

My Weekly

Helping Hand

MAKE IT A MILLION!



Children Still Need Our Help

Yvonne wants to be a teacher when she finishes school so she can educate other children in Malawi. Her favourite subjects at school are English and Chichewa, the official languages of Malawi. Yvonne, who is 11, wakes up before sunrise and does chores before leaving for school on an empty stomach. At school, she receives a daily mug of porridge from Mary's Meals. "Porridge makes me full. I don't feel hungry any more," said Yvonne. "It tastes really good. When I have eaten, I can listen attentively in class, and understand what the teacher is saying." Yvonne's family grow maize, sweet potato, ground nuts and pigeon peas, but this year's harvest wasn't good and they often struggle to find enough food to eat. When we meet Yvonne, she is wearing her school uniform despite it being a non-uniform day, suggesting that she might not have another outfit she could readily wear that day. She has no coat, jumper or shoes on even though it is raining on and off and quite cold that morning. Her uniform however is very neat.

Appeal for Romania 2005

a place beyond sadness

This is one of the very dark places of the Earth. The Tuberculosis Hospital in Cluj-Napoca. Three main buildings, a century and a half old, crammed with people whose years are numbered in despair.

The hall we enter is bare. There's a statue of a man who never smiles. The staircase is wide and grey. Dust comforts the worn hand rail. The walls, as you climb, are barren of pictures. The paint is dull with age.

A place like this can make you very angry.

Faces beyond pain, beyond sadness. Blank faces with no interest, no hope. The faces of forgotten people.

Unsupervised, we look around the wards of this contagious place of confinement. No doctors, only a scurrying nurse in a white mask. Her impatient eyes don't register us.

Before

In the unwelcoming building, we never see a flower. Only the pale petals of peeling plaster.

This is a hospital for the very poor. They have nowhere else to go. We have to help them.

If you'd like to help with this and other projects, please make out a cheque or postal order to My Weekly Helping Hand Appeal, 80 Kingsway East, Dundee DD2 6SL. Or donate by credit card on Freephone 0800 318846. We'll cover all administration costs. Not a penny will be wasted. That's our promise.

Appeal for Romania 2005

Appeal for Romania 2005

As New Hope Dawns

Now the refurbishment of the ground floor of the TB Hospital is completed, to the delight of staff and patients, we turn our eyes upwards to the next challenge...

After: Dr Vasilie Murgan, leaving with delight, surrounded by staff and patients.

Before: big, crowded wards allowed infection to spread easily.

After: "We are now living like a hotel!"

"Thank you to your donors for my husband being happy."

Getting The Job Done

Before: big, crowded wards allowed infection to spread easily.

After: "We are now living like a hotel!"

Appeal for Romania 2005

YOU GAVE THEM A HELPING HAND

The residents of this Romanian Old Folk's Home have reason to celebrate with the opening of their terrific new extension - and it's all thanks to you!

THIS YEAR'S APPEAL

IF you would like to send a cheque, please make out a cheque or postal order to My Weekly Helping Hand Appeal, 80 Kingsway East, Dundee DD2 6SL. Or donate by credit card on Freephone 0800 318846. We'll cover all administration costs. Not a penny will be wasted. That's our promise.

ABOUT POSTAGE

STOP PRESS STOP PRESS STOP PRESS

MY WEEKLY HELPING HAND APPEAL

So Much To Do

When Harrison walked into the Tuberculosis Hospital in Cluj-Napoca, he was horrified by what he saw. "Faces beyond pain, beyond sadness," he wrote at the time. "Blank faces with no interest, no hope. The faces of forgotten people." Beds were packed, barely an arm's length apart, into large wards. The toilets and showers were old and grubby, a syringe lay on a small table with blood seeping out of it. There was not a picture on a wall, no TV, no music playing, no chatter, no laughter.

"This was a hospital for the very poor," he said. "They have nowhere else to go." TB was rife in Romania then, but low priority. This was a large hospital and it was hard to know where to start but we took the plunge and began with the ground floor. The huge wards were split into eight smaller rooms, to help stop infection spreading and allow a higher level of privacy and dignity. There were new connecting corridors, new doors, new windows, wash basins in every room. There was new tiling, new lighting, new plumbing and electrics, air conditioning, hygienic toilets and showers.

We also came across an old folk's home which was plagued with cold and damp. The residents often spent the day in bed because it was so awful. We put in a damp-proof course and sorted the heating, then went on to build a hospital unit, an activities room and polytunnels to grow veg and flowers.