

25th Anniversary Issue

Newsletter

csef

No. 48

AUTUMN / WINTER

2015



We sincerely thank everyone
who has given us support
over the past 25 years.

St. Bartholomew's Hospital, London EC1A 7BE.

Continuing the work of The Clinical Science Foundation, established at St. Bartholomew's Hospital in 1990.
Registered Charity No. 1086712. Registered in England and Wales as a company limited by guarantee number 04154479.
Registered Office: 50, Broadway, Westminster, London, SW1H 0BL.

Trustees

Dr. David R. White, BSc, MSc, PhD

Mr. Christopher Ronalds

Mr. Ian Johnson, MAC, DipCBH, FIBMS

Dr. Paul Bramwell, MA, MEd, PhD

Dr. Christopher J. Derrett, MPhil, MBBS, MRCP

Ms Maureen Hancock, MSc, RGN, RSCN (CSF)

Project development manager

Ms Carmen M. Stan

Specialist advisers

Audiology/Hearing Aids

Computing

General Practice

Medical Imaging

Nutrition

Paediatrics

Radiation Safety

Radiotherapy

Project REMUS

Project ROMULUS

Romanian Protocol

Special Education
(Romania)

Vision Assessment

Legal Matters

Mr. Ray Morley, Dr. Michael Nolan, Ms Seema Patel

Mr. Derek King

Dr. Emilian Costiug (Romania), Dr. Xenia Gaghi (Romania),

Dr. Anca Balan (Romania)

Dr. Donald Jacobson (USA), Mr. Brian Mansfield

Prof. John Dickerson

Prof. Tim Eden, Prof. Paula Grigorescu Sido (Romania)

Dr. Constantin Milu (Romania), Dr. Paul Shrimpton

Prof. Nicolae Ghilezan (Romania), Prof. André Wambersie (Belgium)

Dr. Liana Lascu (Romania)

Mr. Ray Cook, Mr. Steve Jones, Mr. Philip Miall

Dr. Traian Strimbu

Mrs. Rodica Peteanu, Mrs. Wendy Eadsforth, Mr. Tamás Polacsek

Mrs. Lesley-Anne Baxter, Dr. Cristina Nicula (Romania)

Ms Penny Chapman

The Trustees and the Specialist Advisers give their services completely free of any charge.

A quarter of a century!



*Romanians love rubber stamps - or do they now?
see page 12*

This year is our 25th Anniversary of working in Romania. Starting in 1990 we focussed at first on the urgent needs of Romanian hospitals and clinicians post-revolution. This involved supplying clinical equipment, pharmaceuticals and basic medical supplies to children's hospitals, GPs and medical laboratories in the city of Cluj-Napoca.

Around the year 2000 we started to broaden our efforts and included the requirements of special needs children, particularly those with hearing impairments. Many hearing aids were supplied and an earmould laboratory was established in Cluj-Napoca. Vision tests were undertaken and reading glasses provided where necessary. This led to upgrading classrooms and educational materials used by special needs children including, more recently, those with autism.

In this newsletter we discuss our work over the 25 years in Romania. We reminisce a little and elicit views and comments from colleagues and friends. We hope you find it interesting.

Contents

- 4 It's been a long journey!
25 years working in Romania
- 5 Drugs & Poisons Bureau
Dr. Eva Kiss reports on some interesting cases
- 6 A world away - a short memoir
Dr. Paul Bramwell describes two working visits
- 8 15 years of classroom upgrades
Images of our upgrades in Romania
- 10 Gonzi - an old friend
An extraordinary young man
- 11 Freedom down under
Cornel Pop talks about his daring escape
- 12 Words from the past
Some diverse articles from our Newsletters
- 13 Laurie Whelan Education Awards
The first two GP recipients of the Awards
- 14 Next year's and future work
Our projects and funding needs for 2016
- 15 Making a difference
The importance of legacies in favour of charities
- 15 Financial donations
We thank all the people who support us

Front Page: Psychologist Elena Rus and Vladimir (5),
Transylvanian Autism Association,
Cluj-Napoca, Romania.

Back Page: Vladimir (5)

Editors David R. White and Carmen Stan
Graphic Design Keith Davies
Printed by Cantate, Cowcross Studios, 30 Cowcross Street,
London, EC1M 6DQ.

The colour printing in this issue of the *Newsletter* was kindly sponsored by a donor who wishes to remain anonymous.

Message from Jon Snow



What a difference 25 years of tireless work by CSEF has made in Romania. A quarter of a century of therapeutic and remedial work amongst some of the most disadvantaged children in the country isn't a bad moment to take stock.

In the early days, Dr David White and his team based at St Bartholomew's Hospital in London were inspired to utilise redundant equipment that UK hospitals no longer required. They physically drove it by land to Romania, where an increasing number of children were in urgent need of such resources. At first they concentrated on developing the Schools for the Deaf in Cluj-Napoca. They built and equipped classrooms, and transformed the teaching and capacities of deaf children.

Romania was emerging from Iron Curtain days. As the country began to develop, so the work of CSEF expanded to embrace support for the Transylvanian Autism Association. Today Romania is a full member of the European Union. But the challenges remain. New staff have to be trained and brought on, augmented by the remarkable volunteers from the UK. In the coming months, two young Romanian GPs will be in Britain for vocational training. We need funds to support them and for the facilities and educational tools that are transforming so many Romanian children's lives.

So, 25 five years on, let's celebrate by sending a donation, however small, to sustain this productive and life-changing bridge between Britain and Romania.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jon Snow".

Jon Snow

Journalist, broadcaster and television presenter

It's been a long journey!

Our story so far . . .

Our journey started just after the revolutions had taken place in Eastern Europe during 1989. We had seen on our TV screens the violent protests taking place in Romania during December of that year, resulting in the death of 1,100 people with over 3,000 wounded. There followed the shocking images of neglected children in appalling orphanages and rundown hospitals lacking basic resources. Then in October, 1990, David White (St. Bartholomew's Hospital, London) visited Romania to run some training sessions on x-ray protection in selected hospitals. This was at the request of Brian Mansfield, representing The Protekton Trust, who had been successfully installing donated diagnostic imaging equipment in Romania some seven years before the revolution.



A Romanian orphanage visited by the CSF in 1992.

We never believed that we would return again and again for the next 25 years! But we did! Following this visit The Clinical Science Foundation (CSF) was formed by a small group of clinical scientists at Bart's. Originally the charity concentrated on clinical science, providing many tonnes of medical equipment and supplies to children's hospitals and GP practices in the Romanian city of Cluj-Napoca. Since 1997, we have maintained a computerised Drugs and Poisons Advice Bureau at Clinica Pediatrie I 'Axente Ianu' in Cluj (*see next page*).

Following fact-finding visits by Bart's staff (Chris Ronalds in 1992 and by Laurie Whelan, Ray Cook and Steve Jones in 1993) a programme of support for medical laboratories was initiated. Considerable quantities of medical laboratory equipment were delivered to thirteen different medical laboratories, mostly in Cluj-Napoca. Emphasis was given to staff safety and the improvement of analytic procedures.

A chance meeting in 1996 between nurse Maureen Hancock and a UK volunteer special needs teacher, Paul Bramwell, significantly changed our direction (*see page 6*). Paul, who was working at a Romanian School for the Deaf (No.1), drew our attention to severe problems in getting hearing aids to over 200 children there. Advised by Seema Patel we supplied hearing aids for all the children and set up an Earmould Laboratory and a Hearing Aid Repair Workshop at the school. Our work was then extended to the nearby Hungarian School for the Deaf (No. 2) and a Vocational School in the city, which together cared for a further 250 children. With the help of Lesley-Anne Baxter, some 750 vision checks were carried out and over 120 pairs of reading glasses were provided.



Delivering medical equipment to a Romanian children's hospital 20+ years ago.

We soon realised that providing just medical support for these children was not enough and to give them a real chance of a better life we had to tackle their education. Consequently, The Clinical Science & Education Foundation was established in 2001, with an extended remit.

Over 40 room upgrades to modern standards.

In the past fifteen years we have set up over 40 modern teaching rooms/areas and general classrooms at selected centres in Cluj-Napoca. These include special needs schools and, more recently, the Transylvanian Autism Association. Relevant teaching materials have been supplied in the Romanian and Hungarian languages.

Since 1990, some 239 West-East and East-West visits have been completed. Thirty-two Romanian and Hungarian healthcare and teaching personnel have visited the UK for training, all sponsored by the CSF/CSEF. Also, five Romanians have come to London for special medical treatment.

From 1991-2015, the total income of the CSF and CSEF was £909,077 with a total expenditure of some £842,713. In addition, a great many thousands of pounds worth of medical equipment have been donated for use in Romania.

Many people have supported us over the years. Without their help we could not have achieved any of our goals.

Drugs and Poisons Bureau

by **Dr. Eva Kiss and colleagues**

A clinical service provided for the past 18 years.

Starting in the early 90's, a close bond was established between the CSF and Clinica Pediatrie I 'Axente Iancu' Cluj-Napoca. Among the help the CSF has given ever since, was support for the Pharmacovigilance Centre opened in 1997. Based upon the periodically updated MDX database, provided by Truven Health Analytics, the Centre offers important help for all categories of healthcare providers. Information regarding many thousands of drugs and poisons is available 24/7.

It is always a helpful aid in our daily medical activities. Our colleagues in the clinic and elsewhere are well aware of its huge benefits and are often asking us to check the MDX database for different pieces of information about drugs or poisons.

There are many cases of mushroom poisoning.

Here are some of the interesting cases that the MDX database has solved:

A **five-month-old boy** was diagnosed with a genetic form of hyperinsulinism, having very low blood glucose levels, recurrent seizures and prolonged coma. He had a spectacular recovery after therapy with the drug Diazoxide (Eudemine), located by the MDX database. This drug has regularly been provided by UCB Celltech as a charity donation. Contact with this company was established by the CSF.

An **adolescent girl**, after a fight with her boyfriend, tried to commit suicide by ingesting some tablets. The parents could not tell us what the tablets were. According to the code printed on the tablets, the MDX database identified the drug as acetaminophen and also suggested the best treatment.

A **two-week-old newborn** was admitted for congenital ichthyosis, a severe rare genetic disease involving the skin and mucous membranes. MDX provided a list of recommended drugs in this disease.

An **eight-year-old boy** was admitted with clinical indications of high intracranial pressure syndrome and MRI signs of brain oedema. Acute encephalitis was diagnosed and the patient was put on Acyclovir therapy. MDX provided data concerning doses and possible side-effects of this medication. The course of the disease was favourable.

We are often requested information concerning drugs administered to women during **pregnancy** or **breast feeding**. Excluding any risk of these drugs has major importance for the health of the foetus. MDX database contains all the necessary information in order to keep pregnancies safe.

A **14-year-old patient** was admitted to the clinic with aplastic anaemia. He came from a local town where a pesticide-producing factory had been closed several years earlier and large amounts of DDT had been deposited underground. Local people used to dig out this pesticide and use it on their fields and gardens. MDX showed DDT poisoning could be responsible and local authorities were notified.

In rainy seasons there are many cases of **mushroom poisoning** both in children and adults. Often mushrooms are collected in woods or from fields by people who can't properly differentiate poisonous species of mushrooms from non-poisonous ones. We are able to advise on the most appropriate treatment.

Once we were called from a **local prison** where some inmates had been accidentally poisoned with disinfection solution. They were admitted to the local hospital. The MDX database provided information regarding the poisoning.

On average, 30% of requested data are related to: poisonings (range of toxicity, symptoms and signs, monitoring, treatment), while 70% of calls to the Centre concern drugs: indications and doses in different age groups and in different diseases (40%), adverse reactions and contraindications (40%), drug-drug interactions (15%) and other information (5%).

In the past few years the MDX database has been available online providing us with a rapid source of medical information. We hope it will remain accessible in the forthcoming years. We use this opportunity to express our sincere gratitude to Truven Health Analytics and the CSEF for supporting us and our patients.



Dr. Eva Kiss using the MDX database just after it was established in Cluj-Napoca.

A world away - a short memoir

by **Dr. Paul Bramwell**



*Paul
Bramwell*

From 1996-98, CSEF Trustee Paul Bramwell worked at special needs schools in Cluj-Napoca, Romania. During 2014-15 he worked again at a school in Romania. Here he writes about his experiences.

It seems a world away. It is my first day at my new job as an Advisory Teacher for hearing impaired pupils in semi-rural Staffordshire. It is a green and pleasant land of rolling hills and semi-somnolent, strolling sheep. I am not quite used to it yet. In July I returned from my second residential spell in Romania, where I worked as a special needs teacher and coordinator at the British School of Bucharest. It is an expensive, private school on the northern outskirts of the city. The two main buildings are Neo-Georgian and in an area of Bucharest populated by international schools, expat compounds, Mercedes and 4 x 4s.

Eighteen years ago, when I first went to Romania, it was so very, very different. I had arrived relatively suddenly, with little preparation and no real thought as to what to expect. I had been a teacher of the deaf for a number of years when there was a call from the British Red Cross. "Had I heard of the British Red Cross Project in Romania?" I had, it was in the literature - top people in the field had been going out after the revolution to deliver workshops and train Romanian staff after the disastrous policies for deaf children during the previous communist regime. "Yes", I had replied, slightly bemused. "We have funding for someone to be based out there for a couple of years. Would you like to go?"

Six weeks later I found myself in a small apartment in a suburb of Cluj-Napoca, Transylvania. I had arrived in Bucharest on a gloriously hot afternoon shortly after Easter, 1996. I was met by the Romanian coordinator and was given an orientation programme of meetings and greetings that completely disorientated me before flying north to Cluj on an ancient Tupolev straight out of a cold war movie. Thankfully, Cluj was cooler, calmer and all together more relaxed. It seemed quaint, if a little neglected. Another orientation programme followed that disorientated me even further. The next day I had to find my way around and deal with essentials, such as food.



In my second stint in Romania, if I wanted something I sauntered fifty metres to Lidl. In the first stint, it was a long walk into town or a search for a small Magazin, the equivalent of our old corner shop, where choice was limited and service cool. My Romanian, never very good, allowed me to buy many things that I didn't actually ask for and had need of. I found I rapidly accumulated a stack of 25 boxes of matches and ten bottles of shampoo, but no cutlery or soap. I survived the summer as a happy little camper on bread, cheese, tomatoes and beer!

What I found severely shocked me. It was a scene out of the 1950s.

However, it was actually when I started work that I realised why I had been asked to come and why I needed to stay. What I found severely shocked me. It was a scene straight out of the 1950s. At that time, most deaf children, even those with relatively moderate hearing loss, were educated in residential schools. There was no life, no energy. The classrooms were dark and dingy, nothing adorned the walls apart from maps of Romania and the national emblem stuck high on the wall above old blackboards. One teacher said that they didn't have wall displays because it distracted the children. There were very, very few hearing aids. An oral system was used, with children required to talk, but most of them couldn't. Signing was discouraged. Lessons were dry, uninspiring and the children largely passive and docile.

What concerned me most was the fact that the children did not have hearing aids. Children with very big hearing losses, until the advent of cochlear implants, have always been difficult to effectively aid. Many children, though not having such huge losses, behaved as though they did. When I enquired I was told that it was hard to get hearing aids from the state, but that even if they did, they had no earmoulds. The laboratory that produced them was in Bucharest and it took six-months to get one, by which time the child had outgrown it. The teaching, the classrooms, the curriculum would take a long time to resolve, but at least with hearing aids, whatever the context, they would hear more and learn more. This then, was the priority.

*Romanian Magazin in the
early 1990s selling food.*

I was soon to learn that this was not easy to resolve. Most people and organisations that I approached didn't really understand what I wanted, didn't show any interest or said it couldn't be done. Then, by one of those rare chance encounters, the then CSF came on to the scene. One of the schools I worked in, the Romanian School for the Deaf, stood on a main road. Directly opposite it was a large school for visually impaired pupils. Visiting this school was a Bart's nurse. I cannot remember why she was there, but I am grateful that she was. I am even more grateful that she happened to notice that across the way was another school. She just happened to pop in. It was Maureen Hancock and from her I learnt for the first time about the CSF. She asked me what I was doing, why I was doing it and how it was going. When I explained she seemed politely interested. She took my contact details and walked off into town.

About a month later I had a phone call from David White in London. He offered to help and I jumped at the chance. When he asked me what I needed I explained about the need for an earmould laboratory so that we could use the few hearing aids we already had and then maybe source some more. It couldn't have gone better. The CSF worked



The Romanian Magazin has changed dramatically in recent years.

remarkably hard raising the funds, negotiating with the administrators in Cluj and locating experts in the UK who were willing to come out to build a laboratory and train the staff. It is neither nostalgic sentiment nor exaggeration to say that I remember this period with great pride and fondness.

Within a few months, thanks to the energies of the CSF, we had a laboratory, earmoulds within 24 hours and were able to acquire significant numbers of hearing aids. It provided real opportunities for these forgotten and neglected children that they had never had before. It was the start of a long and fruitful engagement between the deaf children of Cluj and the CSF/CSEF. From hearing aids, the charity moved on to providing teaching resources and computers, rebuilding classrooms and completely re-designing and re-furbishing the kindergarten in School for the Deaf No. 2 amongst many other things. It was a sea change in the provision of a good environment for learning. It opened people's eyes to what could be done and how things could change.

So things are different now. The Romanian children I see on my visits back are better housed, better clothed

The British School of Bucharest.

and better fed than when I was first there. They are sprightlier and more curious, better educated and through technology, more aware of the wider world. It is only necessary to flick back through the copies of the CSEF newsletters to notice this. Children, in Cluj at least, have access to hearing aids and audiological services. There is also a recognition of the importance of hearing aids. A number of Romanian cities provide cochlea implants, although I am not sure how well these children are habilitated afterwards.

Progress in the last twenty years has been significant.

There is still a long way to go. The university training for teachers in this field still seems to be outmoded and the preparation of students to work with this complex group of children superficial. The client group is changing within the schools and there are more deaf children with additional needs arriving on the doorstep. Teachers are still undervalued and underpaid in the state sector. There is a fundamental need to have a universal screening programme for newborns and a follow-up programme to support them and their families once they are diagnosed. There is a need for government support. Much of the lead in this area has come from NGOs and parents. These are the challenges.

Despite this, the progress that has been made in the last twenty years is significant. As we bemoan the contemporary state of affairs, it is easy to forget how dire it was before and what a difference a few people can make. I am reminded of a story I heard in a school assembly. A small boy was walking down the beach to find it covered with many thousands of stranded starfish that had been washed ashore after a storm. Vainly he started to pick up a few and return them to the sea. A man walking his dog questioned him about it. "Why are you trying to do this? There are so many that you can't possibly save them and make a difference?" The young boy looked up at him, placing another starfish back into the sea. "It made a difference to him", he said, continuing to stroll along the beach, throwing a few starfish into the sea as he went.

Now, as I focus on my new job on my return to the UK from my second spell in Romania, I reflect on my time there, on the work I have done alongside the CSEF and their twenty-fifth anniversary. It is clear to see how far along the road all involved have travelled and it all seems like a world away, because it was a world away.



photo provided by Paul Bramwell

Fifteen years of Romanian classroom upgrades

Since 2000 we have been upgrading classrooms, specialist rooms and corridors in educational establishments for special needs children in Cluj-Napoca. To date over 40 areas have been refurbished to modern standards.

The upgrades include batches of special teaching materials tailored to the needs of the children.

Here we show a few pictures of upgraded rooms that are representative of the scope of our work over the 15-year period.



Left
Computer
Room



Right
Classroom



Left
Kindergarten



Right
Reception
Classroom



Left
Classroom
with role-play
screen



Right
Life Skills
Room



Left
Kindergarten
Residence



Right
Therapy
Room
(autism)



Above

One of the four Therapy Rooms upgraded at the Transylvanian Autism Association (AAT) in Cluj-Napoca during August, 2015.



Right

Psychologist Alina Gherman with Angel (3), looking intently at a Transformer car in a new Therapy Room at AAT.

Gonzi - An old friend

by Florin (Gonzi) Anca

photo provided by Gonzi



Gonzi in The Netherlands during 2015.

Hello, my name is Florin Anca. I am twenty-six-years old and living in The Netherlands, but born in a hospital in Cluj-Napoca, Romania. Mr White has asked me to make a short story to give you an impression of my life.

I lived in the hospital for more than seven years and I was operated on my kidneys. I was very sick. I met a person from The Netherlands in the hospital in 1995 and was invited for holidays with his family in the Netherlands. In 1996 when I was 7 years old, I got a visa for three months to be allowed to stay with the family Vroon-Paulis because of the marriage of their daughter Caroline. Before that time I had already stayed three times with the Vroon family .

That was a nice break from my hospital stay in Cluj, Romania, where I had lived since my birth. Because Dutch children from seven go to school, Uncle Aad, as I always called Mr Vroon, arranged for me to go to a school for sick children in Zeist. Then my health deteriorated so badly that I had to be rushed into the Wilhelmina Academic Children's Hospital in Utrecht. There the doctors said that I had to stay temporarily for at least a year with the Vroon family in The Netherlands for medical treatment. My Auntie Hanneke and Uncle Aad of course agreed to it.

Because of my complex problems I heard soon that I should stay longer and longer and frankly I found that only very fine. I learned Dutch quickly and liked having a father and mother who cared for me and really loved me.

We first met **Gonzi** in 1991 when he was a patient at Clinica Pediatrie I 'Axente Iancu' in Cluj-Napoca. Dr. Eva Kiss from the clinic writes:

'Gonzi was admitted to our clinic at the age of 11 months. He was our patient until the age of seven years when he was taken into foster care by a family in The Netherlands. Gonzi needed prolonged hospital admission for repeated surgery and treatment.'

This is Gonzi's story in his own words.

In the hospital in Cluj there was a very nice doctor I used to call 'Mama Éva' (Dr. Eva Kiss). I remember very well that people from England came to help that children's hospital. I also remember that once at Christmas time there was a man from England with a big truck with toys, food and other things. It was in the children's hospital where I met him.

In 1996 when I was allowed to stay for one year in The Netherlands I was very sick and had many kidney problems. I could not go back to Romania, but honestly I also no longer wanted to return to Romania. I have good memories of my stay in the day-treatment centre set up by my Uncle Aad in Cluj where I was allowed to go during week days while being in the children's hospital.



Gonzi in Romania during 1994.

So, I have become a Dutchman. I went to a special primary and to a special vocational school in Zeist. I had very nice experiences in the EU Comeius Exchange Project and was twice on visits to a vocational school in Finland. During my second visit I was guest student during 2 weeks following Finnish education in English and stayed in a kind host family.

After finishing school I followed various courses and even succeeded while working to get a diploma in secondary level education as a facility assistant. I've become a facilities employee at my former school in Zeist. This school has evolved over the years from a school for long-time sick children into a special education school for autistic children. I have a permanent job there.

I liked having a mother and father who cared for me and loved me.

In March I was able to buy my own house in Maarn with the help of my foster parents. Besides my work, I also have hobbies. I am a member of a badminton club in Maarn and a board member of it and editor of the club magazine. I have some fish as pets and care for them.

I still regularly attend the hospital in Utrecht for monitoring and research where I get very good care. I have been on various English courses so was able to make presentations about The Netherlands in English at the students' school in Finland.

I would like to thank the CSF/CSEF for asking me to write this article for this newsletter about developments that I experienced in my life. I want to congratulate them warmly on the 25th anniversary of the Foundation that has performed so many years of good work for children with special needs in Romania.

Greetings from Gonzi
(Florin Anca)

Freedom down under

by **Cornel Pop**

Living in Ceausescu's Romania became intolerable for **Cornel Pop**. He wanted to escape the oppression and live in a free society. One day Cornel and his family, achieved his dream. Cornel's tenacity had paid off.

I was born in 1957 in Bobalna, a village in Cluj County. A year later my family moved to Medias. In 1965 we again moved, this time to Cluj-Napoca - this was the year that President Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej died. After that we got Nicolae Ceausescu and life became more difficult.

In 1976 I got married and my first son, Dinu, was born a year later. In 1980 Claudiu was born. Although Cluj was my main home I did move about a lot, depending on where there were jobs. I have been a coal miner and a docker, although my main career was as a car mechanic. At this time I became very disillusioned with the communist regime and everything it was doing. They wanted to strictly control



Cornel Pop

Armed with what I hope was all the right papers I went to catch the train from Cluj to Budapest. So as not to have my money confiscated I removed the end-cap from the handrail in the train carriage and hid the money in the metal tube. The security guards never found it! Once in Budapest I had a friend who was able to help me. My plan was to travel to Austria and the advice I received was to take a plane.

MY ITINERARY TO FREEDOM

Cluj-Napoca, Budapest, Vienna, Athens, Singapore, Melbourne

everything and everybody and my dream was to live with my family in an open and free country. The only solution was to leave Romania. I started to plan my escape.

It was in 1986, while working as a docker in Constanta by the Black Sea, that I made my first attempt to leave. Sadly, this failed and resulted in a three-month jail sentence. My second attempt also failed, but I avoided jail by bribing an official. In both these cases the plan was to leave with a friend, but now I decided to go on my own.

So, in 1987 after selling my car for \$850, I planned my third escape. In those days you needed much paperwork to take a trip abroad. As both of my children had asthma I obtained permission to go to see a doctor in Hungary to get some special medicines. It took a lot of cigarettes, coffee and petrol as bribes in order to get the necessary documents.



Claudiu, Cornel's son, often helps the CSEF in Cluj-Napoca.

Unfortunately, only first class tickets were available at \$148, but this probably worked in my favour. I decided to go looking like a businessman.

My heart was pounding as, dressed in a suit and carrying a smart case, I arrived at Budapest airport. The airport officials were suspicious, and asked many questions. I said I was going to see a friend in Vienna then going back to Romania. They finally let me go on my way to Austria and I found myself in Vienna. It was then 12 days before I could phone my wife in Cluj. My departure caused her many problems with the authorities, but she was very strong and resisted them. Fortunately, I was allowed to stay and work in Austria.

For 11 months I was in Vienna doing many different jobs, such as truck driver, labourer, mechanic, even walking dogs! I considered going to either the USA, Canada or Australia, but decided on Australia because I liked the documentary on their country! The Australian Embassy accepted my visa application. Now I needed to find 3,000 DM for the airfare. By December, 1987 I had raised the money and in January, 1988 was on my way to Melbourne, *via* Athens and Singapore.

In Australia I learned English and took on many jobs, including back-breaking asparagus harvesting and truck driving. I was allowed to bring my wife and sons to Australia in July, 1989, five-months before the Revolution. Finally my family and I were together and free from oppression.

For the past 15 years we have come back and forth between Australia and Romania, depending on family circumstances. My 86-year-old mother still lives in Cluj. I am starting to feel that Australia is my home. It is the best country in the world!

Words from the past



An early newsletter (1994).

The front cover of our 1994 newsletter (shown above) had a picture of a horse-drawn wagon. Surprisingly, this was used then to deliver pathology specimens and supplies to hospitals in Cluj. It was often seen on the streets with its driver, *Ioan Mircea*, hard-working horse, *Duchess*, and guard dog, *Oli*.

This service is long-gone, having been replaced by a modern, less interesting motorised vehicle. We do not have any information on the whereabouts of the driver, *Duchess* or *Oli*!

Hot Transylvanian nights

Anonymous contributor

'... I start to drift into a pleasant, memory-filled world of unspoilt countryside, villages, ox-drawn carts and storks. Suddenly, I am wide awake with feelings of panic and unknown fear. The high-pitched whine by my left ear means only one thing - there's a mosquito in my room and it's after my precious blood ...'

No. 8, p. 7, Autumn/Winter, 1995



A change of format (1995).

We started to produce Newsletters in October 1991, one year after our first visit to Romania. We wanted to let our supporters know what we were doing with their money and what life was like in Romania. The first issue was on A5 paper (half the size of this page), 20 pages long, with 9 short articles and 11 pictures. In 1995 we changed to an A4 format, with improved printing. Now, a typical Newsletter will have probably ten long articles and over 30 images. Here we present a few extracts from memorable past articles.

A very kind message of support

Professor Paula Grigorescu Sido and colleagues

'... We were so pleased to join the opening ceremony of the Nursery School for Deaf Children No. 2 on September 22. We have it in mind as it was yesterday. Entering the school on that beautiful September afternoon, we were first guided through the stairs and corridors of the old school. And then a miracle happened.

We stepped into the new nursery school, together with many other people and many children. Every face expressed deep emotion and astonishment. We found ourselves in a dream world, in a fairy tale built up of colour, harmony and love ...'

No. 26, p.16, Autumn/Winter, 2004

Past memories meet future dreams

Tamás Polacsek

'... News in the deaf community travels very fast. Within just weeks of the opening of our new kindergarten residence, six deaf adults, some who were pupils in our school more than a decade ago, came to visit last weekend ...'

'... The father picked up the photo that stood in a nice frame on the bedside cabinet near his son's bed. "This is us", he said proudly. "I remember my rusty metal bed in the kindergarten", signed one of them. "I remember the carer taking away my little teddy bear; we were not allowed to keep anything with us". "I only remember a small dark room, where I was sent, because I kept crying", said another "This is a different world". "Yes, it is".

"But who did this?" They turned towards me. "Some people with heart. From England", I signed back ...'

No. 34, p. 14 Autumn/Winter 2008



A recent format (2013).

And the world loses another tree!

Anonymous contributor

'... For decades, Romania has been slowly but surely drowning under pointless paperwork. One bank we used regularly to change money in, now bankrupt, generated at least four forms for each transaction and three types of rubber stamps - triangular, rectangular and circular.

The paperwork and the rubber stamps are irrevocably linked. The stamp is powerless without the paper; the paper is inadequate without the stamp ...'

No. 21, p. 8, Spring/Summer, 2002

Breaking news from a Romanian lawyer!

Since July, 2015 an Order of the Romanian Government (pct. V. from OG nr. 17/2015) states that it is now **no longer necessary** to use rubber stamps on official documents, more precisely on applications, petitions, statements and other documents submitted to Institutions of Public Authorities.

Great news!



The Laurie Whelan Education Awards

<http://en.fotolia.com/>



Introduction

The Laurie Whelan Education Awards were established in 2015 to honour the memory of Laurie Whelan, who was a long-serving Trustee of The Clinical Science & Education Foundation (CSEF). The awards allow selected Romanian healthcare professionals to travel to the UK for short-term vocational training. The support enables them to visit institutions and individuals associated with their profession to gain valuable practical knowledge and experience.

Aims

- 1) Develop and enhance healthcare in Romania.
- 2) Encourage Romanian healthcare professionals to enhance their knowledge and skills, particularly those at the start of their careers.
- 3) Ensure recipients are able to visit appropriate UK medical centres of excellence and to meet UK experts working in their specialty.
- 4) Encourage recipients to observe modern methods of postgraduate training in their specialty.

Initially the awards will be given to qualified clinicians working in primary healthcare. Later the awards will be extended to the clinical sciences, nursing, speech and language therapy and audiology. Each recipient will be expected to submit a report to the CSEF detailing their time in the UK within one month of the end of their visit.

Selection Process

Awards are restricted to Romanian healthcare professionals in the Romanian County of Cluj, where the CSEF has been working for the past 25 years. The awards will be advertised through the local professional bodies there and applicants assessed by a small panel of Romanian and UK professionals.

Candidates will be expected to have the requisite academic qualifications, be well-motivated, and willing to develop their knowledge and experience and apply it back in Romania. Candidates should preferably be newly qualified and have a good knowledge of spoken English.

Recipients of these awards will be expected to come to the UK for a single short-term, intensive vocational training visit. In only exceptional circumstances will recipients be funded for a second visit.

Funding Needs

Each recipient will be awarded a grant of £500-£750 towards their airfare and UK travel costs, accommodation and subsistence expenses during a short-term visit to the UK. We need to raise annually at least £1,500. The CSEF proposes to run the scheme initially for five years, after which the project will be reassessed. Consequently, the aim is to raise at least £7,500 for the awards.

2015 Awards

Interviews for this year's awards were held in Cluj-Napoca during July. Five applicants were interviewed by a panel of three clinicians, namely Dr. Emiliana Costiug and Dr. Anca Balan (both GPs in Cluj) and Dr. Chris Derrett (CSEF Trustee). The bursary for 2015 was awarded to **Dr. Raluca Achim** on the basis of her written application and performance at interview. The panel also decided to award a special professional bursary to **Dr. Sorina Pop** who impressed them with her work in developing and promoting general practice in Cluj County.

Dr. Achim and Dr. Pop plan to visit London for vocational training from 6-14 November, 2015.

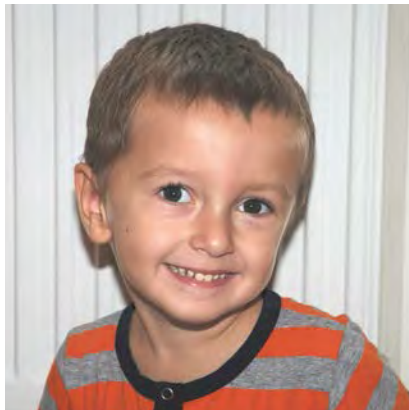
From Left:
Dr. Emiliana Costiug
Dr. Raluca Achim
Dr. Sorina Pop
Dr. Anca Balan



Can you support the Laurie Whelan Education Awards?

Your help would be greatly appreciated.

Funding required



Angel (3)

Transylvanian Autism Association

Display boards
£1,450 per room

Maintenance work
on ten rooms
£2,150

School for the Deaf No. 2
Maintenance and ed. materials
£1,110

The Laurie Whelan Education Awards
Travel/subsistence
£6,000

Romanian Field Workers
Employment costs
£12,000 for period 2015-2016

**Can you help us
continue this work?**

Next year's & future work

**We need
your help
and support**

Transylvanian Autism Association

During Summer, 2015 the CSEF upgraded four therapy rooms and a corridor at the Association in Cluj-Napoca. We plan to initiate regular maintenance for the rooms the CSEF has modernised there.

It is important that 20 display boards are replaced in four classrooms upgraded in 2014. The existing boards, sold to us as 'Velcro-friendly', have proved to be 'Velcro-unfriendly' and have deteriorated. This method of fixing materials to boards is widely used, especially with the visual timetables needed for these children.

COST to replace boards: £1,450

With their daily intensive use it is inevitable that the four classrooms, four therapy and two sensory rooms will need to be regularly re-painted.

COST to re-paint ten rooms: £2,150

Educational dioramas designed and installed by the CSEF at the Transylvanian Autism Association this year.



School for the Deaf No. 2

We plan to refurbish the Life Skills Room, two stairways and a corridor at the school. The areas have not been maintained for several years. More educational materials will be produced.

COST of maintenance work: £1,100

The Laurie Whelan Education Awards

The Foundation wishes to continue the vocational training of Romanian healthcare workers for the next four years. At least two professionals will receive training each year.

COST of programme: £6,000

Essential Support

We need to continue to obtain funding to employ selected Romanian Field Workers to develop our work in Romania. This enables the charity to greatly enhance both the quality of its work and its workload. Some **£12,000** will need to be raised for 2015-2016.

Practical help

A great many people have helped us achieve our goals. The practical help, advice and encouragement given by the friends and colleagues below is greatly appreciated.

ROMANIA: Liliana Avram, Lucinia Bal, Anca Balan, Borbála Balogh, Andrea Biró, Gabriella Blidarean, Istvan Bogdan, Emilian Costiug, Monika Dozsa, Xenia Gagli, Tunde Gede, Paula Grigorescu Sido, Eleonora Horváth, Erzsébet Imre, Elena Iuoras, Attila Kerekes, Andras Koncz-Munich, Stefan Kuti, Dorottya Makay, Rodica Morar, Doina Motas, Elena Munteanu, Nicoleta Niste, Gabriela Pamfil, Ioan Pasc, Rodica Peteanu, Tamas Polacsek, Claudiu Pop, Cornel Pop, Milena Pruna, Levente Santa, Attila Silye, Tunde Simon, Ileana Spanu, Cristina Stan, Traian Strambu, Flori Suci, Istvan Szekely, Coleta Zdrengha.

HUNGARY: Eszter Kopanyi, Mihaly Nadas, Bela Romanyi, Nora Romanyi.

THE NETHERLANDS: Aad Vroon, Leo van Wolfswinkel.

UNITED KINGDOM: Ian Adamson, Ursula van Almsick, Lesley-Anne Baxter, Vernon Benjafield, Helen Bull, Eddie Burton, Penny Chapman, ConTempo Quartet, Michael Cziczkat, Keith Davies, John Dickerson, Jenny Anne Drewe, Wendy Eadsforth, Tim Eden, Michelle Ellele, Claire, Robert & Stefan French, Ann Heroys, Peter Heroys, Roger Hickling, Derek King, Taye Ladipo, Brian Mansfield, John Mant, Kevin McGee, Kate Neville, Seema Patel, Richard Strange, Vince Sudbery, Albin Závody.

Making a real and lasting difference

It is very simple and most rewarding to make a donation of money to a charity. In particular, making a legacy in favour of a charity can make a real difference to the scope and extent of its work. In fact, a legacy can ensure the continuation of a charity's work long into the future. Here we discuss bequests and other ways of making donations.

Leaving a gift to charity in your will is a wonderful way for your generosity to last beyond your own lifetime. In addition, if your estate is liable to Inheritance Tax, you could reduce the amount of tax due by choosing to give money to charity. The value of any gift left to a charity in your will is not included when valuing your estate (your money, possessions and property) for Inheritance Tax purposes. Several years ago we received a substantial legacy from the Elsie Widdowson Estate. With the family's support we have been able to direct the funds to large projects that we could not even have dreamt of without this support.



A legacy to The Clinical Science & Education Foundation can make a substantial impact on the future work of the Foundation. The bequest can be in the form of a monetary donation or personal property that can be sold to raise funds. Because we hope that a long period will elapse between making a will and it coming into effect, we recommend that legacies be made to the general fund, not to individual projects or appeals, whose targets may already have been achieved. It is advisable to use a professional adviser or solicitor when making a Will.

There are more immediate ways of supporting our work. You can send us a bank, Charities Aid Foundation or building society cheque, made payable to the 'CSEF'. Mail the cheque to: The Clinical Science & Education Foundation, 24, Cherry Walk, Hayes, BROMLEY, Kent, BR2 7LT. You could also use a Charities Aid Foundation Charity Account.

If you pay income tax or capital gains tax and give us a donation of money, we are able to claim back the tax paid or due, currently 25p for each £1 you give. It is called Gift Aid. This is a very important source of additional money for our projects.

We gratefully acknowledge the important support received this year from our donors.

Financial & other donations

Mrs. E. E. Adler	Mrs. J. Nair
Anonymous donor	Mr. M. W. Nunn
BDB Charitable Trust	R. & E. Patkai
Miss T. E. Baggs	R. & H. Pawley
Mr. A. & Mrs. M. Baxter	P. & D. Poole
Mrs. C. M. Brown	Mrs. M. J. Prentice
Miss W. M. Browne	C. & M. Priest
Mrs. H. F. Bull	Ms J. Rathbone
Mr. E. F. Burton	Rogers Stirk Harbour + Partners Charitable Foundation Ltd
Mrs. J. Caro	Mr. C. J. Ronalds
Mrs. J. G. Carter	A. & I. & V. Rotar
D. L. Charles-Edwards	Mrs. I. Scrivener-Becze
R. S. & S. L. Cook	Dr. P. Shrimpton
Mrs. B. Cordingley	Mrs. M. Swanborough
Dr. E. Coster	Mr. P. & Mrs. J. Taylor
Mrs. J. Craske	Mrs. S. L. Thorn
Mr. P. Cresswell	Miss A. Trueman
Mrs. M. M. Davey	Prof. A. Wambersie
Mr. K. M. David	Ms C. West, MP
Mr. W. H. Davies	Mrs. J. Whelan
Dr. C. Derrett	Mrs. M. F. Whelan
Prof. J. Dickerson	Mrs. V. Whelan
Mr. L. G. Druce	D. R. White
Mr. M. J. Duke	J. R. & H. White
Prof. T. O. B. Eden	Miss R. E. White
Ms P. & Mr. D. Fawcett	H. V. & J. Wyatt
Dr. A. & Mrs. E. Frank	A. M & M. Závody
Mr. S. & Mrs. S. Gibbons	
Miss B. M. Giller	
Mrs. C. Glazier	
Miss E. L. A. Hale & friend	
Hayes (Kent) Free Church	Organisations
Hayes (Kent) Free Church	providing us
(Women's Fellowship)	with discounted
Mrs. D. Held	goods, services
Mr. P. Heroys	and donations.
Mrs. D. E. Hobbs	
Mrs. J. Homan	
Mr. I. & Mrs. B. Hughes	Cantate Communications
Mr. I. E. J. Johnson	Croitorie (Maria Tobias)
Mrs. V. J. Johnson	Gratnells Ltd
Mrs. B. Jones	D G King
Kinderfonds van	Omicron Reprographics
Dusseldorp via Werkgroep	SC Bass Decor SRL
Roemenië - Rotterdam	SC Diego Cluj SRL
Mr. C. & Mrs. J. Knowles	SC Echo Universal SRL
Mr. A. Knowles-Cutler	SC Kreativitiy SRL
Mr. S. F. Lawford	SC Policonstructii SRL
Ms R. M. Legros	SC Pretext SRL
Mrs. B. G. Lowton	SC Tapy Impex SRL
Mr. L. A. Mack	SC Verla SRL
Mrs. S. McEwan	TeacherBoards (1985) Ltd
J. A. Middleton	
Mrs. P. Mitchell	
R. J. Morley (Earmoulds)	
Mr. G. E. Morse	

Can you help us?



Your support
is very important to us.

Contact Address

Financial contributions should be sent to:

Dr. David R. White

CSEF, 24 Cherry Walk, Hayes, BROMLEY, Kent, BR2 7LT.

Tel/Fax: 020 8462 7944

E-mail: drwhite@dircon.co.uk

Website: www.csef.co.uk

Registered Charity No. 1086712

csef

Please make cheques payable to:

The Clinical Science & Education Foundation

or

CSEF

We will always send you a receipt for your donation.