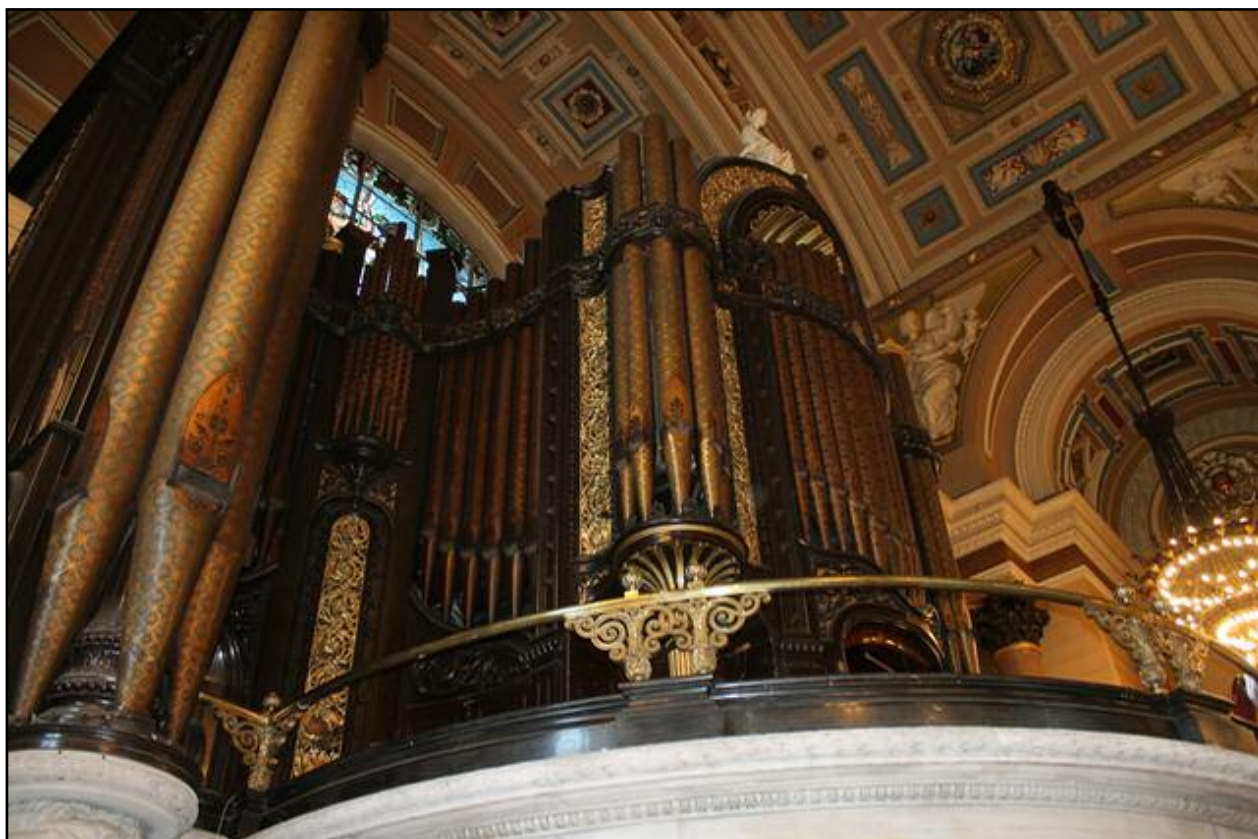


ReSound


For people with Cochlear Implants

Autumn 2016

Issue 52



“The Great Willis Organ at St George’s Hall”

Manchester
Cicada  a charity supporting implant patients

This newsletter has been produced on behalf of the Manchester CICADA Charity

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Editorial

Welcome to the Autumn edition of Resound.

As we draw nearer to the end of the year we still have events on the calendar to look forward to including the XMAS lunch at the Liner hotel on the 26th November which will be reported on in the next issue of Resound.

We have a full program of events set out extending into next year, the AGM is set for the 18th March 2017 to be held at the Liner Hotel in Liverpool, just next door to Lime street station which should hopefully make it easy to get to for those travelling on public transport. Full details will be sent out nearer to the date.

The website address for the events is :- www.manchestercicada.org.uk/upcoming-events-2016/

For those without internet access, details will be posted out about a month before each event.

We have contributions in this issue, with articles from three members this month which I am sure you will find interesting, so if you have a story to tell no matter how small that you think would be of interest to other members please get in touch.

We have featured several articles in this issue all to do with trying to help with communications situations we find ourselves in, hopefully they will be of interest but as ever your feedback is really appreciated so don't hesitate to get in touch.

Once again everyone on the EC thanks you for your continued support and we look forward to seeing you throughout the year, and at the XMAS lunch if possible, and we wish you and your families all the best over the festive period.

Kevin Williams
Editor

An Aerial Challenge

by Kevin Williams

For those few people who don't know by now I have taken up a new hobby.

Every Sunday while the weather is still good, I jump in the car and motor down to Stafford to spend the day on a disused airfield learning to glide.

Apart from the exercise and the sun tan that I have now acquired I do actually enjoy flying and the sense of freedom when gliding aloft above the clouds is magnificent. However this is not about my favourite pastime it's really about the biggest issue that most of us face in our lives and that is to be able to hear clearly especially when outside or at an event.

The reason it became an issue with me was that when in the glider I sit in the front and the instructor sits behind me.



Although things have changed considerably since I first went gliding as a cadet, nearly fifty years ago, (there is now a canopy and the gliders don't fly like bricks), one problem still remains.

Whilst on the ground with the canopy closed I can hear the instructor very well, however once we are flying there is a 60 mph wind blowing around the cockpit, a considerable amount of background noise and an instruction like 'I want you to turn

to the right', or 'watch your speed' needs to be acted on and there isn't always time for 'pardon can you repeat that' especially when coming into land!

There is no intercom and headset in a glider as you might find in a light aeroplane so I have had to turn my mind to another way of solving the problem.

The first issue is that Hearing aids, and BAHAs for that matter tend to amplify ALL sound so speech is drowned out by background noise. There are sometimes choices of program that can be set up on Cochlear Implant Processors and BAHA's but they are really designed to minimize traffic noise or background chatter and not a 60 mph gale.

My thoughts turned to some sort of loop system, but how to fit one in the glider when I got in first time and remove it when I had had my flights; the aircraft of course belongs to the club and could not be permanently changed just for me.

The answer ideally would be a remote microphone that the instructor wore connected in some way to either my hearing aid or the BAHA. A quick check of the mountain of documentation supplied with my BAHA showed that there was such a device, hurray!! Oh dear I have not been issued with one by the clinic as most people use a different device to connect to their mobile phone and you only get one device issued. A new one would cost over £200.

Back to the drawing board (or should I say GOOGLE). A quick check on google turned up an intercom system used by motorbike riders which allowed the rider to talk to the passenger with a boom microphone connected using a Blue Tooth Intercom

system, in fact it was so good you could use it to talk to a group of riders! Yes! ... er No, I won't be wearing a motorcycle helmet in the glider. ☺

In the end I decided that engineering a solution was the only way. I purchased a cheap set of ear defenders, bought the motorcycle intercom and by drilling, cutting and a large amount of gaffer tape have



managed to construct what looks like a standard headset.

OK it's a bit 'Heath Robinson', for those of you with long memories, various so called inventions were published as cartoons in the newspapers in the 40's, but it works.

All of this turned my mind to what other deaf pilots did to overcome the problems.

I actually found a website called 'deafpilots.co.uk' and soon realized that this was not a new problem.

Their solutions varied, some put a mirror on the side of the canopy so the pupil could lipread the instructor but I could imagine a few situations where you would not want to take your eyes away from what is happening in front of you!

One person had a microphone on the end of a long cable that the instructor wore which he attached to a neck loop system and it was fastened inside the glider, but I wouldn't get permission to do that.

So all of this has turned my attention to the wider issue of day to day communications. Here are just a couple of the solutions to help both in the workplace in other situations.

1. Cochlear Wireless Mini Microphone

There are two versions of this device, the



one on the left is for connecting to a smart phone, whereas the one on the right is just a microphone. Both will connect to the BAHA or Cochlear implant processor using BlueTooth and include a noise reduction facility in the microphone. There is a setting on the Processor to connect to the microphone via blue tooth.

2. Bellman Domino Loop system



This consists of two devices, the receiver for the Implant user and a separate remote microphone. The remote microphone which has a filter on it to reduce background

sounds, can either be placed on a desk for example in a meeting or can be worn by a presenter clipped to their clothes.

The receiver can be used with Hearing Aids, Cochlear implants or BAHA devices as it can use a neck loop for a telecoil connection or can use earphones if appropriate.

The receiver also has a built in microphone so can be used without the remote microphone if necessary.

(We will be doing a follow up article in the next issue so if you have more information please get in touch)

St George's Hall guided tour and meal

by Kevin Williams

As many of you will know we tried to get a look around St George's Hall last year and were not allowed in as the MGM Film company had hired the whole place to film some scenes for an upcoming Harry Potter movie, something we did not find out until we arrived.

Determined not to be frustrated a second time we decided that if we booked a guided tour then we would be sure of getting a good look around and also a lot more useful information!

Accordingly a group of us went long in September having taken the precaution of booking lunch for afterwards. The guide was really professional and we began the tour in the basement of the building where the jail cells were and where some painful looking equipment was on display demonstrating that some punishments would be carried out straight after the guilty verdict!



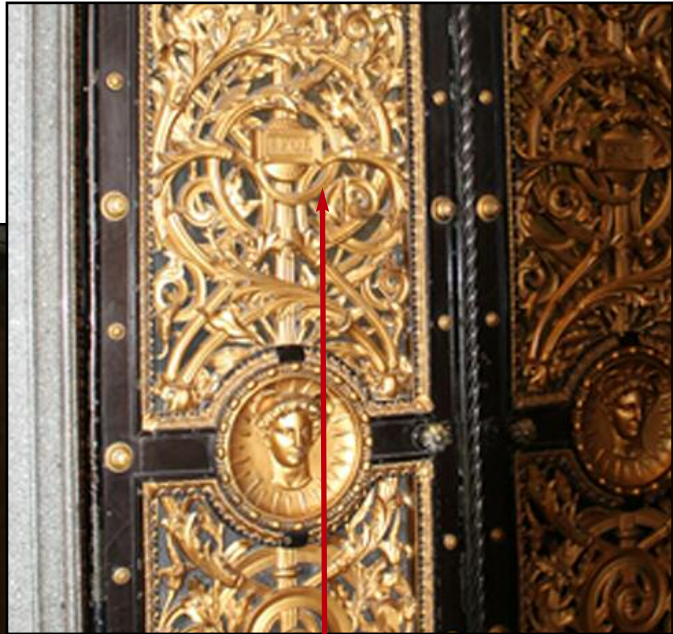
One of two courts each at opposite ends of the building now used as sets for TV programs and films.

A fabulously finished music hall used for concerts and recitals



Throughout the tour the guide told us how the building had been designed for musical concerts then courts of law together with jails and how the air conditioning system designed in the last century still worked today. The architecture and the attention to detail was stunning and the Liverpudlians were so proud of their status as the most prosperous city in Britain that they even

styled the hall in the manner of the Roman Emperors. There was a reference to 'SPQL', their version of SPQR from Roman days on most of the gilded doors which was meant to represent 'Senatus Populusque Liverpool'

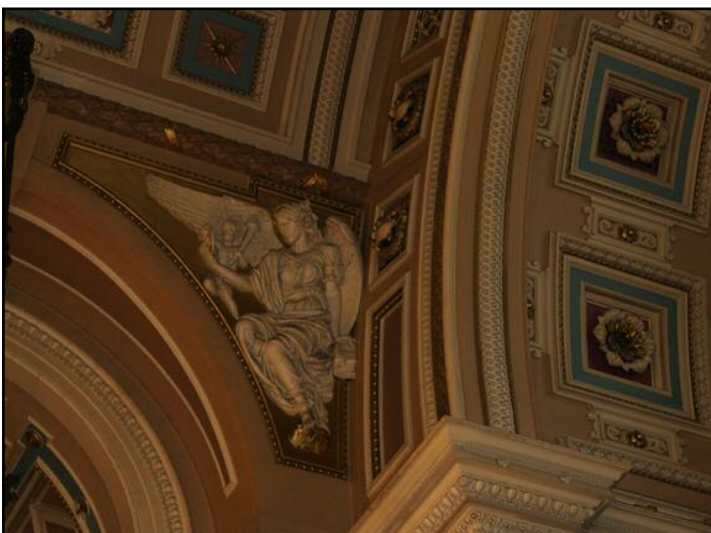


Detail from the gilded door to the main hall entrance showing the SPQL motto.



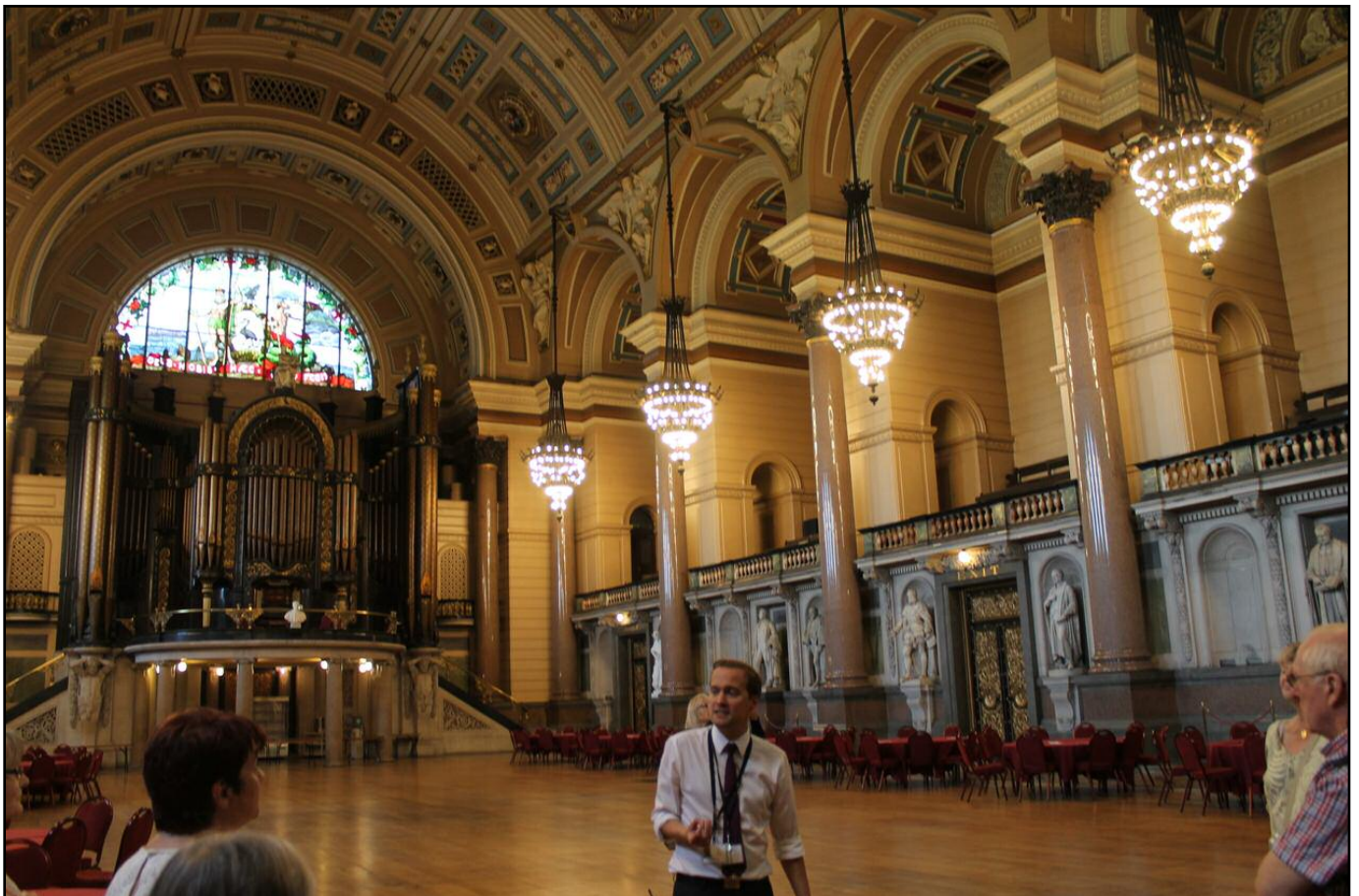
Above: The floor in the main hall is extensively tiled with a mosaic pattern but has to be protected from wear and tear so is covered up with a specially designed floor, and so to show how the floor is designed, small areas are left visible so that visitors can appreciate the stunning workmanship. On the next page at the top is the set of entrance doors to the main hall which illustrate the Roman theme used throughout the building and below that our friendly guide with a group in the main hall itself.

Altogether a fascinating and enjoyable tour followed by a meal for all in the restaurant!





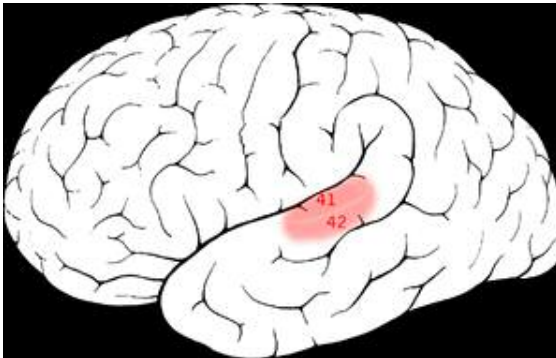
-- The gilded entrance doors to the main hall --



-- The main hall from the eastern end of the building --

Brain Architecture of hearing, deaf people nearly identical.

A recent study has shown that the neural architecture in the auditory cortex, the part of the brain that processes sound, of profoundly deaf and hearing people is virtually identical.



Lead author Ella Striem-Amit from Harvard said, "One reason this is interesting is because we don't know what causes the brain to organize the way it does.

How important is each person's experience for their brain development? In addition, a lot is known about (how it works) in hearing people, and in animals...but we don't know whether the same organization is retained in congenitally deaf people."

Those similarities between deaf and hearing brain architecture, Striem-Amit said, suggest that the organization of the auditory cortex doesn't critically depend on experience, but is likely based on innate factors. So in a person who is born deaf, the brain is still organized in the same manner.

But that's not to suggest experience plays no role in processing sensory information. Evidence from other studies have shown that cochlear implants are far more successful when implanted in toddlers and young children, Striem-Amit said, suggesting that without sensory input during key periods of brain plasticity in

early life, the brain may not process information appropriately.

To understand the organization of the auditory cortex, the team first obtained what are called "tonotopic" maps showing how the auditory cortex responds to various tones. They then used the areas showing frequency preference in the tonotopic maps to study the functional connectivity profiles related to tone preference in the hearing and congenitally deaf groups and found them to be virtually identical. "There is a balance between change and typical organization in the auditory cortex of the deaf," said senior researcher Yanchao Bi from Beijing Normal University, "but even when the auditory cortex shows plasticity to processing vision, its typical auditory organization can still be found".

The study also raises a host of questions that have yet to be answered. "We know the architecture is in place – does it serve a function," Striem-Amit said. "We know, for example, that the auditory cortex of the deaf is also active when they view sign language and other visual information.

The question is: What do these regions do in the deaf? Are they actually processing something similar to what they process in hearing people, only through vision?"

The study clearly asks more questions than it answers but will provide a platform for further discussion and study into why and how deafness occurs and what strategies can be adopted for further enhancing our knowledge.

*The study appears in Scientific Reports.
Source: Indian Express*

Do our theatres and conference halls make sufficient accommodation for people with hearing loss ?

A recent survey shows an appallingly high number of disappointed theatre-goers and conference attendees.

Poor experiences are commonplace for people with hearing loss who attend theatres or concert halls, according to a recent survey by specialist social enterprise Ideas for Ears.

94% of survey respondents said hearing ability has resulted in them having a poor experience, and 83% said they have been disappointed because the right provision wasn't available to allow them to access and enjoy the performance.

The survey was completed by 143 people with a range of hearing abilities, from mild to profound hearing loss.

11 million people in the UK have hearing loss, one sixth of the UK population and a large potential audience for theatres and concert halls.

What customers want

Findings from the survey suggest that shows and concerts can be made more comfortable and accessible to people with hearing loss by offering:

- Less background music when speaking takes place (73% respondents agreed)
- Provision of an assistive listening system (66% respondents agreed)



- Clear speech (65% respondents agreed)
- Captions (64% respondents agreed)

Smaller numbers said they wanted more volume (25%). A few wanted less volume (9%), and some said they would like sign language

interpretation (3%).

Preferences regarding loops, infrared or FM systems

When it comes to assistive listening systems, there is a clear preference for one type of system over the others. The overwhelming majority of respondents (77%) said their preference was for an induction hearing loop rather than an infrared or FM system.

Infrared and FM systems require users to use a headset and receiver which they collect from staff. More than half (56%) of those who had used these headsets and receivers have had poor or very poor experiences.

Of those who hadn't tried the headsets and receivers, this is because they cannot use them with their hearing aids (41%), they made them feel conspicuous or because they don't like people knowing they have hearing loss (26%), they don't seem hygienic (20%), and it is too much hassle to collect and return the equipment (13%)

Not just the auditorium

The survey also looked at experiences with ticket offices, bar areas, eating areas, and with ushers and customer service staff.

The findings reveal that the improvement which would make the greatest single difference is for staff to speak clearly and to look at the person they are speaking to. This is particularly important at the ticket office (71% respondents agreed) and with Ushers (67% respondents agreed).

Reduced background noise is also desired, especially in eating areas (51% respondents agreed), the ticket office (48%) and bar area (46%).

An assistive listening system is wanted in some locations, especially at the ticket office (46% respondents agreed). A text screen displaying information is also wanted at the ticket office (32% respondents agreed).

The possibility of quiet zones to make conversation with friends and families easier holds appeal, especially in the eating areas (39% agreed) and bar areas (33% respondents agreed).

Sally Shaw, director of Ideas for Ears, comments: "The scale of poor experiences reported through the survey suggests that theatres and concert halls have quite some way to go in order to make their facilities comfortable and appropriate for all hearing abilities.

"The numbers of people who have hearing loss has reached 11 million and is continuing to grow. When you consider that each of those individuals has family and friends who potentially wish to join them on a trip to a show or concert then this a very large group of people. It would make sense for theatres and concert halls to invest in measures that meet their hearing needs.

"By identifying what people actually want and what their priorities are, theatres and

concert halls can direct their resources in the most effective ways. This will allow them to introduce improvements that genuinely make a positive difference to people's experiences."

Eastbourne Theatres

Devonshire Park Theatre in Eastbourne, East Sussex, upgraded its provision for people with hearing loss in 2013 and this included the installation of a high quality induction hearing loop in a sophisticated layout design, known as a 'Super Loop' or 'Phased Array Loop'.

Gavin Davis, General Manager of Eastbourne Theatres, believes it was a wise investment. He explains: "We were possibly the first theatre in the UK to install such a high quality assistive listening system and it gives amazing sound quality. When we first installed the technology, we held a demonstration event that was attended by about a hundred people. Most said they had stopped coming to the theatre but after experiencing the hearing loop, nearly all said they were likely to come back. That's what we want – to get people who love theatre coming back. We believe our investment in the hearing loop will have paid for itself within three years. That is a great outcome."

Gavin says that they are now looking to install hearing loops into two further theatres in Eastbourne the Congress Theatre and Winter Garden.

Source: Ideas for Ears.

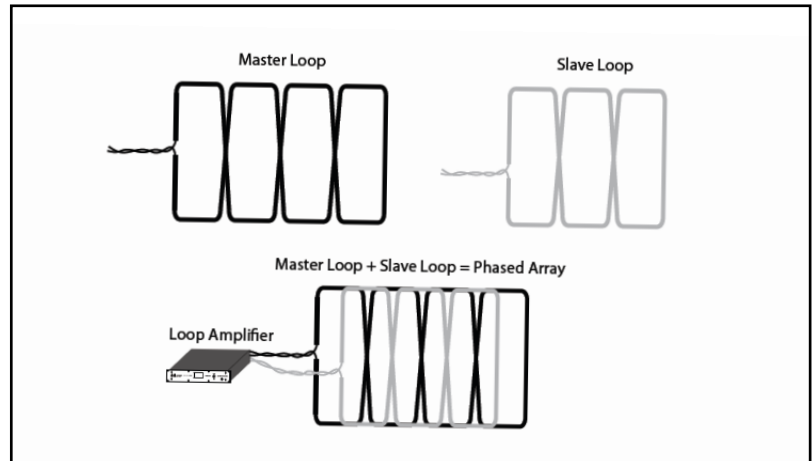
Editor's Notes:

We as a charity, have worked quite extensively with StageText over the years to help to promote the valuable work that they do and recognise the immense progress that has been made with their captioned performances and other techniques that have they have been involved in developing.

For those of us who have used traditional

loop systems over the years many have had varied success in hearing with them in a lot of cases, this article has highlighted some of the new developments in Loop systems.

We are mostly familiar with the 'perimeter loop system' which consists of one run of cable that is laid around the walls of a room in which it is to be used. This design has some issues, one in particular is that the effective area to hear in is not the same throughout the room and also the fact that someone outside the room would be able to hear everything (using the T switch). Two perimeter loop systems in adjoining rooms for example would interfere with each other.



The Phased Array Loop system actually consists of a number of overlapping loops usually laid on the floor under the carpet. By providing a signal to each loop that is electrically 'out of phase' with the nearest loop the result is even coverage throughout the room and a minimum of 'spill' of the signal outside the area. These are increasingly being used in large areas of public places and on transport systems such as ships..

Sea Anemone may hold a clue to repairing damaged cochlear hair cells

Sea anemone proteins have been shown to repair the kind of hearing damage caused by loud sound. In laboratory experiments, a cocktail of the proteins triggered rapid recovery of damaged cochlear hair cells – the cells of the inner ear that translate sound vibrations into nerve signals. Sea anemones use vibration-sensitive hair cells covering their tentacles to detect



passing prey. The creatures are known to possess a miraculous ability to replace lost tissue. They can even rebuild themselves after tearing in half during asexual reproduction. Lead researcher Dr Glen Watson, from the University of Louisiana at Lafayette, US, said: "It occurred to me that if any animal could recover from damage to its hair bundles, anemones would be the

ones." The scientists extracted proteins from mucus-coating sea anemone bodies that appeared to hold the key to their regenerative powers. They then deprived mouse hair cells of calcium to simulate the serious damage to mammalian hearing organs inflicted by loud blasts of sound. When the cells were exposed to the sea anemone proteins for an hour they restructured themselves and recovered enough to absorb a marker dye.

The scientists, who report their findings in the *Journal of Experimental Biology*, hope the early research will eventually lead to a treatment for patients with acute hearing loss.

Source: Irish Examiner

Lawrie Cleary - a man of vision

by Professor Richard Ramsden

When we look back on the history of cochlear implantation in Manchester there is one name that stands out above the rest, without whom it is unlikely that the programme would have got off the ground when it did and have inspired other centres in the UK to follow suit - that man is Lawrie Cleary.



Professor Ramsden and Lawrie Cleary at the opening of the new HN&C clinic at Manchester Royal Infirmary in February last year.

I first met Lawrie, a businessman and art connoisseur, back in 1986 when I was able to treat his own ear problems. In the course of discussion, Lawrie asked me if there was any area of otology that was new and full of potential that I would like to develop.

I had already decided that cochlear implantation held the possibility to change the lives of the profoundly deaf. I had originally been sceptical, because of what I regarded as fairly unimpressive outcomes from single channel devices, but the multichannel devices really were starting to impress me.

There was at that time no centre in the UK providing such a service, although my former teacher, the late Graham Fraser in London, was leading a research programme to produce an affordable single channel device.

The main obstacle to progress was financial. Each multichannel device cost in the region of £15,000 and there was no NHS funding available at that time.

Lawrie was inspired to help me to turn my thoughts into reality. He was already involved with a charity raising money for heart conditions, and he arranged for it to widen its remit to include deafness. The original charity was therefore "HEAR AND HEART", and our first money-raising venture was a ball in a Manchester hotel.

That evening, Laurie picked a winning ticket in the raffle – a parachute jump, and he duly performed this courageous act having tapped into his many friends for sponsorship.

This was to be the first of many occasions when his long-suffering friends were approached to support our efforts. HEAR (Help Ear and Allied Research) then became an independent entity.

By this time I had been in contact with the Cochlear Company who flew me out to Melbourne to fact-find and to discuss future collaboration. It was then that I first met the great Graeme Clarke. Laurie was by now so excited by the project that he decided to fly himself out too.

On our return we continued to raise money through a series of balls, art exhibitions, raffles, auctions and sponsored events. Lawrie is a great golfer and through his contacts with Nissan UK, a group of eight of us were able to play golf in all 4 British counties in 24 hours – Prestwick in Scotland, Forrest Little in Ireland, Royal Porthcawl in Wales and Mere in Cheshire, flitting around the country on Nissan's executive jet.

This raised a lot of sponsorship money and the next year we went one better – Sweden, Denmark, Belgium, France and England in 24 hours.

We were now in a position to carry out our first implants. HEAR had already found the funds to engage the first members of the implant team, based at the University, and they had been assessing a number of potential candidates for the operation.

In June 1988, Marilyn Graham a grandmother from Cumbria, was the first patient in the UK to receive the Cochlear CI 22 multichannel device. Marilyn had been going progressively more and more deaf for many years. Her switch on was spectacularly successful and she appeared shortly afterwards on national television.

This triggered interest in many other ENT departments around the country and pretty soon charitable money was being raised all over the UK to start similar programmes.

Lawrie and the HEAR charity continued to finance all the implants performed in Manchester until the time when the government were sufficiently convinced by the results that they agreed to finance the operation.

Government funding did not mean the end of HEAR's activities. The charity continued to raise money and funded some groundbreaking research projects to do with cochlear implantation and brainstem implantation, as well as assisting a number of causes related to deafness including supporting CICADA.

Over the years we saw many changes, the most exciting being the implantation of children, and the dramatic improvements in the lives of these young patients gave Lawrie immense pleasure.

Lawrie ran the charity with the highest degree of responsibility and care, but eventually the time came to wind up HEAR. One of Lawrie's parting shots was to provide the funds to allow CICADA to become a separate charity. The balance of the funds, some £750,000, was donated to the Central Manchester Trust to establish and equip the new implant centre opened last year, with which many of you will be familiar.

When we consider that over 2000 implants have been performed in Manchester it is worth the thought that none of this would have been possible without Lawrie Cleary, who now has much more time to devote to getting his handicap down.



News from across the pond



The New HiRes™ Ultra Cochlear Implant from Advanced Bionics.

Advanced Bionics (AB) has released the new HiRes™ Ultra cochlear implant and will debut it at this year's American Academy of Otolaryngology–Head and Neck Surgery Foundation (AAO-HNSF) conference in San Diego.

Built on proven HiRes electronics technology, the new HiRes Ultra implant features the thinnest implant profile from AB and includes the HiFocus™ Mid-Scala electrode, designed to protect the delicate structures of the cochlea.

Developed with leading cochlear implant surgeons, the HiRes Ultra with the HiFocus Mid-Scala electrode offers several high-performance features designed to suit individual patient anatomy and surgical preferences for the best possible hearing outcomes.

"AB's HiRes technology offers the fastest stimulation rate, the widest input dynamic range and the precise stimulation of the hearing nerve via 120 bands, which leads to greater music appreciation and more natural sound for recipients," says Hansjürg Emch, President of Advanced Bionics and Group Vice President Medical of Sonova.

The HiRes Ultra is the latest generation of HiRes implants and features a low profile, which makes it ideal for recipients of all ages. The implant exceeds the industry standard for impact resistance and can undergo 1.5T MRI scans with the magnet left in place. In cases where a 3T MRI is needed, the magnet can be easily removed.

Additionally, the HiRes Ultra implant gives recipients access to AB's Naída CI sound

processor and wireless accessories that integrate with the latest Phonak sound cleaning features. The combination of AB and Phonak technologies allows recipients to understand better in noise, connect wirelessly to a variety of media or devices, and receive streaming signals between both ears. The AB and Phonak partnership offers the only hearing aid and CI processor that are perfectly made to work together, and make hearing easy and natural for bimodal recipients.

The HiRes Ultra implant is designed to meet the needs of the global market and is currently available in North America and Europe. Marketplace availability for all other regions will be based on regulatory approval by sector.

(The above article appeared in a press release by Advanced Bionics.)



MED-EL USA announced the FDA approval of the SYNCHRONY EAS (Electric Acoustic Stimulation) Hearing Implant System.

EAS represents the latest innovation in hearing implants, and is the combination of two technologies: the revolutionary SYNCHRONY cochlear implant that stimulates the auditory nerve for high-frequency hearing loss, and the SONNET EAS audio processor, with built-in acoustic amplification for low-frequency hearing loss. The FDA approval of the EAS System represents a major advancement for people who live with high-frequency hearing loss, but with existing low-frequency hearing levels that they are afraid to lose. This is often referred to as a "ski-slope" hearing loss based on the steeply sloping image

represented on a candidate's hearing test result. People with this type of hearing loss often have difficulty understanding speech in background noise with their hearing aids.

Ninety-seven (97) percent of patients participating in the MED-EL EAS clinical trial reported a benefit from EAS within the first 12 months. The study showed that 92 percent of participants reported an improvement in their ability to hear in background noise, one of the most challenging listening environments for people with hearing loss, and 90 percent reported satisfaction with the device overall.

Additionally, 97 percent of patients were able to use the acoustic unit built into the audio processor, which can be enabled if patients have low-frequency hearing levels (80 dB or better) remaining after surgery.

On average, patients performed more than twice as well on tests of speech understanding with EAS than they did with their hearing aids preoperatively.

"The EAS System has the potential to close the gap for people who have high-frequency hearing loss, but whose residual low-frequency hearing would have made them ineligible for a cochlear implant up until now," said Raymond Gamble, CEO and President, MED-EL North America. "If you struggle with hearing in background noise with hearing aids, you may be a candidate for the EAS System."

Harold C. Pillsbury, MD, Chair, Department of Otolaryngology/Head and Neck Surgery, University of North Carolina School of Medicine said "Historically, it's been a challenge to help people whose hearing has been 'too good' for cochlear implants, but who gain little to no benefit from hearing aids despite having low-frequency

hearing. The EAS system fills that unmet need," he added.



SONNET: Now the World's Lightest Audio Processor

Audio processors that are comfortable to wear, easy to use, and provide access to the latest automatic sound management technology are a focus for MED-EL.

That's why we are

pleased to introduce a range of new battery packs for the SONNET audio processor. A new body worn mini battery pack and a choice of three rechargeable kits, featuring a micro battery that makes the SONNET the world's lightest audio processor, are now available in the UK.

NEW: SONNET Rechargeable Battery Kits

The three SONNET rechargeable battery kits (micro battery pack, standard battery pack, or a mixed pack containing both the micro and standard options) provide complete flexibility for MED-EL cochlear implant users.

When fitted with the micro battery, the SONNET is 9% smaller and 24% lighter than the standard Zn-air BTE configuration, making it the world's lightest audio processor thus ideal for children and users of all ages with an active lifestyle. For parents, its water resistant design (IP54), lockable coil cable, and continuous link monitoring to the cochlear implant via the DL-Coil also provide extra peace of mind.

The reduction in size and weight of the SONNET battery does not compromise performance.

The SONNET features the latest generation of automatic sound management (ASM 2.0) and FineHearing Technology which combine to deliver optimum hearing in all situations.

Police Link Officer for the Deaf (PLOD)

Is Enid Blyton the inspiration for the latest service rolled out by a number of Police authorities?

Nottinghamshire is the latest Police authority to launch its Police Link Officer for the Deaf (PLOD) scheme.

PLOD was founded by Sgt Glen Barham who has been a police officer with Hampshire Constabulary for 28 years.



He is the founder of Police Link Officers for Deaf people (PLOD) and sits on the national steering group for emergency SMS.

Glen can remember the first time he met a Deaf person but it was a question from a Deaf lady that literally changed his life and made him look at Deaf Access in a new way and led to the creation of PLOD.

The scheme is designed to promote and improve equal access to Nottinghamshire Police services for people who are Deaf or hard of hearing across Nottinghamshire. Chief Constable, Sue Fish, said: "Last year, Nottinghamshire Police signed the British Sign Language Charter which highlighted our commitment as a Force to adapting the services we offer to ensure they are accessible to the communities we serve and to help build good relationships with the Deaf community.

"Earning the trust and confidence of the people in Nottinghamshire is one of our

priorities as a Force and it is schemes like this that make it possible. I am really proud to launch this scheme and acknowledge the commitment of our PLOD officers to ensure this initiative continues to build accessible services for our communities."

The Force have seven PLOD officers, four police officers and three PCSO's, who will provide support, information and advice to the Deaf communities and promote the understanding of issues affecting Deaf people among the Force's officers and staff.

Inspector Annie Yates, who heads up the project, said: "This is a really important opportunity for Nottinghamshire Police.

This scheme helps to fulfil the pledges the Force signed under the British Sign Language Charter and we continue to work with our partners across Nottinghamshire to deliver improved outcomes for Deaf people.

"The PLOD officers will work within the Deaf communities across the whole county, providing support, advice and information on policing; the officers will attend regular beat surgeries and local Deaf community events.

"Although some of the PLOD officers can use British Sign Language (BSL), or are learning, it is important to remember that they cannot act as interpreters.

If anyone from the Deaf community needs to contact us in an emergency, they can do so by using the Emergency SMS service." PCSO Laura Cooper, a PLOD officer, regularly attends the Nottingham Deaf Society.

Laura said: "I have been a PCSO since 2014 and really enjoy the role I play in the community, especially being involved in the Nottinghamshire Deaf Society.

I regularly call into the centre on Wednesdays, sometimes just for informal chats and other times to give structured presentations, I have recently been doing some crime prevention sessions.

“Attending the Deaf Centre makes me accessible to the centre users, they can ask questions about policing matters and I am able to give advice or pass on any queries to the relevant beat teams in their area. “I have been made very welcome at the Centre and hope that my presence provides reassurance that we are listening to the

centre users needs and concerns and becoming a more accessible service. “I really enjoy the opportunity to talk about my role and the work of Nottinghamshire Police, but equally it’s good to be able to share other conversations about everyday life, it’s all part of interacting with people to learn from their experiences. “I am going to start learning BSL in September to help aid my communication with the centre users; I am really looking forward to learning this new skill, I think I will have plenty of chance to practice”.

(Ed) Although the article above is related to Nottinghamshire police service similar schemes are also available around the country.

This is an article from the Blackpool Gazette

DEAF and hard of hearing people can get help from Lancashire police



The force is reminding locals of services it offers after Deaf Awareness Week.

There are 14 officers trained in British Sign Language (BSL) to help with communication and discuss crime-related issues with the deaf community. They not only help people who are brought into custody, but also deal with victims.

PC Paula Robertson is the force’s deaf liaison officer whose role is to improve the service for deaf people and promote sign language and deaf awareness training.

She said: “Those who are deaf are a very isolated group and by improving the service we provide we will encourage them to report crime and other issues to us.”

There is also an emergency text messaging service for people to contact all emergency services without needing help from anybody else.

Callers send their message with their name, location and the nature of the incident to 66247.

Supt Bob Eastwood, head of Lancashire Constabulary’s Diversity Unit, said: “Lancashire Constabulary has come a long way in recognising and meeting the needs of the deaf community and it is our aim to make it as easy as possible for everyone to contact us.”

All divisions across Lancashire also now have Deaf PACT (Police and Communities Together) meetings, to allow residents to raise concerns with BSL-trained officers.

TextHear Personal Hearing Aid

by Kevin Williams

A new App has been published on the Google Play store which runs on Android phones designed to help people with a hearing. It uses the inbuilt microphone of the phone to pick up speech and then provides a live speech to text display.

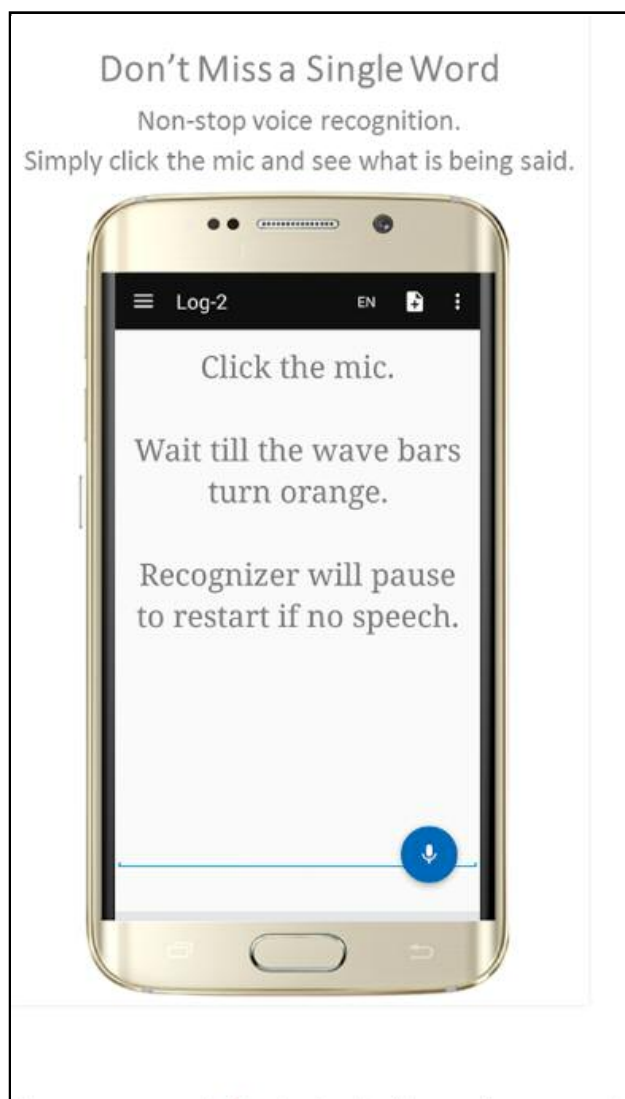
This is a great step forward in being able to improve the independence of hearing

been applications for the PC and even built in facilities in some operating systems in the past, the hardware has never been powerful enough for really accurate operation.

We are looking at how we can adapt the system to provide a one to one speech recognition system for situations where for example, a hearing impaired person is at an event with a speaker but the rest of the audience have no hearing problems.

The big drawback with using the device on its own of course is that the further away from the speaker you are sitting then the less accurate the translation becomes because of the distance and inevitable background noise.

However if this phone can be connected via BlueTooth to a suitable microphone like the one below it means that microphone can sit on the desk / lectern of the speaker and transmit directly to the phone app which



impaired people and has come about because of the improvements in technology producing more powerful processors in these devices.

Although voice recognition as a technology has been around for a while, there have

should improve the accuracy of the translation. There are many types of experiment going on in Universities and the like similar to this one which appeared

recently. Here the guide is transmitting from a phone to a group of people who each have a tablet device to view the message on and there are variations of this



facility available at some public places like museums.

CICADA are carrying out tests with the combinations described and also looking at the possibility of using portable microphones for presenters such as guides on tours as well as more formal situations.

We will keep you updated with progress on this project and hope to demonstrate it at the AGM early next year. In the meantime if anyone has had some experience of seeing these type of systems in use please get in touch to let us know how you got on.

Lunch and visit to Lewis Carroll Centre

by Kevin Williams



A group of us met for lunch recently at the Ring O'Bells pub in the picturesque village of Daresbury.

Following the meal we visited the Lewis Carroll Centre which was conveniently situated over the road from the pub at the beautiful All Saints Church.

Getting together and catching up on news is always enjoyable and the visit to the centre was an added bonus.

The church windows have a section showing characters from Alice in Wonderland if you want to see more visit this link <http://daresburycofe.org.uk/tourism/alice-window/>

or the church itself it is well worth it.



MY C.I. and ME

by Kathy Bullock

The day I was told my hearing loss was permanent and would not recover came as an unbelievable blow. I have always been a busy, organised person, known to be a good communicator with people and most important, my husband's carer. My life stood still!

I had a family, many wonderful friends and colleagues. I tried to avoid them all. I chose to walk on the opposite side of the road to avoid contact with anyone who knew me. And then I was told about a Cochlear Implant.

Following my C.I. I spent time at Manchester University working to improve my speech therapy which was very rewarding, it has enabled me to continue public speaking with restored confidence and I was grateful for the continued aftercare and advice available for me. I have since met with two university students studying for a Masters Degree which they

say had been very helpful.

My home is a lovely old restored farmhouse and I love my garden especially now I hear the birdsong, trees swaying in the breeze, children playing ...and my creaky doors and floorboards at home... My C.I. allowed me to become myself again. Perhaps I took life for granted and now I know that every day is a gift.

And Finally ..

Huge congratulations to Norah and Dave Clewes who celebrated their Golden Wedding anniversary on 1st October.



ReSound 'Notes' section

We welcome contributions from members on any subject that would be of interest to others, (including your CI experiences) your recent experiences with the health service, meet ups, activities or other news about yourself.

If you have something that you think may be of interest to others email it to

editor@manchestercicada.org.uk

or fill in the form online at
<http://www.manchestercicada.org.uk/resound-2/>

or write to: Kevin Williams, 107 Manchester Road, Hyde, Cheshire SK14 2BX.

A big thank you to contributors to this issue, Norah Clewes, Kathy Bullock, Professor Ramsden.

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