

Holiday Lettings

A number of TCF members have contacted us about properties they own which they are prepared to let to other members of TCF at reduced rates. Whether you are looking for a fun-filled holiday at Disney Land, or natural landscapes for walking, or a retreat that gives you solitude and silence, we have them here.

(1) New four bed roomed villa 10 minutes drive from Disney's theme parks in Orlando, Florida, USA:



A beautiful villa with that WOW factor! Completed in 2005, furnished to a very high standard, 4 larger than average bedrooms, 2.5 bathrooms, a 14'x28' solar heated pool. Children of all ages very welcome. Games room with pool table, air hockey, magnetic darts, Nintendo Game Cube, various board games. Strict no smoking policy. Reduced rate of £425 per week and £25 of this

goes to TCF for each booking.

CONTACT: Theresa & Mark
e-mail toppinfamily@ntlworld.com
phone - 01903 212757

(2) Mount Earl, Little Pednavounder, Coverack, Cornwall, UK:

Step out of the rat race. Offering a high degree of privacy and seclusion, set above the beautiful Downas Valley within 32 acres of private heath and woodland. A 20 minutes rugged walk to the beautiful Downas Cove where seals and basking sharks have been spotted. Well equipped accommodation, exposed beam lounge, log burner, sea views, sleeps 4 to 6, conservatory and private garden. Strict no smoking policy. Prices range from £220 to £350 per week depending on time of year. A discount is offered to TCF members.

CONTACT: Mr. & Mrs. Willis, phone - 01326 280123, mobile - 07870 950239

(3) Converted Barn in a peaceful, rural spot in the



CONTACT:
Chris Chick,
phone - 01873
812024

Brecon Beacons National Park

Set in 10 acres next to the owner's barn, near Crickhowell (which has pubs, restaurants and quaint shops). Views of Table and Sugar Loaf Mountains. Canal and river nearby. Riding, caving, climbing, walking etc..

Alternative therapies available.

Barn has 2 bedrooms (1 ensuite), sleeping 4/5.

All amenities in kitchen. TV, video, DVD and music system. Linen, towels, water on meter, electric and central heating all inclusive. Cot and highchair.

20 per cent discount for TCF members.

Low season - £200 per week, £30 per night;

Mid season - £240 per week, £35 per night;

Peak season - £280 per week, £40 per night.

Camping and Caravanning retreat to the Lakes 28th April – 1st May 2006

Having been a caravaner now for a number of years I suggested on Callum's chat room that we could meet up and go camping which is very inexpensive. I love the freedom and relaxation but find it very difficult now being in noisy surroundings and feel very uncomfortable not talking about my Son through fear of spoiling other people's holiday. I am so looking forward to meeting up with other TCF members and talking and listening about our children to people who understand. The response I have received is fantastic and who knows TCF may end up with their own camping club?

We voted on the Lake District. The weekend is booked for the 28th April until the 1st May, to Newby End Farm, Newby, Penrith, Cumbria, CA103EX. Website: <http://www.newbyendfarm.co.uk/caravans.html>. The caravan park is family run and consists of 12 pitches for caravans, tents and campavans. We have the whole site for ourselves. There are showers, toilets and a wash house with a chemical disposal point. The owners are kindly letting us use free of charge, their music hall and marquee for our meetings, I will bring space heaters and gas cylinders so no excuse for being cold, also a karaoke machine for Frog (mind boggling now!)

Margaret Smith-Roberts (Frog to us) has made up a rap song but is adamant it will not be published until after the event. I am still trying to persuade Frog to get a CD made to raise money for TCF because I am sure we all want to hear it. Frog will also be doing crafts with the children and making kids' T shirts with PS (Proud Sibling) on them, but would like a rough idea of how many so she can get enough of the fabric paint.

For those who want luxury, like Lady Margaret (Margaret H) there are plenty of local guesthouses nearby, or for those like our Superman/stampy Webmaster Derek who may need to last minute book. Scottish Margaret Hardy (Haggis/ Posh), Frog, Sarah and Val will be staying in a cottage on the site (still 2 spaces available)

I have not as yet constructed a timetable but the break is basically to relax and do whatever we are comfortable with. There are some lovely walks organised by Serafina, fishing with Jackie's husband, and local pubs. I will bring footballs and a swing ball etc for the children.

The cost £3.50 Per person per night
Children 5-16 £1.50 per night, younger children free.
Electric hook-up £1.50 per unit per night
Pets are welcome

Cottage - £170.00 (not each person) for the week end, sleeps 6

If anybody would like to suggest anything, offer advice (much appreciated) or come away

with us, please contact me: Callum's Mum, Roseanne Kay, my email address is: cheshiregas@btconnect.com and my home telephone number for those of you not on the internet: 0161-304-8060. Nearest train station, Penrith, have no problems in collecting anybody.

Thank you and cannot wait to meet up
Roseanne - Callum's Mum

Donating old, redundant mobile phones

There is a new and easy way to help raise funds for TCF, simply by donating unwanted mobile phones for recycling. Phones can be donated by calling free on 0800 389 7199 or TCF National Office to request a freepost recycling envelope (copy enclosed).

Each phone collected contributes towards the costs incurred in our work assisting families towards a positive resolution of grief.

If you run a business, teach in a school, run a social group, or work in an office, why not organise a day when people can bring in unwanted phones? If you collect more than 15 phones we can arrange a free courier service - simply call us on 0800 389 7199.

All phones collected are put to good use. Working phones are shipped to developing countries for reuse. Damaged phones are stripped down to their individual parts and safely recycled.

TCF News

Issue No 47 Spring 2006

The Compassionate Friends



The National Gathering 2006

To be held at
The Royal Agricultural College,
 Cirencester,
 29th September to 1st October.



Given the popularity of the national gathering at this venue in 2005 we are informing readers of the 2006 gathering early so that they can reserve their places in good time. For participants it is a time to meet up with fellow TCF members and renew friendships. For newcomers it is a chance to be yourself and make new friends.

A newcomer to the TCF Gathering 2005 wrote: 'It was so comforting to meet so many people who knew exactly what pain losing a child causes you. I didn't once hide my tears that weekend. I felt so peaceful when I was there...I would definitely recommend the Gathering to anyone who is sadly in this club that none of us asked to join.'

We stay at the Royal Agricultural College, which has been established seat of learning since the 1800s. It is set in magnificent grounds, surrounded by open fields and on the outskirts of the small market town of Cirencester in the Cotswolds. The accommodation is in Single and Twin rooms,

each having their own ensuite and tea-making facilities.

We aim to have a programme of Discussion Groups, Music, Art and Writing Workshops and Relaxation Therapies. Participants can also take time out whenever they like just to switch off, chat to each other or contemplate. A special Quiet Room is always set aside for participants to display photographs and mementoes of their loved, departed children so you are welcome to bring along these treasures.

On Saturday the Keynote Speaker will be our patron, Dr. Ann Dent. Later on Saturday we are planning a 'Walk to Remember', which will be a short, circular walk through the park and into Cirencester town. You can dedicate the walk in memory of your son or daughter, grandchild or sibling (forms will be enclosed). In the evening we will have our famous Gathering Dinner and Raffle. On Sunday morning there will be an Ecumenical Service with candle lighting. Later we will

hold the AGM and after lunch there will be a Closing Ceremony.

To help make the weekend an even bigger success we are seeking volunteers in the following areas:-

1. Looking after newcomers
2. Registration - meeting and greeting
3. Table hosts at the dinner
4. Candle celebration
5. Discussion Group leaders
6. Quiet Room attendants

If you feel you could help, please contact Marian Venn on 01242 238745; mvbr31413@blueyonder.co.uk

We look forward to meeting you at the Gathering and leave you with a few more remarks from last year: 'All the staff were very helpful, polite and friendly.' 'Thank you for a wonderful weekend.' 'A lovely peaceful setting with magnificent views.' 'We would like to return here again.'

Marian Venn, Gathering Organiser

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Charity Events

We are pleased to offer our readers information on some of the charity events that have been organised by TCF members in the past year. As you may remember, the editor and TCF National Committee members had discussed ways in which we could best spread the word about these events, especially as they are such an important part of TCF's efforts to keep the organisation solvent! We thought about including a photocopied list in one of the newsletter issues each year although the committee thought this a somewhat poor reflection of such noble efforts! The editor is happy to state that it now seems possible to carry reports of charity events in each Spring Issue of the newsletter: hence their inclusion here. We hope we can stick to this, recognising however that lack of a sufficiently large newsletter (for the time being) means we are restricted to the inclusion of only a few events while a number of worthy fund raising activities will still not be reported nationally in this manner. We are still working on this problem and possible solutions are welcomed from readers. Now the good news!

Charity Night Fundraisers

For the Compassionate Friends in Teesside



Bereaved parent Dave Griffiths and his sister Marie (on the left in the picture) organised a Charity Night at the David Lloyd Racquet and Fitness Centre in aid of the Teesside Group of TCF. Dave enlisted the help of some local artists and the event raised £850.20p. Margaret Pringle, local contact for the group thanked the manager of the centre and all who had helped in any way to make the event such a tremendous success.

Quiz Night

By Sue & John White



We have once again held a very successful Quiz Night in memory of our son Paul and our friend's son Nick, raising money for TCF.

We met Linda and Jeff, Nick's parents, through TCF in 1998 four months after Paul died in a car accident aged 18. They have become our

closest friends and we truly do not know how any of us would have survived without each other. TCF gave us back some normality in our lives that we could not find amongst family and friends.

Each year we have held a Quiz Night between the anniversaries: Paul's on 11th June and Nick's on 28th June. In 2005 we had our largest attendance with 158 people.

We have been very lucky with raffle prizes donated to us and usually have been able to acquire tickets for some West End Shows, signed photographs of celebrities, and the Beckhams have given us something each year as they live close by. This year we also had some signed copies of novels donated by several popular authors.

We are enclosing a cheque to the amount of £1,387.55. We would like to ask that you give £200 of that money to the library funds and £200 to the leaflet fund with the rest helping TCF in any way it can.

Holding a quiz night can raise a lot of money especially if you organise everything yourselves and only have to pay out for the supper and hiring of the hall. If anyone would like to know how we organise such a successful evening we would be pleased to offer them help.

Ten Mile Sponsored Walk



Here is a picture of Jennifer Pope who braved a very rainy and blustery day to complete a ten mile sponsored walk on behalf of TCF. Her solo efforts raised £375.00

West Yorkshire

In May the West Yorkshire Group organised a fund raising event in Holmsworth which raised £1,100.00. This was a clairvoyance evening attended by nearly 200 people. Whilst we were very careful to impress that TCF holds no affiliations, it did give us a chance to publicise the organisation with a display of leaflets and information, and the ladies who spoke at the event donated their services free.

Sibling Support Group



TCF Sibling Support Group held a sponsored walk on the 28th of August to raise funds for the group. The walk has raised over £1000 to improve our Sibling Services and to pay for the cost of hosting their website.

Wrist Bands: 'Loved today, yesterday and forever more'

Quote from the Shropshire Journal, Friday January 6, 2006:



'Cariad Cakes, Ludlow's award-winning cake makers are repaying a debt to a charity which helped its owners, David and Kay Fletcher, cope with the tragic loss of their three month old son Jamie.

From January, David and Kay will be selling remembrance wrist bands for The Compassionate Friends, which was set up to provide advice and support to bereaved parents and their families... David said: 'While struggling with the pain and heartache of our bereavement, The Compassionate Friends has provided a constant source of great comfort and support...'

David and Kay write: We'd just like to add that TCF has helped us so much through our bereavement. To this end we wanted to help out in some way, and your wrist bands seemed an ideal means of raising funds and promoting TCF. We have already purchased several quantities from you. The response has been really heartening, with people ringing, asking for further details and often opening their hearts up. We are not initiating some grand charity event but simply making a personal effort that we feel is in keeping with the memory of our beloved son Jamie who died from Sudden Infant Death Syndrome.

Editor's comment: On behalf of TCF I would like to thank all these fund raisers for their brave and magnanimous efforts. They set an example to us all.

(May we please remind you that the 'Charibands' are available from the National Office (with discounts), tel: 08451 20 37 85; www.tcf.org.uk)

MARATHON

Marathon runner Steve Scully, and long-term supporter of the work of The Compassionate Friends, will be representing TCF this year in the London Marathon in April 2006.

Steve is an Emergency Planning Officer in Kent, and was instrumental in setting up the Kent Voluntary Sector Emergency Group (KVSEG), of which TCF Kent members became an integral part. As Chairman of the group Steve helped ensure free training on all aspects of disaster response for all the voluntary group members, in addition to involving TCF with the delivery of training both at a local and national level.

On a personal note, Steve is well known for his warmth, energy, enthusiasm, and great sense of humour.

Let's all show our support and thanks to Steve by sponsoring him.

For further details contact the National Office on: 0845 120 3785 or visit our website www.tcf.org.uk.

LATE NEWS FLASH! You can go to the website www.justgiving.com/tcf and sponsor him on line!

ONE DAY CONFERENCE

'Victims and Witnesses: Raw deal or fair treatment?'

We are pleased to announce that TCF will be facilitating a Conference with the Inns of Court School of Law, City Law School and St. Bart's School of Nursing and Midwifery.

The aims of the conference will be: to improve practitioners' awareness of what can be done to ensure victims and witnesses get fair treatment, to promote best practice in inter professional responses to sudden and violent death, and to answer the question: 'Is a victim centred approach compatible with the legal process?'

Thursday 29 June 2006

Morrison Hall, Atkin Building, Gray's Inn, Inns of Court School of Law, London

Speakers:

Ken McDonald QC (DPP),
Lawrence Gant (A & E Consultant),
Jack Goble (Fire Investigator, London Fire Brigade, and Magistrate),
ACC John Broughton (ACPO),
Diana Youdale (Compassionate Friends),
Joyce Plotnikoff (Consultant to the Home Office and Office for Criminal Justice Reform on vulnerable witnesses).

They will discuss the practices and procedures in place in their organisation to support victims and witnesses.

The afternoon programme will consist of workshops based on case studies, illustrating good and bad practice, to explore.

Delegates will be invited from the Police, Social Services, fire and ambulance services, healthcare practitioners, lawyers, voluntary sector, and emergency planning departments.

Conference fee will be £90 per person, with a £10 reduction per person for 2 or more booked in a single booking.

This is a must attend, low-cost professional development event for organisations dealing with sudden, violent death.

For further details please contact our national office on: 0845 1203785