

Mustard Seed [Jersey]

Recognised Charity in Jersey, Britain ~ Humanitarian Aid to Eastern Europe

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THOUGHTS ON MY TRIP FOR MUSTARD SEED JERSEY TO ROMANIA – JUNE / JULY 2015

"Possibly what I will remember most about the trip was the heat - I found it oppressively hot! I really felt for people without a/c or in poor houses with poor insulation / ventilation, as it must have been grim".

I had 2 days with Mustard Seed Romania, our daughter charity. The first day was spent at Casa Mabel our residential home in Cefa for pensioners.



It is very good to see the lift we supplied working at Casa Mabel. The lift will make a huge difference to residents like Anna (since a fall 8 months ago) who has no confidence on the stairs and stayed in her room on the first floor.



There are now approx 24 residents at Casa Mabel, so it is full.



The communal area at Casa Mabel

The next day I went to visit the K family, who live in a village about 70 kms from where I was based. Here I was encouraged at the work they have done to their house. Their sponsor provided money for building materials and also to buy a motor scooter to help Mr K get to work better.



They wisely decided a horse and cart would be more use as he works as a builder, so here is an interesting motor scooter !!!!!!!!!!!

Then I was introduced to a foundation that is new to me. (The name literally means decent association for the elderly).

In a village, this association has been working for 4 years, with very little funding. We took some food with us for which they were very grateful, as their store cupboard was very bare.

Conditions are much more over-crowded than at Mustard Seed's Casa Mabel. Like Casa Mabel, the residents pay what they can afford but comparing what they pay with what I know the Casa Mabel residents pay and what we send from Jersey, I found it amazing that they can keep going.

Most of their 28 residents suffer from dementia and virtually all are incontinent.



The day room above



A typical bedroom with 4 people sharing.

Compared to Casa Mabel with 1 or 2 per room, this home is over-crowded, but the residents have nowhere else to go.

But (like Casa Mabel) there is a good atmosphere and evidence of love & good care in the place.

"I was so impressed and inspired by the dedication and commitment of the owners of the ADPB home, they have used their own house as security to fund this project". They told us they saw the need when one of their own parents needed help.

I certainly hope that we from Jersey can help them in future.

My final day was spent with Nelu of FI (Fundatia Increderea) and this had to be the highlight of the trip as I saw tangible evidence of the difference help from Jersey has made in changing lives in Romania in the last 6 months.

[The Benedek family were living in a tiny, freezing, leaking shed when we saw them in December 2014].

As a result of our appeal we have been able to provide a porter-cabin for them. There is a well on the site and they have a chemical toilet. Light is provided by a solar panel unit.



"It was fantastic to see the Benedeks in their new home, smiling brightly. Proudly they showed me their garden and the vegetables they have grown with seeds we provided".



This picture shows the site:

- ★ In the foreground: Mustard Seed Jersey's old trailer now insulated and altered to

provide accommodation for a family of 3 and 2 pensioners. (All were homeless).

- ★ Past the first fence is the Bendek portercabin.
- ★ Then in the distance is our most recent porter-cabin which will offer housing to 2 separate pensioners (picture below).



On the day of my visit the 2nd pensioner was due to move in to her part of the porter-cabin.

Because of the amount of money raised we have been able to provide fencing to enclose a small amount of land with each unit of accommodation, which we hope will give the chance of self sufficiency.

At the far end of the site the social worker Nelu hopes it will be possible to grow chickens as a possible source of income as well as food.

But as well as joy and smiles at their good fortune to have a home, there were tears too.



This lady wept as she told her story: Someone she trusted had tricked her into signing papers renouncing her family property, then turned her out onto the streets. It was while she was homeless sleeping at the night shelter that Nelu found her and offered her accommodation. She is incredibly grateful but still weeps when she remembers what happened. (As she has no income, Mustard Seed Jersey is currently looking for a sponsor for her to help with food, etc).

But there is a major problem which we did not realise until the spring:

- ★ *To obtain a pension, child benefit, medical benefits or legal employment in Romania you must have an ID card.*
- ★ *To have an ID card you must have a permanent address.*
- ★ *There are no buildings on this site and portercabins are not recognised as permanent so cannot be used to obtain an ID card. (All that will be issued is a temporary ID card with limited benefits available).*

So after much consultation and discussion with Nelu, we hope to raise funds to build a permanent structure on the site, which will comprise 2 units of accommodation, a storage area and communal showers and washing facilities.

Nelu calculates the cost of materials and specialist work is £40,000 at present prices.

- *So this is now our target.*
- *We very much hope you will help us achieve this.*

*Mustard Seed Jersey Appeal Account
Sort Code 40-25-41
Account No 71135333
This account will be used for money raised to build the accommodation units, storage and communal shower facilities*

Final thoughts:

“As always it is a huge privilege to go to Romania and see the difference our help is making. But it is a challenge to see the continuing need. With God’s help we trust we will make wise decisions and use our resources in the best way possible”.

– Rose Helie-Pallot 13/07/2015

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