

## THE BEGINNINGS OF OUR GROUP

It used to be really difficult to meet other people with the same diagnosis. (One thing the NHS is good at is confidentiality!) I was diagnosed in 1998. Even though I joined MDF and was encouraged by the Lincoln group, it was 2002 before I met another bipolar person in the Grantham area (Jean), and it was not until 2006 that we met a 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> person (Gill and Lynn), it was then that the idea of a local group started to look like a possibility.

It then turned out that there was a Mental Health Services group meeting at Greyfriars Community Centre, for those who could get a referral. As well as being a client's only group, it is not focused on mood swings - a new group was needed.

South Lincolnshire Mind offered us a place for our first meetings in June and July, which saw 12 and 15 people, making the Mind lounge seem quite small as we all crammed in. We voted to work towards being a group within 'MDF the Bipolar Organisation' and set our formal launch meeting for 25<sup>th</sup> August at the Gallery Room in the Guildhall being sponsored by the national charity. Our guest speaker was Jeremy Bacon from MDF National Office. An amazing 26 people came along and all showed their support by completing forms provided by Ian Hulme.

The group was now officially in existence allowing us to hold our first AGM in September with the election of officers and decisions on how to obtain funding, where to meet in future and a series of topics for the rest of 2007.

It is early days and the next few months will determine whether we will achieve the aims of the founding members;

- to ensure support is supplied for all of South Lincolnshire
- to make Grantham "A centre of excellence for Bipolar recovery"
- break down the stigma associated with our disorder

We know from other groups that many little bits of consistent help will determine how much can be achieved. It is for this reason that the group welcomes every offer of assistance and would like to see every member being involved as soon as they feel able to contribute.

***Roger Smith, Coordinator***



St Wulfram's Church, South Porch

We would like to thank Olive for this wonderful view that she captured.



## WORKSHOP - WHAT DO YOU WANT OUT OF LIFE?

At our meeting in August, Roger ran two workshops. He asked the question “what do you want out of life?” This raised much discussion ranging from large issues, such as starting a new career, to seeking contentment, the ability to handle Bipolar and to get on with a normal life.

Between us we had 350 years of experience of Bipolar (more than any psychiatrist!!!) and so we felt we had a lot to offer each other.

Motivation is the key word to any new start we make. Taking that first step is not easy when there seem to be many barriers against us, from our inward problems to the way society sees us. This is why our support for each other, with our own experiences of Bipolar, is so important.



## FUTURE PLANS...

Future meetings will be held at the Guildhall, St Peters Hill, Grantham on the last Saturday of the month, starting at 2pm.

Check out our website for the latest news and updates at [www.mdfgrantham.org.uk](http://www.mdfgrantham.org.uk).

If you have any ideas or suggestions for future meetings and social events, please see any of the organisers and share your thoughts.

## QUIZZES, JOKES & MORE

What do you get when you cross a snowman with a vampire???

FFFFrostbite!!!!

## CONTACT DETAILS

For more information please call 01476 408218 and leave a message or e-mail [info@mdfgrantham.org.uk](mailto:info@mdfgrantham.org.uk).

For items to be included in the Newsletter please e-mail [secretary@mdfgrantham.org.uk](mailto:secretary@mdfgrantham.org.uk).

