about and deliberately pushed one of the most outstanding deaf swimmers in full clothing plus his hearing aids into the water as a joke. As you can imagine, this set off others in doing the same to my annoyance. When Morag appeared she wanted to know who was responsible for this unruly situation. I had to admit that it was my daughter who had provoked this uproar. As you can imagine Morag was not very pleased with the "Carter Family".

10. Sponsors of FYD

I would like to pay tribute to all those sponsors which helped FYD over the years. Some of them were: Allen Lane Foundation, RNID, Wates Foundation, BBC CIN, Marks & Spencer, Esmee Fairbairn Foundation, Radio 4 Appeal, Charles Hayward Trust, Princes Trust, Queens' Jubilee Trust, Foundation for Sport & Arts, Help a London Child and many more.....

10. Influence of FYD on my life

If I had never met Denis & Eileen Uttley, Morag & Hamish Rosie and Diane & Andrew Kenyon all linked to FYD, I would never have helped to set up Breakthrough (Deaf/Hearing) Integration Trust (now deafPlus), Deafax, Decibels, AACT, DisabledChild India, Deafkidz International, Deaf Aspirations, Specialkidz, Efficere Sports International and Deaf Sports & Football Foundation. The work of FYD was inspirational and aspirational !!

11. Is FYD still relevant today?

The nature of the FYD's work especially the National Leadership Training is still needed but in a different 21st Century format. My hope is that Deaf Aspirations (www.deafaspirations.org) will incorporate the "Ideals of FYD" but with more of a focus on leadership, mentoring, business, entrepreneurship, employment and communication skills through one of its projects named FYDA-"Friends for Young Deaf Aspirants" (<http://deafaspirations.org/mentoring.html>)

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Founder of: Deafax - (www.deafax.org); AACT- (www.aact4children.org); Decibels - (www.decibels.org.uk)

One of the founding Trustee/Directors of the following; Breakthrough/DeafPlus (www.deafplus.org);

Ability2Access (www.ability2access.org.uk); Specialkidz (www.specialkidz.org); EASiTEC (www.easitec.co); Deaf Sports & Football Foundation (www.deafsportsfootballfoundation.org); GOALS4LIFE (Global Online Assisted Learning & Support)- www.goals4life.org.uk .