

vitalink

The newsletter for Through the Roof

No.48 Summer 2010

'An Extraordinary Blessing from God'

That was how one parent summed up Through the Roof's holiday for families living with autism. This was the fifth holiday we have run at the Dalesdown centre, and it was great to see that over half of the families were coming back for more!

The programme included the activity trail and games, craft, and swimming expedition, plus praise parties and times of worship, reflection and meditation. We included an outing on the Bluebell Railway, and took advantage of the talents of our team, adding dance and drama and handbell ringing to the programme.

Every year, we're told that the holiday's success lies in providing one-to-one helpers trained in dealing with autism. They enable parents to choose to spend 'time together' as a family, (in one case, getting to swim together for the first time), or to spend 'time out', away from their children, relaxing in the knowledge that they are in safe hands.

One parent wrote, "I can't praise the helpers highly enough, they were utterly

necessary and brilliant with the children". The respite starts immediately – on the first afternoon parents eagerly escaped for a cream tea at the garden centre, where they shared experiences and scones. We also include the siblings of autistic children in all activities, so that they too have some relief from caring for their brother or sister.

One returning parent wrote: "Dalesdown has again exceeded my expectations. This holiday allows me time to relax, de-stress and unwind; time to meditate, pray and worship. I can hand over all the decisions I normally make, such as what to do and what to eat."

Next year's holiday will be from 12-15 April, 2011. Anyone interested in coming, either as a guest or helper, should contact Margaret at the Through the Roof office by phone or by emailing margaret@throughtheroof.org.



A Parent's Perspective

A First-Time Guest's View of the Holiday, by Ola Oyenuga

I am a single parent with a five year old son called David-Anthony who has high-functioning autism. On arriving, I was welcomed by my volunteer Sue who instantly got stuck in. After introducing her to David-Anthony they both went off to play. Sue made me feel welcomed and relaxed – I'm still friends with her now. There were so many activities – fun with other kids, a talent show, swimming, indoor activities and an assault course. They also catered for his food preferences which helped as he has severe allergies.

Although David-Anthony was the youngest person there, the other children welcomed him and he made great progress with his social skills. From preparing, arriving and leaving the holiday I could see that a lot of hard work had gone into making it go smoothly – I'd like to thank everyone who made it possible!

CONTENTS

- 2 News
- 4 Overseas
- 5 Letters
- 6 Articles
- 7 Fundraising



'The Sun Has Got His Hat On...'

DCF holidays in Tenerife by Jenny Edwards

For thirteen glorious days this song reverberated around the hotel in Tenerife as tuneful members of our party woke to a very welcome (and very unhealthy!) breakfast. Fifteen of us had flown from Luton airport on a wet, cold and miserable day to enjoy this first time in Playa de las Americas in Tenerife. Thankfully, we left wet weather behind and arrived to a warm evening and a holiday of sunshine and cool breezes.

During the holiday we visited Loro Park and to the delight of many of the party saw the amazing Orca whales and fascinating dolphin shows as well as walking through an aquarium tunnel. We toured the island in our accessible coach, spent many hours down by the sea sampling gorgeous ice-creams, and some of our travellers made use of the wonderful accessible beach and the amphibious wheelchair to have their first swim for years in the open sea!

Sunburnt and happy, we returned to a lovely meal and to enjoy a time of fellowship together in the spacious meeting room set aside for us during our stay. Whilst there, two people came to know Jesus as their Saviour, and all of us experienced a real sense of God's presence throughout the day. The final verdict is that we should visit there again in 2011, so why not join us and see for yourself just why this time away was so special for so many? Ring the office to ask for details.

Through the roof



Hop for Haiti

Stephanie Elstub hopped for Haiti one weekend in March around her local roads in Ashted and raised £160.61, sponsoring 4 wheelchairs.

"I decided to raise money for Wheels for the World by doing a sponsored hop because I had a broken leg, but I was mended. Some people in Haiti, however, got crushed limbs and didn't get them mended and need wheelchairs", says Stephanie.

News From Northern Ireland

Fleming Fulton School Visit Container

Class P6 from Fleming Fulton School, Belfast, visited the Wheels for the World container to see all the wheelchairs and mobility equipment collected in Northern Ireland loaded onto a lorry en route for Salisbury. Everyone was excited to see the volunteers lifting the wheelchairs up into the lorry and piling everything together



safely for transportation. A fork lift was used to lift the heavy wooden boxes filled with crutches and walking aids. We want to thank everyone who donated their used wheelchairs and equipment to this cause! We hope that the people in Africa will get a lot of use out of the equipment and that it will really help them to have better lives.



Taking a dip in the amphibious wheelchair

Through the roof

Vocal about Inclusion



Baliva

Project Inclusion is a new national competition for young people to get creative by writing a song that promotes inclusion. Winners will have the opportunity to record their song for a compilation CD.

We're partnering with another Christian charity, Act 4, in the new project and have Christian hip hop artist, Baliva, involved to write a song especially for it.

Project Inclusion aims to involve thousands of young people from church groups and schools in devising song lyrics expressing their feelings on discrimination and disability, performing it to spread awareness, then entering the annual competition.

Colour posters, Bible story dramas and music beats are available free to download from our website www.youth.throughtheroof.org/projectinclusion. A curriculum-linked resource pack will be available for schools in the near future. Young people will be able to learn about the injustices surrounding disability, and then have a vehicle to tell the world about inclusion.

Tim Wood, who heads up TTR's Integr8 programme, said, "With this exciting project we intend that thousands of people will hear the message that all of us are of equal value in God's sight."

A Gift for Wheels



Pastor Andrew Adeleke and Pastor Kola Bamigbade present CEO Jacky Oliver with the donation

On Monday 8th April, representatives from the Redeemed Christian Church of God visited us at Through the Roof's office with a £10,000 cheque for the work of Wheels for the World. Pastor Andrew Adeleke of the House of Praise church presented CEO Jacky Oliver with the cheque, and made a speech saying the people of RCCG wanted to bless the people in Haiti. Ever since the devastating earthquake in January, the RCCG has been encouraging members to financially support the work being carried out in Haiti, and they've made donations to seven agencies working to carry out long-term rehabilitation. We're excited and blessed to be one of those.

We praise God that we have now received £22,000 for Wheels for Haiti, exceeding our original goal of £10,000 and bringing us close to our new goal of £25,000. The reports from Haiti show that the need is greater than we first envisaged, so we have set a new target to assist with volunteers, therapists, flights and to increase the size of the distribution.

A Zone for All

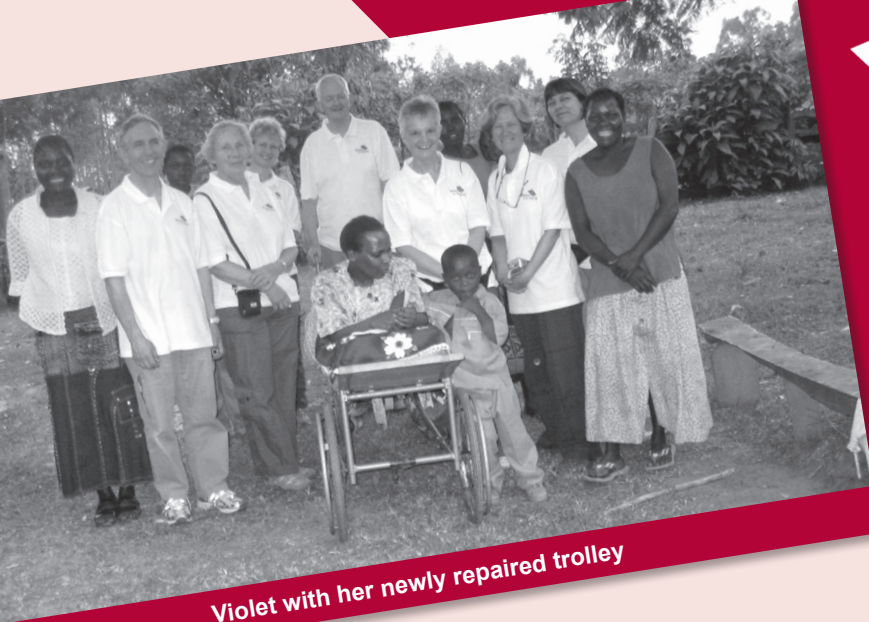
Through the Roof partnered with other disability ministries at the Christian Resources Exhibition at Esher recently in a brand new 'Churches for All' zone.

Visitors to this unique area were able to attend mini-workshops, including 'Disability and the Bible'; and join in interactive activities, such as an introduction to British Sign Language, as well as find relevant resources and publications for their churches.

There was a spirit of co-operation amongst the different organisations and many had positive conversations with visitors. If you visited TTR in the zone do let us know what you thought of it – we'd value your feedback.



Tim and Karen at the TTR stand



Violet with her newly repaired trolley

Through the roof

Violet's Story

Many readers will have heard the story of Violet, the lady in Western Kenya who lay for sixteen years in a dark hut before receiving a visit from members of Wheels for the World team in 2001. Following that visit a video of Violet was shown to prisoners in Long Larten prison and one of those prisoners was so affected by Violet's story that he designed and built a trolley that would enable Violet to leave her hut.

The trolley was delivered by the Wheels team in 2002 and transformed Violet's life. Since that time Violet has been able to not only oversee the planting of her crops but has become a valuable member of her community through her service to her church.

In 2007, a reporter for BBC World Service heard this story and went to interview Violet to hear about the transformation in Violet's life. So it was that people from all round the world were able to hear how the gift of mobility changes lives.

The whole Wheels for the World Kenya team visited Violet in March this year and two techies, Nigel Davey and Andrew Smith, repaired the trolley whilst the rest of the team were entertained by the many children in the compound.

We left with the gift of three live chickens and our hearts warmed by this amazing lady!

Sharing God's Heart for Inclusion

Life-long friends, Christina and Philippa, are joining this year's Integr8 team to Guatemala to inspire a spirit of inclusion within local communities. Philippa, who is totally blind, told Vital Link about their creative fundraising, and how they spread the inclusive message too...

'Firstly, Christina and I have booked to speak in several churches to share our story. We also came up with the idea of having a concert. I sing and Christina plays the piano and violin, but we needed other people to perform, so we sent our local paper, the Biggleswade

Chronicle, details of the trip and asked if they would mention the concert to recruit performers. Within days I was interviewed and photographed by their journalists and the story appeared in the Chronicle that week. Thank the Lord, it was a fantastic article and every detail was accurate.

The response to the concert has been overwhelming and it is now in danger of over-running! Songs of Praise presenter, Pam Rhodes, is local to us and has offered to comper the concert whilst the church that we are using is providing refreshments as their contribution.

As a result of the newspaper article, we have had cheques through the post from people who don't even know us, but have been inspired by the article. We will also be featured in 'Evangelicals Now' (in July). We emailed Premier Christian radio about the trip and they

interviewed me for the news and on a live late night chat show which all helped to spread the word further.

We held a Guatemala evening at our church, so people would be aware of where we were going and we are running a blind awareness day where people can use a sighted guide and experience everyday tasks as if blind.

We have been amazed at the response to our various fundraising schemes. Distant relations and strangers have sent us money, churches have contributed, and we have been given things to sell such as home-made cards and pads. Every week Christina's Nan takes a collection at her ladies meetings for us. Everyone has been good to us, and God is amazing. So far we have raised £600 and gained lots of prayers and interest on the way!

Through the roof



From the CEO's Desk

By Jacky Oliver

We thank God for the many things Through the Roof has been doing in the last few months – hopefully, this issue of VL will give you a taste of that work. I often think we should change the title of this little column, as much of my time and the team's time is not spent sitting at our desks. In the last few months, I have been at Epsom Golf Club to raise funds for our Wheels for the World programme and launching our Wheels for Haiti fundraiser with guest speaker Chris Grayling MP. As we go to print we have raised £22,361 - enough to do so much more than we hoped, so keep giving and keep praying.

I was also on The HMS President, a ship on the River Thames, presenting at a 'Christian Dragons Den'-type event called 'Cross Pollinate'. A nerve-wracking experience, but imagine our joy when we saw the number of gifts gradually rise to £17650 (more with gift aid!) All this is with the help of Through the Roof staff and volunteers. We have raised an encouraging amount of money to help disabled people in developing countries with the gift of a wheelchair, Bible and professional advice from our volunteers teams of qualified professional physiotherapists and occupational therapists. It is very humbling, and I praise God for people with generous hearts who have given money for this project.

Our challenge now is to raise funds for the other services that Through the Roof provides. This has involved me being away from my desk for disability awareness training in Bromley, recording two programmes for Premier Insight programme in Market Harborough, helping with the new Churches for All venue at the Esher Christian Resources Exhibition and attending London meetings in preparation for a visit to Kenya and the Cape Town Lausanne Congress. So - as I return to my desk to write to you all again - I am reminded that we do not work alone but with the care and protection of a wonderful God, and the love and support of many of you reading this latest Vital Link.

From Joni Eareckson Tada...

Dear Roof Breaking Friends...

Dealing with a serious disability has its challenges – I know; especially now that I'm wrestling with thin bones and an occasional pressure sore. But through it all, God has faithfully demonstrated His love through *friends!* The other day when I was feeling a little down, a Christian friend gave me the following prayer, "Lord, I am willing to *receive* what you give, *lack* what you withhold, and *relinquish* what you take." Oh, that you and I might make this our prayer with a glad and trusting heart!

This is why the ministry of *Through the Roof* is so critical – the TTR team is constantly looking for new ways to demonstrate the faithfulness and love of Jesus Christ to people with disabilities and their families. Each program you'll read about in this edition of *Vital Link* reflects the heart of our wonderful Savior as *Through the Roof* proclaims and portrays the compassion of God in a hands-on way.

So, just as I ask my friends to pray for me in my wheelchair, I am asking you to continue to pray for and support the fine work of *Through the Roof*. Summer is upon us and the team is working hard – they need to know that you are standing with them. And as you do, may every encouragement of **Isaiah 58:10** be yours, for "If you ...satisfy the desire of the afflicted, then shall your light rise in the darkness and your gloom be as the noonday." On behalf of Jacky and everyone at *Through the Roof*, may God's favor and joy be yours!



Enabling Church

By Tim Wood



Through the Roof is partnering with other disability ministries to plan a major new one-day conference entitled 'Enabling Church – Disability, Wholeness and Christian Theology'.

Malcolm Duncan, Jonathan Lamb and a video message from Joni Eareckson Tada will all contribute to the conference on 7th October 2010, Friends' House, Central London. The event, organised by the Churches for All network, aims to inspire and challenge church leaders and others to engage with the 18% of the UK population that are considered disabled.

Importantly many of the speakers and workshop leaders, which will include TTR Board members Rev John Naudé and Dr Mike Townsend, have personal experience of disability, either themselves or in their family.

Tim Wood, Development Manager of Through the Roof and Vice Chair of CFA said, "Through the Roof and CFA partners passionately believe that churches can be welcoming communities of love and support where disabled people are accepted and contribute fully to the life of their church. This conference will enable churches to make that happen".

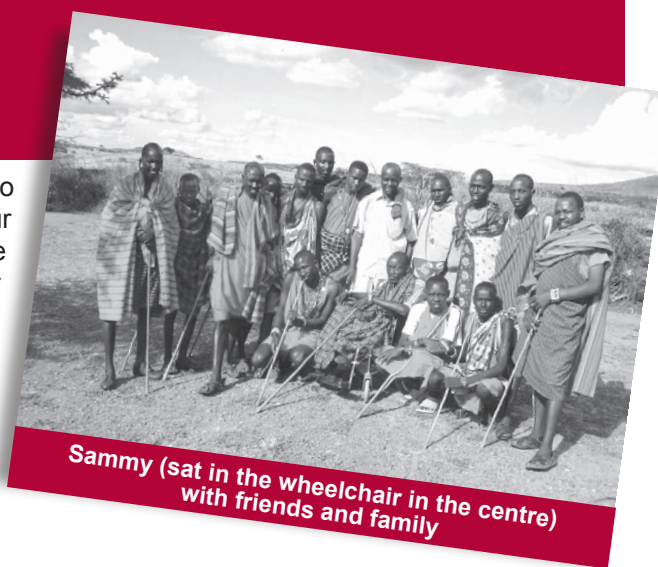
Premier Christian Radio are key partners in this event and are managing bookings, which can be made online now at www.premier.org.uk/enablingchurch or by telephone **08456 525252**. Tickets cost £25 and accompanying supporters of disabled delegates are free.

Wheels for Sammy

By Wendy Devonshire

Sammy Olesimpai is a neighbour of the guide who escorted us at the Masai Parini Camp during our Wheels distribution in Kenya. When I told him why we were in Kenya he reported to me that his neighbour had been in a wheelchair for 10 years, but was very uncomfortable in it.

He offered to take me in the safari jeep to the Masai village where Sammy lived. I was greeted by a group of men – all in their Masai red and orange tunics, with Sammy sitting in the middle, in a child's chair, even though he was 29. He had had polio when he was 19 and his trunk was twisted and his legs wasted. His feet were balanced on a piece of string. There was nothing I could do to his existing chair, but I offered to try and secure a more appropriate wheelchair for him, which was to be transported to him by the camp's area manager who lived in Kitale (from where we flew to and from Nairobi). Having got the Wheels' team approval, I sourced a chair which I hoped would be more appropriate and arranged with IcFEM's Paul Stephens for Paul to take it to Kitale. The chair was dismantled, duct-taped together with alum keys, a spanner and a Wheels leaflet, and taken to Kitale. An exchange of texts suggested that the chair was picked up from Kitale and taken on to help Sammy; we pray that the effort will bring great relief and pleasure to him – and praise to God!



Sammy (sat in the wheelchair in the centre) with friends and family

Putting the 'Fun' in Fundraising

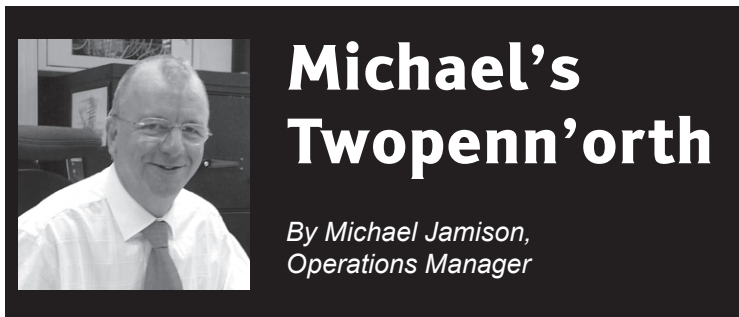


Pupils at Greville school raise money for Wheels

Support for 'Wheels' widens in Ashted as the Wheels 4 Haiti appeal touches many people's hearts. Pupils at Greville Primary School raised £430 for 'Wheels 4 Haiti' by creating collages of coins they had collected, producing maps of the countries where Wheels distributions have taken place. The retiring collection after the school concerts was also donated to the appeal.

As well as the school's efforts, dedicated 'Wheels' supporters from St Giles' and St George's raised over £4,400 by saving £1 a day for the 40 days of Lent, this year supporting the 'Wheels 4 Haiti' appeal. 'It has become an annual event for the Ashted churches, with support increasing each year. One younger member of the church encouraged his family to take part and gave up his after school snack to give his £1 a day!' said Karen Goodridge, Ashted churches representative and volunteer fundraiser for Through the Roof.

If you have any interesting fundraising ideas or would like to consider supporting the Lent Appeal for 2011 at your local church or fellowship group, **please contact Karen at the office on 01372 749955 or email karen@throughtheroof.org.**



Michael's Twopenn'orth

By Michael Jamison,
Operations Manager

It is often surprising how something seemingly insignificant can grow into something larger. About a year ago I read how postage was still being charged on stamped freepost envelopes. Trying to be good stewards of the donations given to us we have kept a record of freepost returns and every month we ask for credit from the Royal Mail for the extra charges. Last month, Alison pointed out that one envelope had gone through the sorting office six times, with TTR being charged for each "sorting".

So what was the small thing? It was writing a letter to the magazine Third Sector, which focuses on charity issues, pointing this out and warning other charities to check their mailings.

And the larger result? The lead front page article on the subject with picture! And a good mention of TTR.

I don't know what the result will be, but I would hope at least other charities keep an eye on their post and get some of the money they are overcharged back. If you would like to read the article go to <http://www.throughtheroof.org/ttr-in-third-sector-magazine> on our website, and follow the link through to the Third Sector site.

Donations

We aim to acknowledge every donation of above £20, but we'd also like to recognise these gifts we were unable to respond to individually. Thank you to everyone who sends money to so generously support the work of TTR and all its programmes, including...

Donations given at the AFC Fundraiser to Integr8

WFTW Donations given to S Raymond as a Christmas present (they got delayed in the post)

WFTW Donations given in memory of Mrs Clarice Knight

TTR Donations given in memory of David Nicholson

Donation from St Andrews, Forest Hill

Donation from V Denning



In Memory of Bruce Fox



**Bruce Fox (on left)
with former Chairman Colin Reeves**

We are sad to announce that Bruce Fox died peacefully on Sunday 30th May. He was weakened by a long fight against cancer and his death followed a sudden virulent infection. Bruce joined as a Trustee on the board of Through the Roof in February 2006 and was appointed Chairman of the charity in October 2007.

We all echo the thoughts of fellow trustee Rev John Naudé who said "His clarity, wisdom and Godliness will be greatly missed".

Our deputy chairman David Dawson, who worked closely with Bruce, represented Through the Roof at the funeral. David also paid tribute to the integrity, wisdom and commitment of Bruce who, despite his terminal illness, never ceased taking an active interest in the work of the charity.

Please pray for Lynn Fox, Bruce's wife, that she will receive comfort and strength at this time. Lynn wrote regarding his memorial service "As Christians we rejoice that Bruce is with his Lord and are commemorating his passing to this new life with a service of celebration".

Connect Weekend

King's Church Hall, Epsom

September 3rd – 7.30pm & September 4th – 10.30am to 4pm



The DCF Connect Weekend is an opportunity for friends old and new of DCF to come together and learn more about the fellowship. We'll be looking at all the various programmes we run, chatting about how people can get involved helping on the holidays, and growing together through worship and sharing. There'll also be fundraising events on the Friday evening, including a silent auction. The event will cost £10, to cover the cost of a buffet lunch on Saturday. If you're interested in finding out more and receiving a flyer, please contact Jenny at the office.



Come Fishing

Jenny, doubtless thinking hard about the next Come Fishing.

We send out a monthly ministry tape/CD, written and recorded by our own Jenny Edwards, through our 'Come Fishing' programme. It lasts for one hour, and contains news, poems, music, prayer items and real-life insight into bible stories and teaching – many people find it a valuable and enjoyable support and contact point. We ask for a small contribution each year to cover materials (12 CDs or tapes) and postage. If you'd like to find out more, or receive an application form, please contact the office.

Through the Roof, Round the Clock

If you'd like regular news from Through the Roof, you are warmly invited to point your computer at our website. www.throughtheroof.org is regularly updated with news and details of what we're up to, the latest stories and access to many of our resources. For even more regular updates, and the opportunity to connect with other TTR supporters, join our facebook page at www.facebook.com/throughtheroof. Say 'hello', or other culturally-appropriate greeting, find out what we're doing, share what's keeping you out of mischief and learn how you can get involved.



CONTACT DETAILS

GREAT BRITAIN OFFICE:

PO Box 353, EPSOM, KT18 5WS

PHONE 01372 749955

EMAIL: info@throughtheroof.org

WEB: www.throughtheroof.org

NORTHERN IRELAND CONTACT:

EMAIL: ni@throughtheroof.org

OUR VISION

Freedom for all disabled people to fulfil their God-given potential.

OUR MISSION

To make the Christian message accessible to all people affected by disability.

Through the Roof Charitable Trust Ltd is a UK Registered Company number 04201510. It is also a Registered Charity -- Number 1087788 with offices at SeeAbility House, 1a Hook Road, Epsom, KT19 8TH.