

Spring
2008

Valerie Taylor Trust

Supporting the work of Valerie Taylor in Bangladesh

"To give the poor, paralysed person the best chance of treatment and rehabilitation at the most subsidised rate – that is our goal"

Valerie Taylor
March 2008

Valerie Taylor's vision in 1971 was to provide rehabilitation for poor people in Bangladesh. Thirty seven years later this vision has gone far beyond her original ideas.

As well as the 100 bed hospital at Savar there are community based rehabilitation (CBR) centres around Bangladesh, degree level training for health professionals and dedicated centres at Mirpur, Gonokbari and Gobindapur.

Valerie's original vision is still at the core of her work.

The **Valerie Taylor Trust (VTT)** has been formed to provide support from the United Kingdom for Valerie Taylor's work in Bangladesh. The main activity areas that we will be helping are:

- The promotion of treatment, care and rehabilitation of disabled people in Bangladesh through re-integration into the community, raising awareness of disability and educating health workers
- Relief of poverty

At present the efforts of the **Valerie Taylor Trust** are focussed on supporting the 100 bed hospital at the **Centre for the Rehabilitation of the Paralysed (CRP)** at Savar. This is where financial assistance is most needed to help the poorest in Bangladesh receive treatment.



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The aim of our Newsletter...

We plan to bring you news from:

- Our fundraisers with ideas on fun ways to reach our financial targets
- Volunteers at CRP – old and new

News about:

- Case studies so you know where your support is helping
- Features on different aspects of CRP
- Special events and tours

So let us have your stories and your photos

The Editor



Bertie Woolnough CBE
VTT Chairman

Commanded the British Military Advisory Team in Bangladesh 1987-1990; visited CRP frequently; long term CRP supporter

I first met Valerie in late 1987 when I arrived in Bangladesh to command the British Military Advisory Team. At that time she was working from a large private house in the Farmgate area of the capital, Dhaka. Like so many others, I was immediately struck by her dedication, selflessness and professionalism in helping those with paralysis live a useful life in their own communities. It was hard to grasp that her hospital was the only facility in that country providing that type of treatment.

Today the work of CRP is recognised widely both in Bangladesh and internationally; the range and quality of treatment and facilities are remarkable. Valerie's work is without parallel in Bangladesh and recognition of her achievements include the award of Bangladeshi citizenship by the Bangladesh Government, and being awarded the OBE by the UK Government. The Bangladesh Government have also given her their most prestigious civilian award 'Shadhinota Dibosh Podok' for her work with disabled people.

I have just returned from visiting Bangladesh and you will find an up-date on CRP elsewhere in the Newsletter. As always, I felt humbled by the commitment and professionalism that I saw wherever I went. But in order to continue helping the poorest receive treatment, financial support from outside Bangladesh is essential. I hope that you will be able to assist Valerie in her work through supporting the Valerie Taylor Trust.

STOP PRESS... STOP PRESS... STOP PRESS... STOP PRESS...

- Valerie Taylor plans to visit UK in September/October 2008
- Events in Scotland and Salisbury are definite
- Contact Administrator for details

Impressions of CRP at Savar

Bertie Woolnough writes: 'My visit to CRP at Savar in March this year was the first for some seven years so I was not sure what to expect! Would much have changed in the intervening years?'

At first sight it appeared that much was indeed the same as I toured the 100 bed hospital, the wood and metal workshops and the halfway house. But throughout the day I became increasingly aware of how much, and in how many ways, CRP has developed. I was struck by the



significant number of individuals with disability who now have a role in helping to run the Centre – from the Reception Desk, in many of the departments, on the wards and even the CRP photographer. The Mother and Child Unit, a relatively recent development, was working at full capacity, and the ability of CRP to treat some 300 out-patients a day is a truly remarkable achievement.

It was my first visit to the Bangladesh Health Professional Institute. Now an internationally recognised provider of degree level training, it is making a significant contribution to the treatment and rehabilitation of the paralysed in Bangladesh. It was also encouraging to learn that some of its graduates are now working at CRP both in Savar and Mirpur.

I had a personal interest in seeing the new water pump and storage tank which were funded by the Canadian Government and the Churches of the Chalke Valley near Salisbury. They are providing essential resilience to the water supply at the Centre.

Finally, one aspect had not changed at all. Everywhere I went I witnessed a clear sense of purpose, hope and achievement – amongst both staff and patients.'

Left: The new water tower at CRP-Savar with the well head at its base. Some of the staff quarters can be seen on the right of the picture.



Above: Minu, CRP's staff photographer with Kamal who is one of CRP's assistant electricians.

Until about seven years ago 21 year old Minu was studying at school but she became ill with what is thought to have been transverse myelitis which left her paraplegic.

Minu is now a staff photographer at CRP and a member of the Wheelchair Users Film Group. In the Autumn, in association with CRP and Purple Field Productions, the Group will be embarking on an exciting new project – a Disability Awareness Documentary for Bangladesh aimed primarily at television.

Our First AGM

AGM Leicester – A Brief Report from a member:

On the 9th March 2008 at the Rise of the Raj Restaurant in Leicester more than 50 members and friends met for lunch and the first AGM of VTT.

As our founder Chairman Ben Clackson wished to stand down due to pressure of work, the meeting elected Bertie Woolnough as Chairman. The post of Treasurer continues to be held by Michael Woodley and Catherine Hall is the Secretary. Chris Hall is our Administrator. Five other Trustees were also elected.

One of the Trustees, David Newall had visited CRP within the last few

months and had sent a positive update of the current situation in both Savar and Mirpur.

Supporters came from as far away as Scotland, the West Country, Southern England and London. There was much discussion about the way forward for the Charity (full minutes on VTT website) with the incoming Chairman, Bertie Woolnough, setting us our first fundraising target of £4,500 each month. This would be used primarily for supporting poor patients at Savar based on a basic cost of £44 per in-patient per month. He also challenged those present to recruit new members from amongst their friends and relatives.

Dr Bryan Whitty then showed us the film* made by his son, Iain, of his impressions of CRP. The film was made specifically for Yvonne Lyon's fundraising concert held in February at the RSAMD in Glasgow. The very successful concert raised over £3,000 for VTT.

Amidst lots of chatter and fundraising ideas we went our various ways buoyed up with enthusiasm for our new charity.

***NOTE:**

The film (in DVD format) has been edited for general use and is available for fundraising events from Chris Hall, the Administrator. Also view it on YouTube.

FUNDRAISING

How Can You Help?

Run a marathon, hold an art exhibition or concert, host a curry lunch or supper, have no-presents – anniversaries or those special '0' birthdays with donations to VTT instead, have a dressing-up-not-uniform day at your local school/office or for those with a particularly adventurous streak perhaps a parachute or bungee jump etc.

But most important – tell your friends about The Valerie Taylor Trust and how they can be supporting members. We have enclosed two leaflets to help you with this.

Art as Fundraising 08

Art has long had a place in raising funds for CRP

Unique cards are produced by patients at CRP. The most well recognised are by Lovely who following treatment at CRP, taught herself to paint after being paralysed from the neck down. Lovely won recognition for her pictures both in Bangladesh and internationally.

Her range of cards is varied and timeless. The most popular being her flower and local boat pictures. All the cards are blank so you can use them for any occasion. Costing just £1.00 per card they are a great buy.

See illustrations of the full range at www.crp-bangladesh.org

Available in UK from Tony Stephens; just call **01747 831043**

Raising Funds

Congratulations Iain!

Iain Whitty has just completed the London Marathon in a time of 3 hours 47 minutes to raise funds for VTT/CRP. So far he has raised an amazing £600 through his Justgiving/run4crp page. The page is still open so, if you wish, you can add your donation.

In fact the whole Whitty family have been busy raising funds for VTT.

Bryan Whitty writes from Scotland: *"We had a charity fair in the church yesterday. Being 1 of 12 stalls we had not expected to make much. However Margaret (his wife) and friends produced lots of home baking which added to card sales raised £208.64."*

But it's not only about money – time and talents are important too.

School boys Rasheeq and Stephen, who have both applied to study medicine, are going to CRP for work experience in August 2008. This has been arranged through The Bengali Performing Arts, Glasgow Group.

Those of you who remember Corina Thomas (From Horizontal to Vertical/Voluntary Work Abroad) will be interested to know that from her current post at York St John, she is now sending her occupational therapy students out to Savar on elective placement. The most critical part of their luggage is a jar of Marmite – a treat for Valerie from a long time supporter, Ann Ikoku.

Former CRP Patient Stars in New Film

To change peoples' attitudes takes time but the attitude of society towards disabled people in Bangladesh is gradually changing. Two films 'Bihongo' and 'Radio Bhai' have helped.

Directed by Shaidul Alam Sachchu and Rehana Samdani and scripted by Elspeth Waldie 'Radio Bhai' was made by qualified young



filmmakers from UK and Norway working with a Bangladeshi production team. Released in the UK last year, it is based on a popular Bengali love story but with a significant difference – the hero is in a wheelchair. Acting for the first time a former CRP patient (and wheelchair user), Shatti, plays the hero, Rafiq. He gives a performance guaranteed to win your heart.

To find out more, go to:

www.crp-bangladesh.org or www.purplefieldproductions.org

Treasurer's Report

- In our first six months we have sent £28,850 to CRP
- We intend to transfer money to Bangladesh each month so regular planned giving by standing order or direct debit helps us. But any amount you can give helps us achieve our goal.
- VTT Gift Aid envelopes are available for fund raising and personal use. Get yours from the Administrator

And finally...

We've teamed up with Justgiving.com, the UK's leading online fundraising website, so you can donate and raise funds for us online. Using **Justgiving** saves us costs and reduces our admin burden, so going online is by far the most efficient way of supporting us.

It's easy to make a single or monthly donation with a credit or debit card online: all you need to do is go to www.justgiving.com/vtt/donate

Justgiving reclaims Gift Aid automatically and pays your donation directly to us at the end of every week, and the site is 100% secure.

Justgiving also makes it easy to raise money: you can create an online fundraising page in minutes to collect donations for any sponsored event or appeal at www.justgiving.com/vtt/raisemoney



Some numbers

Health Expenditure per capita (US\$)

United Kingdom	2560
Bangladesh	64

Source: United Nations Development Programme Human Development report 2007/2008

Some more numbers

In 2006 – 2007

Out Patient services at CRP-Savar

Male patients	10936
Female Patients	7131

In-Patients treated at CRP-Savar

Male patients	363
Female patients	58

Children

Out patients treated	Boys	2207	Girls	1554
In-patients treated	Boys	289	Girls	213

CRP employs 437 staff of which 41 have disabilities

Home visits to ex-patients: 2438

Bi-lingual education and physical dexterity can be learnt from this numbers board showing English & Bengali numbers. It was made from papier mâché in the paper project at CRP-Savar

Valerie Taylor Trust Trustees

Fahmida Begum

Company manager of the Cultural Industries Development Agency in London; CRP supporter for 7 years



Wendy Best

Former trustee, development officer, administrator and newsletter editor of FCRP; advisor to UK based CRP volunteers; visited CRP several times between 1987 and 2004



Ben Clackson

Founder Chairman of VTT. Met Valerie while posted to the British High Commission in Dhaka 1980-82; visited CRP in 1998; acted as a fund raising link with St Andrew's Church, Bedford 1990 – 2006. Long term CRP supporter



Philomena Commons

Lecturer/Advanced Practitioner in Physiotherapy; worked in Bangladesh 1989-1994 at Chandragona Hospital in the Chittagong Hill Tracts and 1999-2004 at CRP. A Bangla speaker, Phil is presently completing a PhD at Leeds University (Social factors influencing the training of therapists around disability in Bangladesh)



Catherine Hall

(VTT Secretary) Resident volunteer physiotherapist and lecturer at CRP in 2002, 2005 and 2007.



Mokhtar Hussain

British Bangladeshi – lived in Leicester since 1972. School governor; member of the Executive Committee of the Leicester Racial Equality Council. CRP Supporter for 15 years



David Newell OBE

Director of Oxfam, Bangladesh in the mid-80's. Assisted Valerie in the establishment of CRP's charitable trust 1984



Michael Woodley

(VTT Treasurer) Visitor to CRP; resident in Dhanmondi area of Dhaka for two years while employed by Govt. of Bangladesh on World Bank project 1984-1987. Frequently returned to Bangladesh as UN consultant to the leather industry



Chris Hall

(VTT Administrator) Resident Administrative Assistant at CRP 2005 and 2007.



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