



The Romanian Aid Foundation

Newsletter, Spring 2006



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RoAF has moved, again

The past 6 months in the life of RoAF have been dominated by the prospect of a move from Salfords following the closure of the ParcelForce site. After some 12 years of Royal Mail hospitality, the Salfords site was closed and RoAF has had to find alternative accommodation. A brief sojourn at a redundant Royal Mail site in Crawley gave us 5 weeks of respite, during which we were able to have a sort-out and dispatch a further two lorries to Dorohoi. We are very grateful to Royal Mail, both for the long term support and for the extra effort involved in enabling us to have an orderly move.

RoAF is now based at a storage unit at Smallfield. This unit became available just 24 hours before the lease in Crawley expired. For those who are familiar with visiting the Salfords site, the new location is roughly the same distance from Horley, but in an easterly direction. The address is Dell's Storage, Plough Road, Smallfield. The unit is opposite the Plough public house, and will be open for receiving donations of clothing on Saturday mornings only, between 09:30 and 13:00. Our website has location details and links to an on-line map.

RoAF has entered a new era, both in terms of a new location and a renewed vision of our work. We are not an organisation that puts money at the forefront of our activities, but it is fair to say that there are costs involved in sending aid to Romania and the new arrangements are more expensive than before. Nevertheless, if all the donations to RoAF were to be gift-aided then the UK warehousing costs would be covered by the money that the taxman returns to us. Below, our manager in Romania gives his report of the activities of the past three months, all achieved with your support.

Greetings from the team in Dorohoi:



(left to right)

Ionela (office administrator),
Iulian (warehouseman),
Valeria (shop manager),
Beni (General manager),
Elena (shop assistant),
Nigel (GLIA team coach),
Dumitru (pastor),
Maria (receptionist),
Cornelius (warehouseman),
plus
Laurentiu (electrical and computer engineer) who missed the photo.

A Report from Romania

Beni writes from Dorohoi:

Dear friends, I have planned to write this report for the activity of the last three months of Asociatia Neemia (AN). Being so blessed with the full warehouse of goods received from RoAF during the last months of last year and also three lorries received this year, the AN staff had a lot of work to do in all departments. I was very pleased with the work of every person who works for AN, as they put all the effort to do a good job. There is still a lot to learn and there is the possibility to do the job better, but we know everybody is trying to improve the quality of the work.

The office was opened five days a week: from 9.00 to 15.30 for the public interest and till 17.30 or

sometimes later for administration work. About 50 people daily come into the office for different needs: clothes, furniture, money (medicine, rent, electricity bills, wood for heating, gas bottles), computers, etc. Usually Maria, Laurentiu or I deal with them, to determine what the situation and needs are. Just to talk with them takes a lot of time, even when many times we will be unable to help. With the new regulation, now when we register a new family we have to take more details about the family, more papers to write, copies of ID cards, etc. We had planned four days per week for the distribution to 7 families per day, plus some others receive aid directly from the office; food, children's clothes, or some other things (every day there are people receiving help in this way). There was a lot of need of wood for heating in the winter and also medicine, we could help with maybe just 25% of the requests, with some money from donations and some from AN. In January and February when it was very cold we took boxes of clothes from the warehouse and prepared them for families in the office (it worked well but the office was too busy and difficult to work).

In March we were able to donate a lot of tables and chairs and other furniture to gypsy and Romanian families, we have just a few tables and no chairs left. We were able to make donations from the things you sent, they were very good for the needs here and for the work of AN. Last week, we donated two pieces from the special needs equipment which come in the last transport to a family who have a ill daughter with a physical disability from Botosani; they were very pleased to have those things. We helped also some hospitals with detergent, disinfectant and some tinned food.

Laurentiu prepared about 30 computers in last 3 months, which we donated to families, two kindergartens (one in the village and one in the town), and one computer to an Orthodox church. The need for the computers, even basic ones, is very great; we could only help with 25% of the need.

There was a lot of work also keeping the accounts up to date, the stock was so big, we still work hard on that with the stock from the end of last year which still doesn't balance with the accountant stock. We have bought last month a computer program for keeping the accounts which seems to help, Ionela is trying hard to learn it and to transfer all the dates to computer.

It has also been a lot of work put into Accreditation paperwork preparation. I asked two specialists to help me with that, it couldn't be possible to do all that work without help. I had a lot of involvement in that and took me a lot of my time to finish that paperwork. It was finished two weeks ago. Since then, one representative from the commission come to our office and checked if the declared documentation is the same as the reality and also had a lot of questions to ask and many things extra asking us to do. All the accreditation commission members have met yesterday and asked us to be there as well. They said that there were happy with how we work and how we are organised, but asked us to do a few things differently and asked me to change a bit of paperwork that was already prepared, and hopefully the documentation will be complete and we will get the accreditation. There are four months since I started to work for this documentation. All the charities find it hard to cope with all this paperwork.

The shop has been done well all these 3 months because there has been a lot of work put into it, trying to put some new stock every day. The clothes that were not sold in a period of time were brought back to the warehouse and made available for the donations. Just with the income from the shop we manage to cover all the cost of AN work, plus some more expenditure as: new program for accounts; pay customs taxes for 3 lorries; paid somebody to help with the paperwork for the accreditation. At the moment nothing has been changed regarding the legislation, law, regarding economic activity of the charities. We keep the shop supplied also with the Christian brochures supplied from Mennonites charity and also from other source when we have.

The warehouse is not as full now as it was at the beginning of last month, but we still have sufficient goods to last until the end of July for donation and for the shop. There was not sufficient heat the warehouse in the winter, it couldn't be possible to warm it when it was very cold. We would like if possible this year to brick in one of the big metal doors of the warehouse and to replace the other one with a better-insulated door. It would also be very good if we can do something about the fence at the warehouse, which we still were not able to make. God helped us to manage with all the work even when was much snow, and too cold. Cornelius and Julian have put together the pieces from the furniture we receive so we can donate them already fixed. A few pieces we put in the shop for sale (less than 10 %) if they were very good quality. The land at the warehouse has been ploughed last autumn and we hope to grow corn this year. It has been very wet until now and not very warm; already there are many floods in Romania, but not in this area.

The van worked well during last year, not having major problem, and was good even when was very cold. Just this month, because the roads are so bad after the snow melted, the van got several problems to the suspension, brakes, servo steering pump. Some of the problems have been sorted, some not yet. It also needs to replace at least two tyres this spring, and to take away some rust, which started to appear. Cornelius and Laurentiu use their cars to help the work when needed.

I want to thank you very much for all the work you do for AN. I know that without your

support we (8 people) wouldn't have a job and so, so, so many families would live without a hope in their difficult situations and could not think of a better life. Your generosity is a blessing for this area.

May God reward you with eternal life,
Benoni Mirauta, Manager, Asociatia Neemia



Joy in a Box

Once again last Christmas we had the privilege of distributing the gift boxes that many supporters had been preparing during the previous six months. The main consignment is due to go in early-October so that will be the deadline for those who are planning to prepare boxes this year.

If you want further information about the gift box scheme then please see our website at www.roafan.org.



The 2006 RoAF Duck Race

The 2005 RoAF Duck Race took place on the River Mole on Saturday 18th June. All the ducks were sponsored and nearly £500 was raised to help with the distribution of aid in northern Romania. Many thanks to those who helped make the event such a success, including the Horley Scouts and the management of the Six Bells.

The 2006 Duck Race is planned for Saturday 17th June.

Forthcoming Events

Dennis Hickman Jazz Quintet

featuring Dennis Hickman at the piano and Des Ward as vocalist.
Saturday 20th May 2006, 7:30pm, at Oakwood School,
Balcombe Road, Horley,

[click for more details](#)



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The Romanian Aid Foundation

179 Albert Road, Horley, Surrey RH6 7HS, UK;
email: info@roaf.org

The Romanian Aid Foundation is UK Registered Charity No. 1060828.

Asociatia Neemia

Str Spiru Haret nr 9, Dorohoi, Botosani 6850, Romania.
Telephone 0231 610059; email: Beni@roaf.org

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Link to previous newsletter: [Autumn 2005](#)