



SCOTTISH AID TO EASTERN EUROPE
(A Christian Development Project)

Dear Friend

This year Nigel Yates and I were delighted to travel to Oradea, Romania. This was Nigel's first visit to the country. It gave us the chance to see our co-workers in Emanuel Hospice. We also visited PULS and Caminul Felix, two other charities operating in Oradea which we support.

I hope you find our report interesting and challenging.

What did we do this year?

We collected aid which was then sorted and packed in the usual way. We continued to work in smaller teams as an added health precaution. We resumed delivering presentations of our work and it was good to be able to give an update of things in Romania.

Our aid was delivered in April and the recipients were very grateful for the support they received.

What did we donate to the Hospice?

We gave the hospice incontinence pads, walking aids, nightwear, knitted blankets, children's clothing, toiletries, arts and craft items and toys. We also sent a wedding dress!

We gave PULS clothing for ladies and babies.

We gave Caminul Felix 2.3 tonnes of clothes for ladies, gents, children and babies. We also gave them shoes, bedding, household items and tools.



Above: Gaby Vişan, Nigel and Gaby's wife, Mihaela outside the PULS Centre.

We were delighted to see Gaby again and Mihaela who is the President of the organisation.

They work with mothers who initially wished to terminate their pregnancies, but chose to keep their babies. They work hard to ensure that they can give the mums suitable

clothes for themselves and their children. They also hold interviews and counselling sessions with individuals and small groups.

In addition to such practical help PULS also arrange for summer camps for the children who would not otherwise have the opportunity of a holiday in the countryside.



Above: A young family which PULS supports.

We then visited Caminul Felix, where orphans and vulnerable adults are cared for as well as adults who grew up in care at Caminul Felix. Some have built their own homes and gained employment on-site.

The organisation was approached by the authorities with a request to provide care for adults with disabilities. Sadly, this is a group which is not catered for adequately.

In response to this request, a new accommodation block is now well under construction.



Above: The new accommodation block for adults with disabilities is progressing well.

A key feature of Caminul Felix is the variety of training opportunities for young people growing up and wishing to gain paid employment. Unless such opportunities can be provided, young people can lose motivation.

Over the years, we have witnessed such situations across the country where the potential of youth is not harnessed in meaningful and productive ways.

When it is used positively, it represents a valuable resource to the individual in gaining paid employment. It also gives a sense of purpose to the individual and brings benefits to the wider community.

Caminul Felix provides this hope for the future.

There are two villages. In Village 1, there are six houses built in Swedish style. The houses are all the same. The children grow up in families usually with around ten children and two parents. The care of a mum and dad provides love, adult role-models and stability for children from broken homes.

Village 2 has ten houses built in US-style and we were given a tour. It was lovely to see the improved living conditions for the children.

It's always lovely to see bright and spacious rooms for the children. They compare sharply with the lifestyle to which many street children are forced to live.



Above & Below: One of the bright and spacious bedrooms.



Above: Village 2 was build with support from the US and the UK.



Above: One of the modern spacious houses for a large family.



Above: Flowers and bushes add colour during the summer months.

In addition to the spacious homes, the surrounding area is ideal for recreational use. Whether it is the well-resourced children's park or the open fields used for team games, there is something for everyone.



Above: The well-resourced children's park.



Above: Open fields are ideal for recreational purposes.



Above: Trees are picturesque and also provide shade from the hot summer sun.

While there are many careers to choose from, it is important for young people to consider their personal skills and what they enjoy doing. In the normal course of life, we are in our employment for many years, so it is important that we enjoy our work.

It is also important to select a trade for which there is a high demand and that such a demand will continue for the foreseeable future.

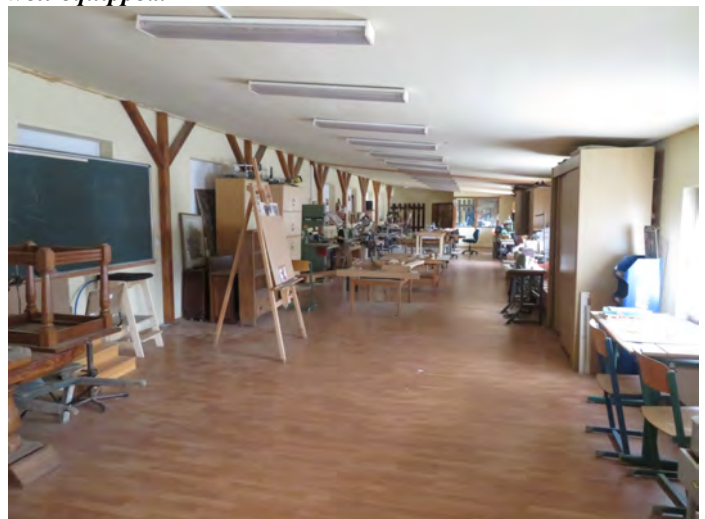
With these factors in mind, an extensive workshop block provides dedicated places for young people to realise their full potential. Here they can train under the supervision of qualified experts and in so doing, they gain confidence in their work.



Above: The extensive area housing various trade workshops.



Above and below: The joinery workshop is spacious and well-equipped.



Small units can be rented on-site and on one of our visits, kitchen units were being built to order. These items can then be delivered, or collected according to client wishes.



Above and below: The motor vehicle workshops are spacious and well-equipped.



As noted in last year's report a project in recent years has seen the building of new houses on land within Caminul Felix. The aim is to provide suitable homes for people who have grown up in care there.

Fixed prices are set for the houses from the outset and provided the payments are made as agreed, then the buyer has full ownership at the end of the agreed term. This provides a powerful incentive to families. Knowing this sense of stability is an arrangement which was less defined prior to the Revolution.



Above: New houses being built for families living at Caminul Felix.

Local people build the foundations for the houses and teams from overseas, including the UK come and spend several weeks completing the house.



Above: The interior of the house well under construction.



Above and below: The new complex for residents with disabilities.



Completion of the above residential complex will provide ideal homes. The building will have twelve apartments and will house two people in each apartment. Having a spacious and secure living environment is a wonderful benefit to the residents.

We were then shown an interesting project which provides employments for some of the vulnerable residents. Sunflower Designs manufacture unique, handmade textile products. They also provide valuable revenue for Caminul Felix.

The company purchases surplus materials from local industry and recycles them. This reduces waste and benefits the environment.



Above: The sewing department at work producing quality items.



Above: Part of the bright and spacious shop area.



Above: Mariana shows off a bag made on the premises.

We then visited Noble House which is a converted building and is now an attractive, modern hotel.

It is another project designed to raise funds and also to provide quality accommodation for up to 44 guests.

The staff can advise on tours to local places of interest and are flexible to your requirements.

Modern links mean regular flights between the UK and Romania which is a full member of the European Union. This means reliable service for travel and during your stay.



Above: Noble House Hotel - a new holiday option.



Above and below: Interior views of Noble House.





Above: Nigel, Simona, (Hotel Manager) and Gordon.

Simona and her team are able to advise on your holiday plans no matter the duration.



Above: The reception area at Noble House.

Emanuel Hospice

We were delighted to meet our friends at Emanuel Hospice again this year. Our visit began with a briefing on progress at the new building and a visit to the site.



Above: The new hospice building is progressing well.

Changes to planning arrangements with the local authorities and the pandemic caused frustrating delays. It was encouraging to see the building's progress.



Above: A close-up view of the hospice building.

Estera, the senior social worker from the hospice, took us on home visits where we visited the sick and the poor. We gave them toiletries, nightwear and toys for the children. As ever, we received a warm and friendly greeting.



Above: We visited homes to meet the sick and the poor.

Estera and her medical colleagues travel many kilometres every week on home visits. She usually delivers aid and also takes the opportunity to have a friendly chat with her patients. Sadly, some may have had no visitors for many days, or even weeks. I have often been impressed by the value of a visit and Estera's skills as a listener and means of support.

One of the highlights of our visit every year is the Children's Day. This is an opportunity for children and their families to forget about the pressures of family life where someone is seriously ill and come together to enjoy themselves. The hospice provides this treat free of charge for everyone and local sponsorship is provided.

The event is organised by Estera. This involves contacting around seventy families well in advance to provide details of the event. Unfortunately, some patients may not be well enough to attend due to illness and cancellations are sometimes made at very short notice.

Arrangements have to be made with the host venue regarding the meal, the facilities available and the activities throughout the day. The bus transport also has to be arranged.

On the day, we had individual and team games. Tug-O-War is always very popular! We also had many other activities

including face-painting and bubbles, especially for those with restricted mobility.

For several years now our Children's Day has been held at the Hanul Pescarilor (*Fishermen's Inn*) just outside Oradea. The owner has provided a delicious meal and use of the sports field free of charge!



Above and below: The beautiful setting at the Fishermen's Inn.



Above: The stunning setting for our meal.

After our meal, we enjoyed the events on the sports field.

It was lovely to see the children and adults come together. Most did not know one another but the competitive spirit of the team games helped them to gel!



Above and below: Games for everyone!



Above and below: More games!





Above: They're off!



Above: Tug-O-War is always a favourite!

Some of the children enjoyed the face painting and bubbles!



Above and below: Face-painting and bubbles!



After a time of fun in the sun, there was a chance to enjoy choruses and a Bible story.



Above and below: Choruses and a Bible story.



The children always enjoy receiving their gifts of toys. This year we donated almost half a tonne of toys to the hospice in 95 boxes and bags.

At the end of the day's activities, Estera and her helpers set out some of the toys on display for the gifts.



Above: The toys being set out.

The children then have the opportunity to have a close look and decide which toy they would like.

Estera gives each child a small piece of paper with a number on it. When each child's number is called, they

come forward and chose a toy. In many cases this is the first time they have had the opportunity to chose a new toy.



Above and below: The girls making their choices.



Above and below: The boys making their choices too!



After the exercise of several hours in the hot sun, the children and the rest of their families are ready to set off for home tired but happy.

We are always grateful to Estera and her helpers for making the day such a success.

We are also grateful to the management and staff at the Fishermen's Inn for making our visit so memorable.



Above: The group at the end of the day's events.

All too soon, it was time for us to say "Goodbye" and to travel home.



Above: Gordon, Estera and Nigel.

Thank You

Each year we always receive the aid needed by the hospice and others. Once again, I'd like to say a very sincere "Thank you" on behalf of my fellow-trustees, our sorters and packers and the widows, orphans, sick and poor of Bihor County, Romania.

Changes from 2024

Having said that, in recent years our transport costs have risen by 75%. We always try to be wise custodians of our funds and in this challenging financial climate, we recognise that we are always accountable for our expenditure.

From 2024 we will stop the collection, sorting and packing of aid and instead we plan to use our funds to purchase the aid in Oradea where things are now available. In this way aid can be targeted more accurately for the three charities.

We plan to visit Oradea in June as usual, but this year we will go with our co-workers and buy the aid. We will then help to distribute some of the items.

As usual, we will bring pictures of our visits as we distribute the aid to the sick and the poor. We also plan to give presentations as usual.

I hope you feel a full partner with us in this challenging but rewarding work - thank you!

Dr Gordon Lyon, Chairman of Trustees.