

Spring
2009

Valerie Taylor Trust

Supporting the work of Valerie Taylor in Bangladesh

How it started.....

- 1979 First 4 patients treated in converted cement store in Dhaka
- 1981 Move to house in Dhanmoni area of Dhaka
- 1984 Setting up in Bangladesh on 5th May of the Trust for the Rehabilitation of the Paralyzed
- 1985 Move to larger accommodation; White Lion House, Farmgate
- 1990 Move of 55 patients to temporary accommodation at permanent base at Savar
- 2003 CRP-Mirpur building completed providing improved clinic facilities in Dhaka

And now in 2009....

At Savar: 100 bed hospital for acute spinal injuries; Physiotherapy and OT departments; Surgical operating theatres; X-ray department; halfway hostel; metal workshop for making wheeled mobility aids; wood workshop; orthotics/prosthetic workshop; vocational training centre.

- 21 bed Mother and Child Unit with outpatient clinic and special seating workshop
- Special Needs school
- Bangladesh Health Professionals Institute (BHPI) running 11 courses - 3 to degree level
- Four other CRP centres and Community Based Rehabilitation country wide
- Plant nursery, fish pond & printing press for income generation.

STOP PRESS... STOP PRESS....

- First 30 years of CRP.....
- Glen McGhee back at CRP.....
- More Marathons for VTT
- Commemorative stamps issue
- Jean Ward visits Savar
- Fund-raising

The first 30 years of CRP.....

Founder, Valerie Taylor, remembers.....

"CRP's history and development is bound up in the special characters that we have been privileged to know and with whom we have worked.

We need to start with Madhab Chandra Kangsa Banik. Madhab broke his neck in a fall from a roof on 17th March 1976. From then on he celebrated that date as his birthday because he said that was the day he started a new life, a life in the company of paralysis. CRP

employed Madhab as a counsellor; we used to say "one word from Madhab was worth 100 from an able bodied person". A keen chess player, Madhab also taught himself to paint using an adapted arm splint strapped to his wrist. After his death in 1999 his incredible life continues to be commemorated by The Madhab Memorial Vocational Training Centre at Savar. A few days before he died he gave me some limes he had grown "If there are pips inside plant them" he told me; so now there is a special reminder of Madhab close to the door of our house - a lime tree bearing its white flowers and limes in their season. *Continued on page 2.*



Chairman's Letter

2008 was an excellent year for the Valerie Taylor Trust. First, we exceeded, by far, our monthly fundraising target of £4,500 which was primarily for supporting the treatment of poor patients at Savar. Second, Valerie carried out a highly successful fund-raising and awareness tour in many parts of England. She also managed to have some well deserved rest and recreation.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank our first Administrator, Chris Hall for the marvellous job he has done in getting VTT up and running. As his own business commitments demand more of his time, he will take on a supporting role to our new Administrator. Brian Woodgate, who brings a wealth of experience to the job. Christine Coyne will also be joining our volunteer administrative team. Welcome Brian and Christine.

Elsewhere in this Newsletter you will read the highlights of Valerie's work in Bangladesh as the Centre for the Rehabilitation of the Paralysed (CRP) celebrates its 30th Anniversary. It is a remarkable and inspiring catalogue of achievement. But several factors are impacting on CRP's financial outlook. The increase in staple foods such as rice means that the poorest cannot afford to contribute to medical treatment; the ever-increasing population - now over 160 million with 41% below the poverty line - severely limits support from the Government; and the world-wide economic difficulties have led to some long-standing donors scaling down or withdrawing their support. The need for financial support from outside Bangladesh remains as critical as ever if Valerie's work is to be sustained.

Thank you all for generously supporting the Valerie Taylor Trust with your time and talents.

Bertie Woolnough CBE

Rua's Tablets raise £1000

Rua Gillespie of Kelvindale, Glasgow has been busy raising funds for VTT selling £1.20 bags of Scottish 'Tablet' fudge mainly through her local church. In October Rua was able to present a cheque for £500 to Valerie during her visit to Scotland - a further £500 cheque has now been received. That is a lot of fudge. Well done and thank you, Rua

The first 30 years of CRP..... *Continued from Page 1*



Above: Jabeda

Another special person who worked at CRP for 25 years is Mohua Paul. Mohua wanted more out of life than to just stay at home, so she accepted the offer to come to CRP when it was based in Dhanmondi. She learned to type and keep the Centre's accounts; to be an excellent cook, play the guitar and was very skilled at embroidery. Over the years Mohua worked hard to build up the women's independent living centre at CRP-Gonokbari. She has gone on to found another NGO, Access, working with disabled people.

Jobeda came to CRP at White Lion House, Farmgate. When a wall fell on her breaking her back, her lower limbs were permanently paralysed. Using a low level wheelchair for mobility, she learnt to use a sewing machine to produce garments to sell. Abandoned by her husband she feared she would also lose her baby son,

Johirul. With the help of CRP's social welfare department she went through the courts to get custody of her son. Now Jobirul, in his early twenties and working in the local knitting factory, looks after his mother. It was a particular pleasure to be invited to his wedding in their village home in December last year."

Three other UK based international charities have grown from needs first met at CRP. Motivation - mobility aids in developing countries; The Swinfen Charitable Trust providing Telemedicine world wide from a pilot scheme at CRP; Purple Field Productions, founded by Elspeth Waldie, making films on public awareness issues.

And for the future? Valerie writes "In conclusion I would like to convey the warm and grateful thanks of everyone at CRP for the wonderful, most faithful and very generous assistance we have received from so many people over the last 30 years. Together we now look forward to CRP's next 30 years."



Left: Mohua

Valerie's 2008 Tour

Ben Clackson writes: "Many of our members were able to meet Valerie again in the course of her fund-raising tour during September and October 2008. Beginning with a week in Northern Ireland, with events hosted by James Holt and Maggie Muldoon, she then spent nearly 4 weeks in various parts of England, ranging from Kent in the South to York in the North and from London to Somerset. She ended with a week in Scotland, where events were organised by Bryan Whitty in Glasgow and Marjorie Douglas in Edinburgh. She may be able to visit the UK again this autumn but this has not been confirmed. Please let the Administrator, Brian Woodgate, know if you would like to host an event when she is next in UK.

I know that for Val herself it was a very happy time: it was a great pleasure for her to meet so many of her friends, and to see the enthusiasm of her supporters old and new, and to feel that at last things are moving forward again.

I am delighted to be able to tell you that the money raised directly by the tour amounted to £22,000. This will be increased once Gift Aid is added."

Valerie's Busy Day in Marden, Kent

Valerie's visit began at the Vicarage with a welcome from Rev. James Robertson and Brian Woodgate. Next stop was lunch at the Taj of Kent Restaurant with manager Mr Ali, a supporter for several years. Sarah Davies, Chairperson of the Church's Charity Group also joined the lunch.

Then it was on to visit Swallow class at Marden Primary School to tell them, with a visual presentation, about the work at CRP. Later in the afternoon Valerie visited Marden Heritage Centre where she spoke to volunteer staff about her work.

In the evening Valerie gave an illustrated presentation in the Vestry Hall for church members and their friends who donated a total of £280.

It's not only about the money

Our first newsletter mentioned that 5 undergraduate occupational therapy students from York St John University had gone for their final twelve week placement to CRP. Following the huge success of this venture, Valerie spent a day at the University speaking to both senior lecturers about internationalizing therapy and students to motivate them to think about working in developing countries once qualified, particularly at CRP. Valerie also met John Fathers, Head of the Design Degree; he is keen to stay in touch and to look at design projects for his students that would benefit CRP.

Corinna Klaentschi (née Thomas) writes "Valerie worked hard all day. Although no money was raised, I believe the links with an established University, the promise of many students and lecturer exchanges and general professional support will be invaluable.

On a personal note, I was delighted to spend more time with Val and it was lovely to be able to show off my family to someone who has played such an important part in shaping my life. Like many of us, I had no idea that when I went to CRP as an 18 year old volunteer I would still be involved 19 years later - and thank goodness I am."

From Joyce Halliday and Wendy Best in the West Country...

During a couple of days of supposed rest and relaxation in Somerset last September, Valerie managed to speak in Bicknoller, Taunton and Ilminster. Also during her visit the 8-strong Troubadour singers gave an enchanting concert. Val's 'R&R' raised over £1000!

Two spin offs may prove even more beneficial:

- An enthused 'Bicknollerite' with an engineering bent is visiting CRP early this year while en route to Viet Nam. He will investigate the possibilities of solar energy panels heating the water for the in-house laundry. This is critical help as the outages in the local electrical supply continue to cause problems.
- The Valerie Taylor Trust has also been adopted by the Quantock Deanery as their 2009 Missionary Project. This means that every church in the Deanery will be getting to know about CRP, be praying for the work there and be raising money.

Glen McGhee back at CRP

"As the plane landed at Dhaka International Airport, I looked out of the window; the country didn't seem as green as I remembered it 18 years ago. In the intervening year Dhaka and the surrounding towns had expanded. With a population of 90 million when I left and 161 million now I suppose I should have expected it.

I worked with CRP from 1987 to 1990 at the time when it was still in Farmgate at White Lion House. The course was to train 10 people in making low cost braces (orthoses) and help them to set up a small workshop in their organisation; the first of its kind in Bangladesh.

Now I was back and very excited to see CRP-Savar that I hear so much about. The Centre seems so big as we are driven from the front gate to the flat I was going

to call home for the next few months. The first tour of the site, I just couldn't take it all in. 500 staff over four sites; such a change from Farmgate with its staff of 30 crammed into so little space - no lifts so patients were carried upstairs on stretchers.

I am so happy to see real wards instead of converted bedrooms. The best of all for me was to see how the wheelchair and metal workshop had grown and the development of the special seating department. And a small Orthotic and Prosthetic department, but that will change. Exciting news; there is talk of a national training course here at CRP which would save students having to travel to India or Viet Nam for training.

All around CRP it was good to meet up with some old faces especially Val's

daughters Joyti and Poppy. O I feel so old, Joyti is married now; it doesn't seem 20 years since we put up a Christmas tree together and tried to make it look pretty with what we could find in the local shops. Poppy is as funny as ever and I am trying to find time to read her Black Beauty.

There is a real buzz about the place and to think that Valerie had the strength to see the vision of it all those years ago and here I am standing in it; I am amazed and honoured.

I am glad I have come back; I was scared that it would not be as good as I remembered but I made the right decision to take this time and come back here. I should have done it years ago. I know it is only for a few months but I am sure I will be out again and next time for longer."

CRP Commemorative Stamps to be issued in Bangladesh

Two stamps, in four colours and with Taka 6 and Taka 3 denomination have been designed and should be released later this year; hopefully in time for the 30th Anniversary Celebrations. So philatelists watch out!

While on the subject of stamps, Sheila Hazell has been collecting used stamps for CRP since 1998. If you have some to spare please send them to Sheila at: The Studio, c/o Yewdsen House, Chinnor Road, Bledlow Ridge, Bucks HP14 4AW.

Valerie tells me the stamps Sheila collects are very very welcome and that they hope to encourage some of the older children at the school to start albums.

Valerie Visits the House of Lords

During her visit to the UK Valerie lunched at the House of Lords with Lord Swinfen and Lord Judd and brought them up to date on CRP. Lord Swinfen worked closely with Valerie to develop the Telemedicine capability which now supports developing countries across the world whilst Lord Judd met her when he was in Bangladesh as Minister for Overseas Development.

More Marathons for VTT



Ian Smethurst, Chris Hall and Anna Smethurst after they had Run to the Beat London 1/2 Marathon, October 2008

Catherine Hall, Chris Hall, Anna Smethurst and Ian Smethurst raised £1037.59 when they ran in the Run to the Beat London 1/2 Marathon in October 2008

Former CRP staff member, Adrian Sym, raised £478.74 when he ran in the Cologne Marathon in October 2008

Helen Mortimer and Lucy Mortimer raised £1131.81 when they ran in the City of Norwich 1/2 Marathon in November 2008

Sponsorship was collected through <http://www.justgiving.com/vtt/raisemoney>

The Mother Teresa of Bangladesh visits Leicester City

The Bengali community and the people of Leicester turned out in force on Sunday 5th October at Simla Pinks Restaurant, London Road, Leicester to welcome back Valerie Taylor who gave a presentation about the work involved in caring for the patients. She also explained how the money raised is utilised and stressed the importance of the donations, pointing out that in Bangladesh £1 is more than many earn for a day's hard work. Organiser of this event and VTT Trustee, Mr Mokhtar Hussain, said he was proud to be associated with this wonderful organisation. "The people of Leicester have been very generous" he said and invited more people to take a positive initiative to help raise more funds.

The event was attended by the Right Worshipful the Lord Mayor of Leicester, Cllr. Manzilla Sood who welcomed

Valerie with open arms calling her the Mother Teresa of Bangladesh and praising her hard work and determination which has led to the development of CRP as an internationally respected organisation.

Mr Faruq Haider, who chaired the event, mentioned the numerous awards with which Valerie had been decorated amongst which is the O.B.E. for her outstanding efforts to provide holistic treatment for the paralysed and the "Shadhinota Dibosh Podok", the highest civilian award of Bangladesh.

The manager of Shimla Pinks, Mr Shaf Islam, gave special thanks to all those who attended for making the event so successful and looked forward to the next event.

by Mintu Rahman

Jean Ward visits the Mother and Child Unit at Savar



Retired paediatric physiotherapist, Jean Ward, first visited CRP in 1998 when the mother and child unit consisted of 5 mattresses at the end of a dark bare room. Now a purpose built unit treats 21 in-patients (usually for two weeks at a time

accompanied by their mothers) as well as numerous out-patients. There are dedicated areas for reception, staff, treatment and separate living space for the mothers.

Jean writes "During my visit I gave some formal lectures, ran discussion groups, provided general clinical supervision when applicable, gave joint treatment together with the Bangladesh Health Professionals Institute (BHPI) students and organised role play workshops. The students became a mother, or child, or a therapist and demonstrated clinical techniques, activity programmes and management of various conditions. Some students proved to be very good actors especially as strong willed, unco-operative active children!

Each morning the in-patient children and their mothers attend one of three group sessions - one for children who are able to sit unaided, one for those needing support and one for severely handicapped children who enjoy massage and need a quiet, gentle



programme. Each session includes functional activities of dressing & feeling, together with 'therapeutic games'. Each child also receives individual treatment and, most importantly, the mothers are shown how to continue this at home.

As many of the children never experience 'normal' childhood activities, I encouraged more use of the playground's swings, slide and sand pit. Delighted children buried and unburied their feet and made sand pies whilst a very withdrawn little boy relaxed in the swing smiling and humming away to himself

I spent several evenings in the Children's Hostel where it was lovely to see the children playing in small groups rather than watching TV. We added the Hokey Kokey to our repertoire of action songs which the children sang with great gusto.

Children always help to create a relaxed atmosphere, but it is the excellent way the therapists work together regardless of disciplines or level of qualification that gives the unit its special buzz. I was made most welcome by an enthusiastic hard working team of therapy staff and students. Altogether I felt it was a very worthwhile visit and I look forward to the next."

Mother and Child Unit at Savar 2007/2008

Number of children with disabilities who received services during July 2007 to June 2008

In-patient	516
Out-patients	1465
Special Seats for children	73
Assistive devices for children (<i>wheelchairs, etc</i>)	2111
Cost of 14 days residential treatment in the Mother and Child unit approx	10 GBP

Source: CRP Annual report 2007/2008

Administrative Changes

Brian Woodgate

(VTT Administrator)
Over the past 45 years Brian has held senior appointments with both the Ambulance & Police Service. A supporter of CRP for eleven years, he visited the Centre in 2001.



Christine Coyne

(VTT Development Officer)
Graduate of Social Anthropology. Worked with educational and Development charities in Ethiopia and the UK. A new member of VTT.



FUND-RAISING

- Collect your coppers for VTT - they soon add up!
- Information Leaflets, Newsletters and Gift Aid envelopes are always available from our Administrator
- Are you making or up-dating your Will? Consider making a legacy to VTT.
- Taking part in a sponsored event? Use the online fundraising website www.justgiving.com/vtt/raise (Gift Aid is recovered automatically).

Would you like to organise an event when Valerie next visits the UK?
Tell our Administrator.

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