

## From Our Chairman

After the scare over Valerie's health in March, when she had a fall during a fund-raising trip to the US, it was a great relief for us all to see her looking and walking so well at our Annual Supporters' Meeting in May. Since then, she has enjoyed time with her family, and, early in October, she saw a consultant neurologist who gave the all-clear for her to fly back to CRP, where she now is.

However, this fall does remind us all not to rely, as much as in the past, on Valerie being present at our fund-raising events. I often think of the Tuesday morning sales of a large variety of donated items at the United Reformed Church, Daventry, which over 10 years raised more than £45,000 for us to send to CRP, and I'm delighted to say that even now that the sales have stopped, the Church still sends us regular contributions. This just shows how if a community can be convinced of the value of what CRP does for people with a range of disabilities, it can make a contribution beyond the reach of most of us as individuals.

Do please make a note of our 2020 Annual Supporters Meeting in London on Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> May, a little later in the month than usual. We hope to see you there.

**Ben Clackson.**

## From our Treasurer

Total income (net of expenses) in the first 5 months of the year was £32,289 This is behind last year (which included sizeable corporate and international donations raised by CRP but channeled through VTT) Annual accounts for 2018/19 have been finalised following the independent examination. Two years ago, VTT changed its policy to allow funds to be used by CRP to assist patients in the mother and child unit, the inclusive school, and/or with Prosthetics & Orthotics as well as patients with spinal cord injuries. In order to allow CRP to spend funds where the needs are greatest, future donations should be regarded as unrestricted where possible.

**Sayadul Islam Khaled, FMAAT.**

## SHOURAB by Liz Timms

When I first met Shourab he was a very sad little boy sunk deep into a large wheelchair. Three weeks later he was still facing an uncertain future, but he is cheerful, playing karam with other children and in a wheel chair more suited to his size.

This is the story he told me. When he was four years old both his parents were killed in a car crash. He was turned out into the street by the landlord, crying with nowhere to go. A security guard at the local 'factory' took him to the home of a rickshaw puller who cared for him and passed him on to a couple who had been unable to have children of their own. For three years it seems this arrangement worked well. He went to school up to grade three and learned to read. But then the couple had their own child. Shourab was demoted to the role of 'servant' and was then 'dismissed'.



Somehow, he got a job as a hotel porter, but was again dismissed because he was too small to do the work allocated to him. His next job was to be sell tickets on a bus. The bus company had one bus so when that broke down the company folded and he lost that job too. By this time he had made a friend, who also worked on the buses, so the two of them went to Dhaka's main railway station and worked as porters, earning a little and sleeping at the station as part of the community of 'street children' who live there.

Perhaps 8 months ago, aged about 11, he was standing in a train doorway where crowds of people were pushing to get on and off. In this melee as the train started forward he was pushed and fell under the train. He was lucky that only his toes were cut off. What happened then is uncertain, but he was taken to hospital, where the wound must have been stitched and discharged back to the station where he developed a most shocking infection.

Polash, the manager of a hostel for street children invited him, and eventually insisted he come, to the hostel to be looked after. On January 12th Polash brought five street children to the CRP Prosthetics and Orthotics department. They had all lost limbs or parts of limbs. Shourab was one of that derelict little group.

His foot is by now beyond redemption and painful. The dilemma is whether to let him go and beg for the rest of his life or amputate the foot and provide him with a prosthesis. This is the most likely outcome. Meanwhile he is staying in the 'half-way hostel' at CRP and having good food; he has been enrolled in the William and Mary School and will get a place in the children's hostel. If all goes well his life could be turned around. Pray that after the chaotic life he has led so far he will be able to cope with the discipline of regular life at CRP and benefit from all it can offer him.

## 2019 Annual Supporters Meeting – Brian Woodgate, Administrator, reports:

Once again, the Annual Meeting was very well attended by Trustees, members and supporters, who were treated to an excellent 'light' curry lunch beforehand, provided by Mokhtar Hussain, his family and friends and other helpers, who were thanked by the Chairman in his welcome.

**The Chairman** welcomed all present and, in particular, Valerie Taylor, who had been well enough to attend the meeting after her fall in Seattle. He also welcomed Carolyn Scott, President of FCRP-Canada, thanking her for looking after Valerie in Seattle and Vancouver and travelling back with her. He also welcomed Beth Richan, who had also flown in from Canada, and had a long association with CRP. Mokhtar Hossein and Margaret Hakim then welcomed Bangladeshi members and guests in their own language.

**Chairman** went on to thank Helen Mortimer for producing yet another excellent Spring Newsletter, and Errol Doobay, who brought many copies of the CRP Annual Report back to the UK, and for his input with the IT network at CRP and equipping the VTI courses in Computer Applications. He also thanked Valerie for enabling him to get the most from his recent visit to CRP. He thanked the administrator for all his work during the year and also all those who, by their regular giving, enable VTT to subsidise the poorest patients.

Finally, he outlined the situation concerning the Ambulance and hospital bills saying that the final figure would not be known for some time. It was hoped that the bills could be met by American FCRP, with help from a GoFundMe initiative in Australia that had raised A\$4000. If necessary, any shortfall could be met from VTT funds but this was not ideal as funding was primarily for the benefit of CRP patients. A crowd-funding initiative in the UK was the preferred option if it became necessary. Several supporters had indicated that they would be willing to contribute to the costs.

**Treasurer's Report.** 2018/19 had been an excellent year with total income standing at £366k, VTT's highest ever income, primarily due to a legacy of £200k. £164k was sent to CRP in the year and permission had been given for a further transfer (c£200k) later in the year.

**The Draft Annual Report to the Charity Commissioners**, which included figures from the Draft Accounts for 2018/9, highlighted an issue of Governance: The Protection Policy for Children and Vulnerable Adults. Action had been agreed with CRP in January to strengthen the implementation of CRP's Policy

**Trustees** - Chairman announced that **Sayadul Khaled** is willing to take on the role of Treasurer and that Stuart Jeffreys would be standing down as a Trustee. He thanked Stuart for all his work with the Trust's finances and welcomed Sayadul to his new role. Philomena Commons was also standing down, not wishing to be re-elected. Mohamed Rashid was available for re-election. Peter Donnelly, who had raised funds for the Moulvi-Bazar unit and was willing to advise volunteers to CRP; and Glen McGhee, an orthotist, who had recently returned from CRP were nominated to fill the vacancies. All were elected.

**Valerie Taylor** - Valerie thanked supporters for all their messages of support after her fall, and she spoke of some recent news at CRP. A team including Iris, Khokon's niece, who is an OT on CRP's staff, had successfully developed a battery powered wheelchair, which can run for 100km on one charge. This will be manufactured by CRP itself, and it is hoped that it can be operated by foot instead of hand, making it suitable for people like Poppy who can only use their feet, and who despite difficulty in walking have surprisingly good movement in just their feet.

She also mentioned the success of the women's and men's wheelchair basketball teams, who participated in international competitions held in Kathmandu two years ago, Bali last year, and Bangkok this year. Many of these wheelchair athletes had never had an opportunity to go abroad before, so this was a wonderful opportunity for them.

Seeing Michael and Patience Vince, who had worked as Mental Health nurses at the Pabna Mental Hospital more than 40 years ago, she spoke of the Mental Health clinic at Gonokbari, which is now helping patients, who are brought to and from Dhaka by bus each day, and this seems to be working well. Finally, on behalf of the poorest patients Valerie thanked all those who raise funds in the UK to subsidise their treatment: ranging from the sale of cards from her own photographs by Carol Bennett to the proceeds of a production of "As You Like It" by Elizabeth Marden.

**Carolyn Scott** - Carolyn spoke of her disappointment that the number of volunteers going to CRP from Canada is much lower than it was because of the negative, and, in her view, largely unjustified, perceptions of Governments and Universities about the security situation in Bangladesh. She was pleased to see friends at the meeting whom she recognised from her visit to CRP earlier this year, and also Peter Donnelly, who had been a guest at her home in Vancouver 7 years ago.

**Jan and Roger Varney** - One area of involvement has been the Operating Theatre. \$77k has been raised by Rotary organisations in UK and Dhaka to replace four crucial items of equipment which are expected to be installed in 2 months' time: a steriliser, an anaesthetic machine, an Operating Theatre table, and an Operating Theatre bed. Given improvements already made to the floor, that will raise the Operating Theatre to acceptable standards, but a projected air conditioning system will have to wait till later.

Currently a container is being filled with items procured in the UK for shipping to Chittagong. This will include grass protection matting to enable wheelchair users to access grassed areas adjacent to garden areas at various levels without damaging the grass during the rainy season. Also included will be 120 pressure relieving mattresses with pumps obtained at no cost from the NPAC (National Police Aid Convoys).

Jan reported that participation by 116 senior nurses from Government hospitals in a Conference in February which she helped CRP to organise had been very enthusiastic: it was a great success.

**Ben Clackson** - Ben showed and commented on photographs taken on his recent visit, focussing particularly on the two CRP sub-centres at Chittagong and Rajshahi and on some Rehabilitation Outcomes for patients with disabilities, rather than on the treatment and training they were given along the way.

### Looking to buy someone a present?

Liz Timms, a long-standing supporter of CRP and VTT, has compiled two books about CRP based on the anecdotes, experiences and stories of those who have worked there or been a volunteer. The books give an excellent overview of the work of CRP through the personal profiles and eyes of these supporters. Books are still available for a donation of £10.00, plus £5.00 postage and packing.

Books may be obtained by contacting the Administrator on 01622 743011 or email: [admin@valerietaylortrust.org](mailto:admin@valerietaylortrust.org), sending a cheque made payable to VTT. Alternatively, copies of the book may be ordered via a link on the VTT website – [www.valerietaylortrust.org](http://www.valerietaylortrust.org)

### Invitation to Annual Supporters' Meeting

You are all cordially invited to

**2020 Annual Supporters' Meeting**

at

**St. Paul's Community Centre, 5, Rossmore Road, London  
NW1 6NJ**

on

**Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> May, 2020 at 2.00pm.**

A light lunch will be available from 1.00pm.

**Please note this date in your diaries NOW.**

## STUDENTS ON PLACEMENT – JESSICA BLOOMFIELD

During October to December 2018, myself and another student from the University of East Anglia were lucky enough to complete our final eight-week elective placement at the Centre for the Rehabilitation for the Paralysed (CRP) in Savar. I was studying my MSc in occupational therapy and my colleague Lucy was studying physiotherapy.

We felt welcomed the second we left the airport in Dhaka and were warmly greeted by our CRP driver Selim, who drove us to CRP Savar. The guesthouse for volunteers at CRP is right in the grounds and was built a year before we arrived. It was extremely comfortable and had everything we could need, including Shamoly and Norbanon, who worked there and took great care of us, always ensuring we were dressed properly in our salwar kameez before leaving for the day! We spent the first week across the different departments at CRP, to get a feel for this vast place and to decide on where we would focus our time. I visited a number of occupational departments including hand therapy, stroke, neurology, and paediatrics. At the latter, I accompanied the mothers and their children to the national monument where they discussed disability and stigmatisation with the CRP staff.

I decided to spend the majority of my time with the spinal cord unit, where the programme offered by the OTs was very comprehensive. From group and individual therapies, to wheelchair skills and sports, patients were offered numerous opportunities to support their recovery and participation in life. Before leaving CRP they spent time at the halfway hostel with their caregivers, to prepare for life in their communities. It is difficult to describe how it felt to see patients admitted to the wards unable to mobilise before leaving CRP able to walk again. For those with more severe complete spinal injuries progress was less obtainable, however the therapists still worked hard to support them and their caregivers to participate in daily life and to gain insight into their spinal injury or disease.

Outside of our placement hours CRP also offered us a rich cultural experience as we joined a variety of events including cultural programmes of dance and drama, rallies to promote road safety, and celebrations during world occupational therapy day, where everyone wore yellow and took to the streets to raise awareness of our important profession. Whilst we were at CRP, physiotherapy and occupational therapy were finally recognised by the Bangladesh government, I'm sure in no small part due to the tireless work CRP does to support individuals through these therapies, as well as to promote their regulation and recognition country wide. Since returning to the UK, I have been advising future students to take their elective placement at CRP. I learnt so much and experienced true kindness and generosity from all the people I encountered there. I hope to return one day when I have more professional experience!



## ESSENTIAL GIFT SCHEME

A few years ago we thought of trying this new Scheme and to our surprise it really took off and has been very worthwhile over the past few years. Most people who have used the Scheme use it at Christmas time but, of course, it can be used all year round for various celebrations for all those we know who have "everything", and we rack our brains wondering what to give. **EGS may be the answer !!**

Easter time, Eid and Diwali are other times for special gifts.

We do hope you will "try" the Scheme with the knowledge that it helps so much in the wonderful work being carried out in the Valerie Taylor Trust and CRP.

Elizabeth Arthur, the scheme administrator, would be very pleased to hear from you on:-

**0141 339 4273, or**

**email at [elizabeth350arthur@btinternet.com](mailto:elizabeth350arthur@btinternet.com), or**

**write to her at 51 Burlington Avenue, Glasgow, G12 0LJ**

## Other News

### Events

\*\*\* Elizabeth Marden produced an amateur production of William Shakespeare's "As You Like It" at her church in Notting Hill, London that raised an excellent £600.00 for our funds.

### Corporate

\*\*\* A further donation of £79,087 was received from ABF plc, the parent company of Primark, that will further cover the costs of the lecturers in Prosthetics and Orthotics at the Bangladesh Health Professions Institute at CRP.

\*\*\* Donations totalling £5758 were received this year, from two of Aldi's suppliers, HKG Garment Solutions and Miles gmbh.

The above corporate donations are a continuation of support following the Rana Plaza Disaster.

### Legacies

\*\*\* During the year, legacies from the estates of deceased members and supporters totalling over £300,000 have been gratefully received by VTT in support of CRP. Trustees would very much appreciate it if members and supporters would consider making such bequests in their wills. A leaflet and further information can be obtained from the VTT Administrator – details below.

**Many thanks to all our supporters who have held or who are organizing events of all sorts to raise funds in support of our aims. Please let the Administrator have details of any events and amounts raised for the information of other supporters.**

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT**

### PERSONAL DATA

**PLEASE** let the Administrator know if your details change, e.g, **change of name, address, email address, telephone number**, or if you no longer wish to continue your support. It would also be useful to know if you change your standing order, or tax position as these are all relevant to reclaiming tax on your fees and donations. A new form will be forwarded to you.

**We are legally obliged to ensure that any Personal Data we hold is accurate, up to date and secure. We can only do so if you keep us informed of any changes.**

**For further information, or to change any of the data we hold on your behalf, please contact:-**

**VTT Administrator, 4, Wilberforce Road, Coxheath, Maidstone, Kent, ME17 4HA**

**Tel:- 01622 743011; Email:- [admin@valerietaylortrust.org](mailto:admin@valerietaylortrust.org); Website:- [www.valerietaylortrust.org](http://www.valerietaylortrust.org)**