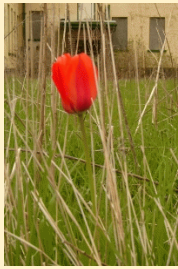


THE ORIGIN STORY OF VICTORIA'S LLEW

I thought on this, our Pride Day I'd pass down part of LLEW's oral history as related to me.



The History-book facts: There had been consumers employed at VMIAC since early '80s. As far as LLEW within clinical services we all started in the Dinosaur Days of the early 1990s with the brave consumer pioneers who conducted a participatory research program in one of the big hospitals over 3 years, and documented it in a series of reports which recorded many of the challenges LLEW would experience and hard-won solutions - consumer management and supervision, debriefing etc. 'U&I', 'Understanding and Involvement' OR 'The Yellow Book' f is a basic reference even now.

Then the new mental health service in that region employed 'Staff-Consumer Consultants', the first LLEW in public hospitals. I had the privilege of working with most of those pioneers.

The hospital got a nice award for being innovative; no-one rushed to take up the idea of LLEW.

Oral LLEW History: Until a Health department meeting, a little later.

A local hospital had been built, and funds put aside for staffing. Then just before completion, wild weather hit, and the damage put back completion for months. That wasn't the problem, because ... insurance.

The crisis was they had almost 2 months wages allocated for initial staffing in the budget and it couldn't be used there. That was a disaster, because if they got to June 30 with a surplus in staffing, next year's staffing budget would be reduced by the amount of the surplus because ... rules.

After I would guess a few suggestions for use of small amounts here and there, someone came up with a good idea: 'Hey, you know that Staff-Consumer-Consultants thing? We could split the money and give it to services to employ those consumer whatever's in each service for the next year! So, no cuts next budget!'

And the rest is History.



I heard this from someone in the business at the time, so I am confident of the above facts.

But I have an interpretation of my own that I remember, when progress is slow, or even reversed, when resistance is stiff and automatic, when my heart breaks for some of the things we see.

It seems to me that LLEW like the Blues Brothers, are on a mission blessed by the Divine!

Because there were two separate Divine Interventions involved in LLEW's origin.

First, in the insurance business, the sort of storm damage above is called formally 'An Act of God'.

And second, a bureaucrat had a good idea, which is a miracle in itself!

Or that's my theory! *

Happy Pride day, Comrades, may we have many more!

Bill



*For any doctors reading this, I am of course speaking rhetorically and hyperbolically and don't actually believe The Creator of All intervened in our origin! That would be a little... odd. **

** For any LLEW reading this... Sometimes I kinda, sorta do believe that a little 😊