

# Telegraph & Argus

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## How a coffee bar became a guidance centre for young people

# Packing them in with the sound of gospel—as well as pinball

Pinball and table football machines, as well as reasonably cheap beverage of one sort or another, are usually the main reasons for teenagers frequenting a coffee bar. The San Remo coffee bar, Piece Hall Yard, Bradford, was no exception — until six months ago.

It was then that four young men — members of a small Christian group known as Gospel Vision — approached the manager, Michael Yiannakas, seeking permission to use the facilities of the disco above the coffee bar as a base for their Christian activities.

Mr. Yiannakas consented but stipulated that their activities must not interfere with the coffee-bar downstairs.

However, the four men encouraged — Jim King, of Ilke, Stephen Scholes, of Bradford, Dave Maslen, of Harrogate, and Pete Aspinall, of Ilkley — proved to be so popular with the San Remo's young clientele that a fortnight ago Mr. Yiannakas withdrew his original condition and allowed them the freedom of his whole premises

## every night of the week.

The San Remo is still a coffee-bar, but now it is a coffee-bar centre of Christian guidance and participation.

### EARLY HOURS

At least one of the four organisers of the set-up is at the San Remo by 6 p.m. At the moment the various activities go on until about 11.30, but it is hoped that soon they will extend into the early hours.

There is no set pattern of events. The only enjoining theme is Christianity. The upstairs "disco" can be transformed from a cinema to a music-hall or to a teach-in centre.

The organisers show two or three films a week. The films always entertain the youngsters, but they always contain some kind of Christian moral.

After a film, one of the members of Gospel Vision accentuates this moral for the

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audience and urges them to accept Jesus into their lives.

Every Saturday a group is hired to perform for the San Remo's young patrons whose ages range between 14 and 25. The songs are always religious songs, but any suggestion that Bradford's younger generation would object to this plugging of Christ is not borne out by the reaction of the San Remo's customers.

They join in all the songs readily and vociferously and it is rare on a Saturday night for the San Remo to be anything less than packed.

### VIDEO

Gospel Vision own their own video machine and often record Christian meetings which they can show to the young people at a later date.

Their most notable success in this respect so far concerns a meeting at York Minster.

Their recorded version was warmly received by the San Remo's customers.

Only a minority of all who frequent the San Remo are Christians. The constant aim of Jim King and the others is to increase this number.

It is beyond dispute that their first six months' activities at the San Remo have affected many of the youngsters.

The four people concerned give up their own time and money to the venture. Pete Aspinall has just given up his job to go full time into the work. Yet they want no praise or credit.

They say they are merely answering a calling — "We are not pushing religion or the Church, we are simply sharing God with them."



The organisers, left to right: Dave Maslen, Stephen Scholes, Peter Aspinall, Jim King, outside the San Remo

It's been 45 years since the four original trustees of Gospel Vision have worked together, but now these four men, three of whom are now Pastors, and with over 35 years experience of Pastoring each, will be starting a Residential School of Evangelists. The School will open its doors to students in 2020. Gospel Vision's new refurbished office Premises situated at 142 Bradford Road, Ilke, BD19 8SA.

*Isaiah 43:19 Behold, I will do a new thing; now it shall spring forth; shall ye not know it? I will even make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert.*



Singer Mike Kazzybrin entertains at the San Remo.



Gospel Vision 2019: Dave Maslen, Rev Stephen Scholes, Pastor Peter Aspinall and Pastor James King