

# Mersea Island Festival

20th - 28th August 2006

Bushey & Watford, Oxford, and Chichester were among some of the Phab clubs to visit Mersea Island Festival this year.

## Bushey & Watford

It was the first time that one of our members, Tom, had visited a centre like this, he experienced activities that he never tried before including climbing, abseiling, quad biking. A good time was had by all.

**Julian Treves-Brown**  
Bushey & Watford Phab



## Chichester Phab

Well as usual Sue and Doug did themselves proud, the activities were well organised with something for everyone be it Wall-climbing, Zip-wiring, Water-skiing, Quad-biking for the more adventurous or sign-language, Tai-Chi, Art and crafts for the not so adventurous. Also the trips off camp including crabbing, castle visit, water-skiing were well run.

The Roman Games were hilarious and spirits were not dampened by the wet weather. The evening entertainment's were great fun, Karaoke, Bands, Discos, Talent night also Sue managed to get a Hot air Balloon that took people up quite a few feet how cool is that!



But the best thing of all was the feeling of one big family united together, looking out for each other how precious is that.

**Carol Liddell**  
Chichester Phab



## A Volunteer's Story

Mersea Island Festival is a summer camp made especially for people with disabilities in mind. This year was my first as a volunteer, something I had been meaning to do since I last went there.

The 'campers' all have fantastic individual personalities and are given the opportunity to just be themselves away from any prejudice. I JUST WANNA BE ME - is a phrase I've seen on a t-shirt. This is a place where you can.

Activities including climbing, zip wiring, archery, quad biking, banana boating, speed boating, waterskiing, crabbing, dance workshops, writing workshops, music workshops, painting, pottery, paint-balling, even hot air ballooning and trips to Colchester Castle and the like.

It was fantastic to see some of my friends from my Phab club doing amazing activities they have never dreamt of doing before, but having the full support from the qualified



staff at the Mersea Outdoor Centre.

This year's theme was 'Romans on Holiday' and as well as the other activities, there were allsorts of things to make in the arts tent (and the special roman tent) including togas, armour, swords, shields, flags and chariots. Evening entertainment is on every night, with live bands, disco's, karaoke and not forgetting of course the 'Camp Concert' where campers perform song, dances, poetry and even football skills.



Each year a few staff members have gone around the site discretely filming everyone in their activities during the whole camp, and on the last morning, the edited film is shown to everyone. Many tears were shed on the last day as everyone had to say goodbye to Mersea Island and their new friends.

Back home, I'm glad for the internet, as it makes keeping in touch with everyone a lot easier. I just now sit by the front door eagerly awaiting my copy of the DVD to arrive!

**Helen Williams**  
Oxford Phab

