

Deerbolt Aid To Orphans

DATO is an established charity run by staff at the Deerbolt Young Offenders establishment in County Durham. In September they made their second visit to Dorohoi, taking 4 van loads of clothing, toys and bedding for Asociatia Neemia to distribute. They hosted a party for the children at the Centre of Hope and visited some of the families that the two charities help, and managed to see a bit more of the spectacular scenery on their drive across northern Romania. If you live in the north-east of England and would like to get involved then let us know.



Vacancies

RoAF has the following vacancies:

Warehouse manager: Principally; to ensure that the Horley warehouse is open each Saturday, to act as a point of contact for the warehouse volunteers and to liaise as necessary with Furnistore management.

Website technician: Principally; to maintain and develop the RoAF website, under the editorial direction of the Trustees.

RoAF does not employ paid staff in the UK and these posts are on a voluntary basis. If you feel that you could help in either of these roles then please ask for further information.

Forthcoming events,

all subject to confirmation

Lorry loading:

Saturday 10th April – Horley

Thursday 6th May – Lampeter

... plus some others

Jazz Concert in Horley, - tbc.

Duck Race – first Saturday in June

Christmas Concert – tbc.

Joy in a Box launch, mid June,

Christmas lorry – 04th December 2010



The Romanian Aid Foundation Newsletter, March 2010



As I write the first draft of this report I am in a small village in the far north-east of Romania in January. The outside temperature is a relatively balmy Minus 5C – a rise of some 20C above that of a week ago. The euphoria of New Year's Eve is over; the TV is announcing the realities of the New Year – fuel prices up by 30%, other prices and taxes to follow suit. A proposed “fast-food” tax, aimed at tackling obesity, is so inclusive that ordinary food bills may rise by some 20%. Romania now imports about 80% of its fruit and vegetables, and shop prices are comparable with those elsewhere in the EU. Conversely, prices for home-grown produce barely cover the costs of transporting it to the markets.

The minimum wage is set at the equivalent of £150 per month, but that only applies to those who have jobs. Towards the end of last year the Romanian government gave many of its public sector employees several extra days of holiday each month – unpaid and largely unwanted. This year, it has simply announced the chopping of 15,000 posts in the education sector. Healthcare is in a similar situation and it is easy to understand why actually getting treatment depends on the ability to pay for it.

It is within this context that the work of RoAF and Asociatia Neemia continues.

Despite the difficult circumstances in the UK throughout the year the RoAF teams in Horley and Lampeter were able together to send out 9 lorries, matching the number in each of the two previous years, plus the van loads from DATO, south Wales and the Isle of Man. Asociatia Neemia also received surplus goods from other charities in Romania and together this actually increased the quantity of aid available at a time when we were expecting a reduction.

Our thanks to Alex Scott who stood in as warehouse manager for three months. This allowed me to spend longer in Dorohoi, looking at ways in which RoAF and AN are addressing the needs of the people that we are helping in Romania. One of the outcomes of this will be a greater emphasis on helping people to help themselves, and we will be working through this in the coming months.

With many thanks for your interest and support, *Steve Humphreys*

The Romanian Aid Foundation and **Asociația Neemia**

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The Romanian Aid Foundation and **Asociația Neemia**

Working with Romanian people to bring help to the needy,

Hope through the Christian message and co-operation through joint ventures

UK Registered Charity 1060828

Comings and Goings

During the autumn the Horley warehouse was host to three pupils from Oakwood School, as part of the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme. Their practical help in the warehouse was appreciated by the team and what they learnt about preparing aid allowed them to pass their Community Service module.

Robert Kidd has helped with the Horley warehouse for a number of years but has now moved away to work in the west country. We are grateful to Robert for all his efforts and eagerly anticipate the setting up of a new branch in Bath.

Finally, it is with sadness that we report the passing of two friends during the past year. Win Woodcock was a loyal member of the Friday packing team and Lesley Tarrant was an enthusiastic packer and caterer on Saturdays. We are very grateful for the contributions that these two ladies made, and for the way in which their families have continued their link with RoAF – Win's son and daughter are both involved in the work (and her son-in-law is Chairman of Trustees) whilst Lesley's husband Steve continues as an essential member of the Saturday warehouse team.

Helping from a Distance

Chris and Ellena Edmonds live in Wales, just north of Swansea. Perhaps how they manage to support the work of RoAF may give you a few ideas if you live a long way away from Horley (or even if you don't).

Having put the word out, they receive vast quantities of donated crockery, clothes, toys, etc; some from the local charity shop, which passes on to them things that haven't sold after a couple of weeks, and some from friends and friends of friends through their local church.

About a quarter of what they receive is cherry picked as being the most suitable for the needs of Dorohoi; this they pack up for RoAF and about four or five car loads a year are taken either to Lampeter or Horley.

About a quarter was sold, some at boot fairs and some via advertisements in local papers. Ten boot fairs in the year raised £705 and sales through advertisements raised £85.

About a quarter, textiles that range between rags and well-worn clothes, is sold to a local textile recycling business for 25p/kg, this raised £60 in the year.

The remaining quarter is taken to the local dump - there is no point in sending rubbish out to Romania – and this quarter of the original amount is much less than what probably would have ended up in the tip otherwise!

Altogether, this makes a total raised in the year of £850, all from other people's unwanted things. Let us know your enterprising ways of helping the work of RoAF, so we can let all our supporters know in order to inspire them!

The Figures

Despite the difficult economic climate, last year's income was some 12% more than the previous year's. Our expenditure in the year was around £29,000, a little less than last year, but the increase in donations allowed last year's deficit to be redeemed and a small balance to be carried forward into the coming year. As usual, the bulk of the expenditure went on transport.

| INCOME | 2009 | 2008 | Change |
|--|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| Income from donations | 26,939 | 23,682 | +14% |
| Fundraising events | 2,196 | 2,136 | +3% |
| Tax reclaim (Gift Aid) | 2,799 | 2,632 | +6% |
| Interest | 23 | 106 | -78% |
| Total income | 31,957 | 28,556 | +12% |
| EXPENDITURE | 2009 | 2008 | Change |
| Transport (9 lorries in both years) | 20,910 | 24,187 | -14% |
| Needy individuals (where not funded directly by AN) | 340 | nil | ~ |
| Warehouse costs (including rent, materials, insurance) | 6,847 | 5,390 | +27% |
| Special projects (Trustee visit, 2009) | 344 | nil | ~ |
| Publicity (including phone, postage, stationery) | 850 | 332 | +157% |
| Total expenditure | 29,291 | 29,909 | -2% |
| Balance of income over expenditure | 2,666 | -1,353 | ~ |

Notes

- . The figures for 2008 are taken from the audited accounts for that year, and may differ from the estimates given this time last year. The figures for 2009 are preliminary and are subject to confirmation.
- . Transport costs are linked to the costs of fuel and to the exchange rate between the pound and the euro. Transport costs remained fairly consistent during 2009 but we have been advised of an increase in transport costs of around £130 per lorry, with effect from April 2010.
- . Warehousing costs include the repayment of the previous year's deficit. Costs are expected to stabilise at about £5,800 during this coming year.
- . Publicity costs were higher this year; we have invested in some display equipment which allows us to improve the quality of our presentations.
- . Gift Aid reclaims have not increased as much as the income from donations.

Many thanks to all those who have made donations of time, goods and money to help this work continue.