



In May a steel framed building was donated by a local company, Shufflebottoms Ltd, to provide a house for a needy

family. Mrs Lorna Shufflebottom, company director, visited Dorohoi with one of her employees to oversee the erection of the building. A work party of 5 from Emmaus Christian Fellowship, Lampeter, flew out for two weeks and due to good organisation, much hard work and co-operation with Beni (our Romanian co-ordinator) and his very able and willing Romanian workers, this steel frame was transformed into a superb home for the Rusu family, who enjoyed assisting in the project wherever possible. The home has been blessed by the arrival of their third child in the autumn.

A second house was built in October, supervised by Beni using the same Romanian work force, providing a traditional basic but comfortable home for another family who lived in appalling conditions. These projects were largely funded by members of Emmaus Christian Fellowship.



The Romanian Aid Foundation and Asociația Neemia

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2008 was a very busy and productive year for RoAF in Lampeter (Wales). Since 1992 we have been making 2 "Aid Trips" annually to Dorohoi, using Royal Mail vehicles or lorry manufacturers' demonstration vehicles generously loaned free of charge. However, due to the current economic climate these source dried up and early in 2008 we felt led to purchase a tractor unit of our own, to be used exclusively for transporting aid to Romania. This unit was also made available to another Christian charity in Wales, "Support for Romania", in Cardiff, who in turn allow us to use their trailers. This relationship has proved beneficial to both charities as we share many items such as tinned food, baby milk powder, bedding, etc. Having this unit also meant that in July 2008 Steve Flegg was able to take an additional load to Dorohoi using a trailer loaned by ParcelForce.



We continue to receive a good number of bicycles and wheelchairs which have been refurbished to a very high standard by prisoners in Swansea and Cardiff Prisons. This project is efficiently co-ordinated by Wendy Dando who has increased our support network through her many contacts in south Wales.

A mammoth sponsored swim was undertaken by Jac Burgess in November. She achieved her target, completing the 10 mile swimathon in 5hrs 13mins. Her brave efforts raised just over £2,000, to be shared equally between RoAF and "Help for Heroes", a charity supporting severely injured soldiers on their return from active service.

The Welsh "Joy in a Box" appeal realised approximately 800 shoe boxes, carefully filled and wrapped by children from many schools throughout south Wales. These were taken to Dorohoi, to be distributed to needy families and school children in time for Christmas.



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

Q&A with Richard Burgess, one of the founders of RoAF and leader of the south Wales team

What observations have you made over the 17 years since your first visit?

In 1992 when the freedom from communism was very new the majority of people lived in very poor conditions. The scars of dictatorship were very obvious, eg orphanages were in a shocking condition, hospitals were disgusting and the whole infrastructure had broken down.

There was a cloud of despondency over the whole area, corruption was rife and people in general had a look of sadness.

In 2008, what has changed?

In the cities closer to the western borders there has been an economic explosion bringing a massive construction programme and a tremendous upturn in manufacturing largely brought about by the abundance of cheap labour. Entry into the EU is evident.

But what about Dorohoi?

300 miles from the border, to the extreme north-east of the country, the main route to Dorohoi is over the Carpathian mountains and despite extensive improvements the roads can be impassable for many weeks in winter due to heavy snow. This makes transport very expensive so this isolated area is not economically viable for industry. Unemployment is in excess of 75% and this brings with it many problems and difficulties. The cost of living is now very similar to the UK but there is very little help from the government. Times are very hard for the majority of people in Dorohoi.

How much does it cost to send a lorry?

To send a lorry to Dorohoi now costs approximately £2,600, whether we use our own vehicle or a return load on a Romanian lorry. To maintain our on-going support there we need to send 8-10 loads each year.

A breakdown of costs – return journey.

Fuel (£1,700), Ferry (£320) and Insurance (approx £250).

Road tax for France & Belgium (£20), Germany (nil), Austria (£250), Hungary, (£40) and Romania (£40).

This figure does not include maintenance due to wear and tear.

What do you take on the lorry?

Each lorry can carry up to 20 tons of tinned food or about 12 tons of mixed items. We have established contact with a food company in Lincolnshire and, thanks to their generosity, RoAF has been able to send about 40 tons of mixed vegetables or soup during the past year. That's about 78,000 tins, each one of which forms the basis of a nourishing meal when supplemented with locally



grown produce. This food is distributed to needy families and also shared with some local institutions.

The mixed loads are made up of clothing, some new items but generally used garments (which are inspected before dispatch), bedding, mattresses, beds and household goods. We also take bicycles (which help people to get work by increasing their mobility), wheelchairs and computers (which help children with their education and future employability). From time to time we will take special items, such as a rotovator to help on a smallholding which supplies vegetables to the Centre of Hope in Dorohoi. Many of these items are surplus to requirements in the UK and might well end up in landfill sites long before they are worn out.

What can we do?

We must maintain our support, prayerfully, financially and practically. We need to continue providing food, clothing, hospital and school equipment, etc, in order to give needy people, many of them families, a basic standard of living, and through our giving show them the love of God. Your financial help is essential to fulfil our commitment to the needy people of Dorohoi.

And finally?

We would like to thank those, in south Wales and elsewhere, who have contributed to this work during the past 17 years.. I hadn't envisaged, on my first trip, that this would grow into the size of operation that RoAF is now, but I praise God that we have been able to share his blessings with so many people.

