Transforming lives through disabled people

14 November 2012

Dear Friend

"Here you are Daddy!" Rebecca, my four-year old, tightly clasping her palm, slowly unfurled her little fingers to reveal several coins. "I want you to have this..."

I counted up 37 pence – the contents of her piggy bank. My daughter grinned toothily. What could 37p buy? Not our weekly food bill, or even my favourite chocolate bar. Then I remembered Jesus' words..." this poor widow has put in more than all the others", referring to her copper coins dropped in the temple collection. It wasn't the sum, but the cost offered willingly, that Jesus emphasised. Similarly, Rebecca cheerfully gave me all she could. Shamefully, I had dismissed the amount until I grasped the incredible generosity of the value. That is why I am so grateful for God's provision through every one of our compassionate supporters.

Thanks to generous donations this year from supporters like you, hundreds of disabled people, their families and communities have been transformed. Below are examples of four people whose lives have been changed...

- "The Dalesdown holiday (for families living with autism) gives me time to reenergise, to rest, to meditate and pray. I get quiet time and peace to recharge my batteries before returning to my hectic, non-stop life."
- Our Wheels team provided an adapted wheelchair and tray for Sharon, aged 9, a severely disabled Kenyan girl. She can now sit up in class, helping her achieve the 2nd highest exam marks in her school year group!
- "Integr8 has helped me become more independent and achieve new things that hadn't seemed possible before."
- "I then got in touch with the amazing volunteers of DCF...I want to thank everyone who has supported me."

Your kind support of Through the Roof isn't taken for granted. **We value every gift**, regardless of amount, and so I hope that you might consider donating willingly in the year ahead so the vital work can continue. You can use the form enclosed which enables one-off or regular donations and which also details how you could contribute on-line, by phone or text.

With every blessing and many thanks

Tim Wood

Chief Executive, Through the Roof

P.S. Thank you so much if you already give by standing order. If you don't, please consider doing so, as it gives the charity more stability to plan ahead.









vitallink

Transforming lives through disabled people



The World Comes to Wheels



Glenda re-tyres

Holiday Happiness

Our Wheels for the World teams are used to distributing chairs in developing countries where many don't have the opportunity to buy their own, so a distribution in East London was a very different experience.

Throughout September, Great Britain has been thrilled by the achievements and skill of Paralympic athletes from around the world. We've all watched remarkable athletes do amazing things, but sadly, we discovered that many athletes and teams arriving from poorer countries don't have their own wheelchairs or well-fitted aids at home, and have had to borrow wheelchairs, or make do with sharing them to get around at the games. Many of these athletes, and some of the teams supporting them, will be going back home without the wheelchairs that could improve independence and access to work, life and training.

Through the Roof was contacted about this need for wheelchairs by Dr Fred Sorrells of the International Institute of Sport, and arranged two days working at St. John's Church in Stratford to provide properly fitted wheelchairs and crutches for delegates who needed them.

Most Wheels distributions come at the end of months of planning, organization and the careful administration of plane tickets, cross-country jeep journeys and hotels, so it was an unusual experience to buy a travelcard and take part in a Wheels mission in the busy heart of Stratford. But it was a distribution that had the same effect, with the gift of a chair improving the

independence of many of the clients, including Mary. A Paralympic athlete from Kenya, Mary competes in discus, shot-put and javelin – she won silver in Beijing. She had polio at the age of 3 and makes her living selling goods at the roadside. Even getting to her training depends on inconsistent transportation, and her new wheelchair will mean she's able to work and get to her coaching much more easily.

Wheels co-ordinator, Glenda, also saw something she never thought she'd see – a pole-walker on the streets of London! A coach from Tanzania arrived using a single pole as a mobility aid. Back home, he works as a primary school teacher, and the crutches he was fitted with will help him travel and work more easily.

Assisted by two prison officers visiting from the Parkhurst workshop, who were pleased to directly see the work they and the prisoners do changing lives, the team assessed 49 clients (including athletes, team leaders, medical staff, admin staff and even a couple of chefs) from 26 different countries. They gave out chairs, crutches and rollators plus repairing and improving several damaged chairs.

It was an amazing two days – a great opportunity to serve people who are giving up a lot to travel and compete, but also a chance for team members who haven't travelled overseas with Wheels to see first-hand how the gift of a properly-fitted wheelchair can change lives, and bring independence, mobility, and joy.



At the Opening Ceremony



Four Days at the Paralympics

Glenda Re-Tyres

by Tim Wood, CEO



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Sometime last century(!) our Wheels for the World Co-ordinator, Glenda, was asked by a friend what her passion was. Glenda replied that she didn't have one, so her friend challenged her to ask God for one. Soon after this, Wheels 'rolled' into Glenda's life. Her thirteen years with Wheels has taken her on 27 distributions to countries such as Albania, Jordan, and Sierra Leone, working with local Christians to meet the desperate needs of disabled people – providing the gift of a wheelchair and a Bible.

Jacky Oliver, previous CEO for TTR, recalls, "Such was Glenda's passion to see disabled people in developing countries receive the freedom of a wheelchair, and to be introduced to the greater freedom of knowing Jesus and His transforming power, she would often work through the day, the night, when injured or unwell. Her amazing achievements include recruiting volunteers, organising wheelchairs, speaking to anyone who'd listen about the work of Wheels, booking flights and accommodation, leading teams to different countries and sitting in the African dust to



Glenda (centre) on a distribution in Kenya

comfort and pray with someone. I'm glad to have been a colleague of this dedicated lady."

Over the years, God has worked through Glenda to make a huge difference to the lives of hundreds of disabled people and their families, for which they will be eternally grateful. I am so pleased she has been a part of the team at Through the Roof and we will all miss her energy and commitment when she retires at the end of November.









Our Vision

'... is of a world where all people live interdependently, mutually giving and receiving as God intended.'

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

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Meet Nigel

Nigel Drury, TTR's new International Missions Manager

Nigel Drury is our new International Missions Manager, a post that covers work with Wheels and Integr8. We briefly welcomed him last issue, and here are his introductory thoughts...

'What a pleasure to join an enthusiastic team, dedicated life-changing to bringing opportunities to impoverished and neglected disabled people. Africa was my life for over twenty years, working as a church missionary in community development and training. I had the privilege of living alongside some of the world's poorest and most marginalised people affected and displaced by the civil war in Mozambique. These people opened their lives and humble homes to my wife Heather and me. We shared in their tragedies, sicknesses and bereavements, but also their joys and celebrations. From this experience and having raised our two children in this environment, the poor of Africa hold a special

place in my heart. But there are commonalities with disadvantaged people all across the globe, and I do not find myself unduly Africacentric.

Heather and established training organisation South Africa serving organisations across Southern Africa. This focused on early childhood care and development, but included disability and inclusion as well as needs relating to the HIV and AIDS pandemic. We trained workers and volunteers in community health and care projects in terms of family and child needs, orphan care, foster parent training and support for bereaved teenage heads of household.

I look forward to playing a part in the strengthening of this charity and hope to develop productive relationships with partner churches and agencies overseas as well as with supporters and volunteers here in Britain.'



Tug of War at the Celebration (Photo by More Than Gold UK)

Through the Roof joined with 14 churches from Aylesbury (www. aylesburychurchnetwork.org.uk), Youth for Christ, Fusion, Global Games Sports, the Council, and More than Gold to create a unique inclusive community festival at Stoke Mandeville Stadium for the opening of the Paralympics.

The free event – held at the birthplace of the Paralympics – was fully inclusive. Boarding helped wheelchair users travel across grass, the multi-sensory tent attracted many, BSL interpreters were available, and Paralympic sports, arts, crafts, and games were available for all to try.

Torrential rain threatened to cancel the event but five minutes after the 6pm start, the downpour stopped and the sun shone! Three thousand people enjoyed a great night.

Celebrations at Stoke Mandeville

Marilyn Baker sang to a hushed crowd in the name of Jesus before everyone gathered to watch the opening ceremony from the stadium on a big screen with subtitles.

Between leading games, Marty Woods of Fusion told the crowd, 'The great thing about this event is that everyone is equal. Everyone has something to offer, no matter their ability or disability. Everyone is important.'

Rev Keith Edwards, minister of Aylesbury Methodist Church, said, 'It's been brilliant to see everyone included. Our team of 250 volunteers includes some with disabilities.' One volunteer, Lynn Watts, said, 'I saw a partially sighted man, led by his wife, walk across the sensory path we created of grass, sand and pebbles. It was magical to see his expression.'

Fusion asked Through the Roof to document the event as a model of inclusion. TTR's CEO, Tim Wood commented, "There was a visible presence of disabled people at this event - all God's people together. I'm encouraged that the 'Inclusive Community Festival' resource we're creating will help other churches follow the excellent example set by the Aylesbury churches."



Philippa at the UCCF forum

Reaching out to Students

Around 1000 people attended the UCCF Forum for Christian Unions, and our Youth Ambassador Philippa and volunteer Marie spoke to and inspired a lot of them! Through the Roof exhibited at the forum for the first time this year, and we're pleased to report an encouraging amount of interest in TTR's work, with delegates and exhibitors signing up to get involved.

As the UCCF Forum was for students and Christian Unions from around the UK, the Integr8 program appealed strongly, as did the various mission trips run by both Integr8 and Wheels. Marie said, 'When Philippa told one student with cerebral palsy about her mission to Guatemala her face lit up and she remarked, "I never knew God could use me like that".'

Philippa said 'It was wonderful to see so many Christians gathered together with the joint aim of serving and praising God. Even though it was cold at night (we camped for four days in September in a field in Shropshire!), the wonderful atmosphere of Christians united kept us warm during the day.'

'I am always looking for buddies to accompany me to events, and would be glad to hear from you if you're interested. If there are any volunteer drivers out there who would be willing to drive me even some of the way to engagements or accompany me on public transport then please do get in touch with the TTR office or me directly (philippa@throughtheroof.org or 07841 087 806). Many thanks to Marie Crawford for her indispensable help at the UCCF forum.'



From Joni Eareckson Tada

Dear Roof-breaking Friends...

Even though the Paralympic Games are behind us, I am still delighting in all the wonderful stories. Stories about people like Gaysli Leon, a 45-year-old hand-cyclist from Haiti who sustained a spinal cord injury during the devastating 2012 Haiti earthquake (which also took the lives of his wife and eight children).

Leon was a late entry to the Games, and was overwhelmed by the hearty reception he got from the fans at his Paralympic race along the road in Brands Hatch. That doesn't surprise me – the people of Great Britain have gone 'all out' in embracing the thousands of Paralympians who descended on the UK from around the world. And frankly, I think the tremendous efforts of Through the Roof helped raise even more awareness about the Games!

Our wonderful Through the Roof team provided a unique, mini-wheelchair distribution at a church next to the Olympic Park to give the gift of a wheelchair and the Christian message to 49 Paralympic athletes and officials from 26 countries. Thank you, Through the Roof, for bending-over-backward to share the love of Jesus with these athletes with disabilities! And thank you, friend, for supporting Through the Roof through your gifts and prayers. Onward and upward!



Mike Townsend, ready for broadcast

Who's Specia

by Mike Townsend, **TTR Chairman**

The Paralympics have been special - with special people competing. I was there when Ellie Simmonds won gold at the Aguadrome. You should have heard the noise!

From the buzz, I detect a change of attitude towards disabled people. We are recognised as people, with dreams that can be fulfilled or shattered.

I feel very special. I was asked to preach live the sermon on BBC Radio 4 Sunday Worship. The service was about the Paralympics and the value of disabled people. This was a very special opportunity to speak to two and a half million people - all individuals in their homes.

God has planned a big party in heaven.

Who is invited?

The important people all refused to go. But fresh invitations went out. Luke 14:21 'Go out guickly into the streets and alleys of the town and bring in the poor, the crippled, the blind and the lame.'

In my sermon I assured listeners that we are all special to God because we are made in His image. It's not just those on the A-list.

Why are invitations sent out again? "So that my house may be full" verse 23. God wants us there. That means you and

The feedback from the service has been amazing. My inbox has been full. Everywhere I go people are still talking about it. Perhaps I have shifted from the Z-list to the A-list! Perhaps not.

The many media opportunities this summer have really put Through the Roof on the map.

Do you feel of little value? Jesus invites you and me to come to the party. We are special. Not because of our celebrity status or abilities, but because we are made in the image of God.

From 'Special' Mike.



Through the Roof is happy to welcome two new board members. Carol Arnold (an intellectual property lawyer) and Trevor Hahn (a trainee minister and accountant) have been appointed as trustees, and we're looking forward to their input. Please visit www.throughtheroof.org to find out more about them both.

Charlotte and the Cheviot Challenge

Charlotte Lobb has recently completed an amazing challenge to raise funds for Wheels – here is her story...

Many years ago I was quite fit and used to spend much time climbing (generally by one of the most awkward routes) to the top of mountains and cliffs.

One day in the Alps I got a stomach bug and it completely floored me. After a year I was diagnosed with ME/CFS. Several years of debilitating illness followed, being housebound, bed-ridden, and in drug treatment in Belgium, before learning to walk again and regaining strength.

17 years after I first fell ill I finally felt well enough to challenge myself. I decided that as a celebration of wellness I would

walk The Cheviot Challenge, a walk of about 24 miles in the Cheviot Hills, Northumberland. I can't adequately thank all those who supported me when I was ill or who have



Charlotte out walking

walked with me as I have recovered, but I wanted to use my celebration as an opportunity to help people less fortunate than myself and raise money for Wheels for the World.

In the end, it was horrible weather - it poured down all day long and I ended up ditching my waterproofs as I was as wet inside them as outside and the trousers were dragging my legs down. The middle section was a nightmare of knee deep heather and bog with grassy tussocks, I never quite knew whether my foot would land on solid ground or not. But after that the going was easier and despite the blisters the thought of why I was doing it, and the encouragement of knowing that so many people had sponsored me before even completing

it, gave me such a boost and we completed it in 11 hours - a long day! I just can't believe how generous people have been – it is truly amazing.

Holiday Happiness

by **Jenny Edwards**



Relaxing on the Babbacombe holiday



Holidaygoers in Babbacombe

Despite the weather, once again members of Disabled Christians Fellowship have enjoyed some wonderful times of laughter and fellowship together whilst on their holidays this year.

At all three venues, Majorca, Babbacombe and Blackpool, we welcomed new holiday makers amongst those who have been coming away with us for many years, and shared some very special times together. In Majorca we had the challenge of the inaccessible pavements and rather unpredictable weather, but nevertheless managed to explore, eat plenty of ice cream and gain a tan. Babbacombe was next, again providing a mixture of sunshine and showers, and new and regular holiday makers. Some managed a paddle in the sea, and all enjoyed the excursions and shopping trips. Folk left promising to meet up again next year to renew their friendships made on this holiday.

I am always amazed at the lovely atmosphere at the holiday in Blackpool, which must be one of the windiest places in England! The laughter continues – often under umbrellas and fighting against the elements. This week was the last we shall hold in Blackpool for now, but we look forward to meeting up again at our new holiday venue at Hinwick in Wellingborough in 2013. Thank you so much to all the helpers on these holidays, we couldn't have done any of this without you!

Next year's brochure, including details of the holiday to Tenerife in May 2013, is available on request.

At the Opening Ceremony

by Mary Willis, Volunteer Holiday Helper

Last Autumn I auditioned to take part in the Paralympic opening ceremony, but failed at the second hurdle. I thought that was the end, so I was surprised to be emailed in May asking if I would like to take part. I was thrilled and daunted! After all it was at least 30 years since I had taught dance as part of work as a PE teacher.

More than 240 of us met regularly from May until August 29th learning the steps and understanding a little of the overall concept. Wheelchair users, skateboarders and tandem cyclists weaved their dances through ours. The hard work culminated in a 7 minute section celebrating the extraordinary work of Sir Isaac Newton who observed the 'ordinary' but was able, through that, to discover the laws of gravity.

The whole event was wonderful to be part of – so many gifted people working together with huge commitment and enthusiasm. Volunteer professional artists spent hours creating costumes, masks and props. The logistics involved in fitting each section into the bigger picture, making the



Preparations at the Paralympic opening ceremony

sets and providing the sound, lighting and music were beyond my understanding! We were unable to watch the evening unfold as we waited away from the stadium to be called over for our slot. The first time I saw the ceremony was the evening after the event on YouTube.

This experience reminded me of our lives as Christians. God has put us here on earth for a relatively short time. Each of us has been given a particular job that is more effective when worked out with others. We want to learn from what has gone before, see where we fit in the whole story and know how God will work things out. But often, that's not possible. One day all of us, no matter what our abilities, will be able to look back and marvel that God did take hold of our lives and create something of value through them.

Donations

We aim to thank every donor for their generous gift, but sometimes it's not possible to contact people, due to anonymous giving or lack of return address. We're extremely grateful for all of your contributions and support. Thank you all!





Trent Valley gather for cake and fundraising

DCF Trent Valley's Coffee Morning

Two Weeks Told

Thank you to everyone who took part in our first 'Two Weeks for TTR' awareness and fundraising event. We're still collecting together all the details of everyone's contributions, but money was raised through cake sales, a popular jam/chutney sale (in our offices – with people from the shared office building drawn in to sample and buy), coffee mornings, board members donating preaching fees and selling arts and crafts (different board members in each case!) and a collection in a shopping centre.

DCF Trent Valley had a lovely coffee morning, with stalls for cakes, cheese scones, books, new and second-hand, cards, handicrafts, free range eggs from 'Happy Hens' and a card tombola. Coffee and a stunning assortment of biscuits were available, with time to sit and chat once everyone had browsed the stalls. A number of people asked about TTR and took leaflets away with them to read at home. The whole event raised an amazing £255.

TTR staff demonstrated the sport of boccia in the local shopping centre, and spoke to the Mayor of Epsom, the local PHAB Club and members of the Rotary club, among many other, sharing about our work and raising awareness of the charity in Epsom. Thank you again to everyone who took part! We hope you had fun.

Precious by Jenny Edwards

I've often heard that moving is one of the biggest causes of stress one can go through, so I'm pleased to report that I have now moved, and yes, it is a time of frustration (mainly with BT) but has not been as stressful a time as for some. Those who know me are aware that my treasured bungalow is no more, having been razed to the ground and removed bit-by-bit, leaving bare earth where it once stood. I'm in a lovely new flat with amazing adaptations, and yes, I'm very pleased with it. Soon it will feel like home!

My bungalow was precious and I hated losing it, but I am also aware that there are many things that I feel precious about that could easily disappear as fast as my bungalow has. There is nothing wrong with feeling precious



Jenny and Margaret at the Dalesdown holiday

about something, but this has highlighted to me that knowing the Lord Jesus is the most precious thing I have, and it can never be taken away from me. All the earthly things that are precious will fade away, but our relationship with Jesus will never fade – this is an everlasting friendship and remains precious forever.

In Memory of Shirley

by **Glenda Pike**

Our friend and Wheels team member, Shirley Raymond, passed away on the 9th July. Shirley had been part of Wheels since joining in 1999 as a retired physiotherapist. Over 15 distributions, she led teams, administrated trips and seated clients, changing hundreds of lives in Romania, Albania, Kenya, Jordan, Ghana, South Africa, Nigeria, Ethiopia, Tanzania and Uganda, as well as being part of the Wheels committee.

When people ask to go on a Wheels trip we say they have to be flexible and adaptable as you can never be sure how the day will unfold. Over the years we have laughed, shed tears together and I have valued her constant friendship. She was reliable, honest and completely trustworthy, supportive of the team and caring for individuals. She never made a fuss but quietly got on with the job. We will miss her for all she meant to us individually, she was such a very special person, we loved and appreciated her. Her work here has been completed and I am sure when she entered into the presence of our Lord she heard the words 'Well done thou good and faithful servant'.



Shirley in Uganda in 2011

Party in the Sunshine



Enjoying the weather in Ashtead

Ashtead Wheels supporters were blessed with perfect weather at their summer garden party this year, raising an amazing £740. Children played games, while guests enjoyed scones, tea and cakes. TTR team members, including new International Missions Manager, Nigel Drury, attended, and Karen Goodridge (our Volunteer Community Fundraiser and party organiser) was pleased to be able to introduce him to Ashtead's faithful supporters.

The Dalesdown Family Holiday

For families with children with autism

Please spread the word to any parents you know who have children with autism that bookings are now open for next year's Family Holiday at Dalesdown in Sussex. If they are struggling with the full time care of a severely autistic child and could use a break, would appreciate one-to-one childcare from breakfast to bedtime, and enjoy fellowship with others in the same situation, they should contact margaret@throughtheroof.org. The holiday will run from the 2nd to 5th April 2013.

Four Days at the Paralympics

by Linda Head

My Paralympics experience began when Through the Roof received a request for a relief carer for Stacy James, Paralympic Chaplain. Stacy (www.walkingvictorious.com) comes from Ohio, USA, is a 13-time wheelchair marathon participant, a wheelchair athletics medallist and professional speaker and author.

Stacy was an inspiration and speaks passionately of how God – and her mum – helped her come to terms with the diving accident she had 21 years ago (aged 20) which broke her neck. It was a privilege to be part of the amazing group of people making up the multi-faith chaplaincy team, all there to support athletes and staff emotionally, spiritually and practically.

There were so many highlights for me, starting that first Wednesday assisting athletes' transportation to the stadium for the opening ceremony. Athletes not taking the buses marched through the village in country groups. The atmosphere was stupendous.

On Friday, we met Kenyan multi medal-winning runner, Henry Wanyoike (www.henrywanyoikefoundation.org), who lost his sight after a stroke. Henry came for bibles to take back to Kenya. He prayed with us and shared how God had blessed his running and the charity he established to support disabled people.

Stacy was interviewed by The Sun, and her piece appeared as the 'Sunday Sermon' (normally provided by Archbishop Sentamu). Her prayer, published in the article, was:

Dear God. With all the challenges I face today I am going to believe that You have a purpose in them and I will trust You to be there and help me through.

I will believe that I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me, and I will not give up knowing that you are running the race right beside me, holding my hand and helping me cross the finish line no matter how long my race may be.



Linda and Stef Reid,
Paralympic Silver Medallist



Stacy James, Paralympic Chaplain

On the final day, we joined a wonderful Christian celebration where many athletes and other staff shared how God blessed their time at the Paralympics. The London Paralympics were a wonderful opportunity for athletes to come together, compete and showcase their ability. But many return home to an environment of prejudice and poverty. At the same time, while we in the UK are fortunate materially, as one Chaplain said "spiritually we are the developing nation. Many of the poorer communities to which competitors return are 'rich in spirit', with much to teach us."



Christmas approaches, and Philippa is busy home-recording a Christmas Carols CD to raise funds for Integr8. It will be called 'A Few of My Christmas Favorites' and includes a mix of Christmas tunes. The CD will be available from the online shop priced £5. £2.50 from each sale will go to raise funds for Integr8, and the remaining £2.50 to cover production costs. Happy Christmas!

Cheer Bullseye!

Margaret with her trophy and some of her certificates

by Anita Southey, DCF Taw and Torridge Team leader



Congratulations to Margaret Searle of the Taw and Torridge DCF! Margaret, one of our long-standing members, recently volunteered to do a sponsored archery session to help raise funds for our next DCF holiday and raised the magnificent total of £300. Not only has Margaret achieved this, but, since starting archery in 2003, she has gained over 1,000 certificates and two trophies. Certificates are awarded for getting at least one bullseye in a session of 16 arrows. Margaret has often had 5 or more bullseyes in a session!

Please partner with Through the Roof in our mission to transform lives through disabled people...



Anything you give will make a difference.
Thank you!

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It is also a Registered Charity -number 1087788 with offices at

SeeAbility House, 1a Hook Road,



With your financial support, Through the Roof can continue to provide life-changing opportunities for disabled people and equip churches, individuals and communities to do the same.

Through the roof

You are partnering with us in working towards a world where people live interdependently, mutually giving and receiving, as God intended. *Once again, thank you!*

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