



LIONS BELARUS TRUST

DISTRICT 105SE

Registered Charity No. 1112811



This Newsletter is designed to give brief details and news of the current and future work of the "Gomel Group". For further details, call Howard Lee on (01252) 734530 or email lionhowardlee@sky.com

BELARUS PROJECTS

NEWSLETTER

No 10

March 14

Our Visit to Gomel September 2013

In September 2013, an intrepid trio of Paul Withers, DG Mike Parker and yours truly travelled to Gomel to visit our existing projects, and possible new ones. The overwhelming reaction from our visit is that our work in Belarus is still sorely needed. Due to economic decline and domestic inflation, the standard of living in Belarus has continued to fall since our last visit, with average wages now at below US\$200 per month. And of course, the long-term effects of the Chernobyl Catastrophe will be greatly felt for many years to come. Due to the dedication of Lions from all over the District, the Multiple District, and beyond, our help for the less fortunate of the Gomel area of Belarus is continuing, and growing in size and effect, every year.

We visited the four projects that we agreed to support two years ago.

- Kindergarten 99 for children with speech disorders – £4,000 for equipment and reparations to the psychology department of the school – all completed and very effective.
- Day Centre for Disabled - £3,200 for a wheelchair ramp and a porch to cover the entrance – delays have occurred, but should be completed this Spring.
- Special Education Centre and Orphanage - £2,300 for a new boiler and pump – all completed.
- Gomel Regional Centre for Health Improvement – we agreed to sponsor youths for a stay at this centre at £90 each, and support from Lions Clubs in South East England, Germany and France has been great. £9,000 was collected, and will be used to sponsor 100 youngsters during the summer of 2014.



Our intrepid travellers meet with the head of the Gomel Education Department

We also visited quite a number of potential new projects, all of which have been considered by the Gomel Group. With Cabinet's blessing, we have agreed to support:-

- Regional Hospital Children's Department - £6,250 for a playground.
- Kindergarten 99 for children with speech disorders - £750 for an industrial washing machine
- Special Education Centre and Orphanage - £2,100 for play facilities.
- Ulukovje Orphanage - £2,500 for renovation of toilet facilities.

Please see over leaf for details of these projects

Your continued support is respectfully requested. Please send donations to District Charities Treasurer Tom Berry (01303 892064), or directly to Lions Belarus Trust Treasurer Frank Lees (01892 654196).

Various other facilities were visited during the trip, some of which are being considered for future support

Once again, I sincerely thank my fellow Trustees of the Lions Belarus Trust, David Careswell, Peter Drysdale, Chris Iles, Phil Robinson (now retired), Frank Lees and Paul Withers. I also thank the other members of the Gomel Group, all of whom have put in marvellous efforts over the last year, and no doubt will continue to do so.

Gomel Lions In Good Health



During our visit various members of the Gomel Lions Club accompanied us, and we had the customary Lions Club party night, with lashings of food, vodka, toasts, music, games, etc. The Gomel Lions Club continues to act as our main partners in our projects. They also have many projects of their own, mainly centred on orphans and disabled children. However, they still need our support to pay their international dues. If you feel able to assist, either personally, or from your club's administration account, please send donations directly to Frank Lees (01892 654196). Personal donations attract GiftAid support.

Our Current Projects in Gomel



Regional Hospital Children's Department

We visited the department, which is cramped and stuffy, with beds in corners and corridors in order to cope with the number of children needing attention. Children are often confined to their beds merely because of lack of space. The unit houses up to 50 children at a time, and on average each child stays around two weeks. It currently has no playground, but it is vital for the children to get fresh air and exercise to aid their recovery. There is a small, but adequate, open area, immediately outside the building, which will be ideal as a playground. We have agreed to pay for the preparation of the ground, and to supply and install the play equipment, at a total cost of £6,250.



Inspecting the site for the playground

Kindergarten No 99



The current state of the laundry

This is the school for children with learning difficulties, where we have provided equipment for the psychologist's therapy room, as well as furniture, toys and other items on the Shoebox lorry. It is doing very well, and making excellent use of the help we have so far given. However, we were taken on a tour of the kitchens and laundry, which are surviving on just a few items of equipment, all of which look as if they came from the ark. The list of requirements is long, but for now we have agreed to provide them with a new industrial-strength washing machine at £750.

Ulukovie Child Protection Centre

This is a centre which we have visited several times before. They act as the central recorders and co-ordinators for all children at risk in the Gomel region, and do a fantastic job. They themselves house up to 25 children who have been removed from their homes for their own protection, for up to six months at a time, before they are returned to their homes, or fostered. Their current playground is virtually derelict, and we have agreed to pay for new play equipment at a cost of £2,100.



Call that a playground!

Ulukovie Boarding School (Orphanage)

This orphanage houses up to 200 orphans between the ages of 6 and 18, and we have helped them before with fire doors, and a "half-way house" where their 18-year-olds can learn to live alone before departing the school. Every year, they are on our delivery list for aid from the Shoebox Appeal, and every time we visit them we are impressed with the work they do, but depressed by the amount of help they still so desperately need. This time we were shown two rooms that should be toilets. They are in the school wing of the building, on two floors, and they are totally derelict at present, so that the children have to go back to the accommodation wing to use the toilets there. Each of the two toilets needs complete renovation and installation of new wash basins and toilet fixtures, and we have agreed to cover the cost, which for both toilets totals £2,500.

In the true spirit of Lionism, please give generously

Howard Lee
Chairman, Lions Belarus Trust

Please visit www.lionsbelarustrust.org