

# VISION

Christmas 2019



*To cure, sometimes; To help, often; To comfort, always.*







# Dear Friends

“Simply doing what we do best”

**T**his has been yet another interesting, challenging and exciting year for our little charity. I was daunted as I took over as Executive Director but with your help and support, we have had another milestone year. We have celebrated 30 years of service, bringing help, hope and hospice care to infants and children; we continue to reach out to help change the lives of those disadvantaged who need help with education and welfare or access to multiple therapy to make a better life for themselves and their families.

Our dedicated administration and care teams in the UK and in our hospices and community-based

programmes have worked extra hard this year, doing what they do best, but also arranging events to make our milestone celebration an outstanding success. The London based celebration reached out to a new potential supporter and the “Supporters Tour 2019” brought together long-term friends of the charity to share news of what we have achieved.

This year’s volunteer led Shoebox Appeal has again received an outstanding response and our warehouse and logistic volunteers have been pressed hard to ensure that an additional 2000 gift boxes are loaded and available for our volunteer St

Nicholas, to deliver them where they are needed most: to the needy, young and old, before Christmas.

Our care teams in the hospices and children’s projects have faced even more challenging cases as they continue to “work their seeming miracles”. TLC and the delivery of personalised intensive complex care programmes seem to achieve those miracles. However, their complex personalised care programmes continue to need your help and support, if we are to keep our team of miracle workers together.

This Christmas I am asking for your continued help and support specifically for Andrei who is a beautiful

very frail little boy with considerable health challenges. He has a lot of potential and needs a great deal of care to make sure that he will not only survive but will also achieve that full potential. Admittedly, we have a long way to go in his care plan and are merely in the foothills of his journey towards being the best he can be. Andrei needs child sponsors and your donation help if we are to deliver the intensive nursing and therapy care and sensory stimulation he desperately needs. If you could help him this Christmas and even in the year ahead, we and his loving family will be eternally grateful

We all wish you everything for New Year!

**Valentina**



# Children in Distress 1989 – 2019

## 30 years of loving care for desperately needy children and families supported by CID's projects in Romania

# AN ACORN TO AN OAK TREE



“Dear Friends, as a founder member and later a privileged trustee of Children in Distress, at a time when Dr John Walmsley and a handful of parishioners were inspired to raise some aid for Romania from St Laurence Church, Barkingside Essex, few of us would realise what would follow! People from Churches of all denominations sent us money and aid, even an old lady begged me to take 6 eggs and £5, which she could ill afford, for our venture and everyone wanted to get involved in our aid programme.

Our Church and Church hall became a depot for goods which our volunteers were sorting and boxing up ready for 3 lorries. Dr Walmsley and a team, including Eddie Errington were taking these to Romania. Whilst boxing the

goods a member of our packing team, Sidney Hansford, realised his cap was missing, a new cap his wife had just bought him, his cap was on its way to Romania, never to be returned!

Things at home had intensified and we had to find other storage venues for the mounting donations that were pouring in. Our Lady Chapel and Church hall were full, also parts of the Vicarage. We had an offer of a ward at a local psychiatric hospital, complete with padded cells, we nicknamed it ‘The Cracker Factory’.

The only access was one very large window at one end as the hospital still housed inmates.

When Dr John Walmsley returned home, we had 7 more lorry loads, Romanian Children's Aid was born.

We had been given a bungalow in

We can say a lot about the thirty years of good deeds, but it is better to listen to those who created and built Children in Distress, those who put their heart and soul into it.

This year was all about you who gave, time, money, experience and love keeping the flame of our mission burning for 30 years: **To cure, sometimes, To help, often, To comfort, always;**

The following stories are told by two of those who contributed to the birth of Children in Distress and helped to become what it is today.

John Pirie MBE is one of those who responded to Rev. John Walsmley's call when he decided not to be im-

passive at the cry for help of all those children in pain and misery found in the Romanian orphanages.



Cernavoda at a peppercorn rent and our target was now a 25 bed children's hospice. It was a real surprise to those of us who were there when we saw above the door of the bungalow a sign which translated from Romanian into English the words ‘The House of the Children’, we were on our way, Children in Distress was born.

The bungalow was then to become a school as now we had the land around the bungalow where we built a 100-bed hospital and a nurses' home.

One day whilst I was in the bungalow working, catching up on little jobs that needing doing, a lad of about 6 years plus started to help me, we got on fine although we had no words as he was Romanian, and I English. He handed me the tools he thought I needed, he was my shadow, where I went he followed, so much so at the end of my stay I was

in our Commer van on way to the airport when up popped a little head with a bundle in his hand and started talking to me. A nurse translated his words to me, he wanted me to be his Poppa and travel with me to England. I did not see little Johnny again.

I am now 78 years old, have dedicated 6 years or more to the Charities Foundation, met on the way so many people, children, families, professionals, people in top positions in life, all with one ambition, the Charity, now a real business of love and giving of themselves.

The oak tree has little acorns, those acorns now are making big oak trees, by the grace of God. Thirty years on I am proud of every person involved.”

I am yours,

J F Pirie, MBE



Trish Witcomb, her husband Geoff who sadly died last year and their daughter Charlotte volunteered and supported CID for years. Trish shared with us her thoughts about October Thanksgiving Tour in Romania and 30 years celebrations but also her experience with Children in Distress.

## LOVE AND DEVOTION



“It was in 1989 that Revd John Walmsley, the then vicar of St Laurence Church, Barkingside, Essex, met a man returning from an aid mission to Romania, and learned of the appalling conditions in the country’s hospitals and orphanages. Shortly after the Romanian Revolution, the execution of Nicolae Ceausescu and the subsequent fall of communism at Christmas 1989, John took out his own aid convoy and saw for himself the terrible plight of so many abandoned infants and children infected with the HIV virus-and his vision for ‘Children in Distress’ was born.

In 1992 the St Laurence Children’s Hospice was opened in Cernavoda - the first and only pediatric hospice offering respite, palliative and end of life care for children living with full blown AIDS - staffed by many dedicated British volunteers and Romanian carers. 30 years later CID now provides hospice care for babies and children with life threatening conditions as a result of infection, accident, genetics or birth defects. Today CID cares for thousands of children in its hospices, child development centres, autistic unit and their associated community services - physiotherapy,

speech therapy, education, psychology and teaching, and social welfare programmes.. All the Romanian staff are fully trained and the charity has been a leader in the training of staff in these specialisms and in changing the attitudes of the country towards children, and adults with disabilities.

As a family we have supported the work of CID since 1996, when our daughter Charlotte was a volunteer carer at St Laurence. Geoff and I volunteered in 1997 and returned many times in the early years, joining the supporters tours in more recent years, each visit seeing the growth and influence of CID who has come so far in its brief 30 year existence. This is also true of Romania itself and with EU support is still emerging as a productive country. However, the contrast between the more wealthy cities and the poorer rural areas is a stark reality.

Myself and 8 local supporters joined a group of more than 40 on the 30th Anniversary Celebration Tour in October this year. All 8 had never before visited Romania or the CID projects and were very much affected by all they saw. Seeing the severe medical/physical dis-

abilities of the children can be difficult to witness and is very emotional - none less so having seen it many times before. In 1998 Geoff and I met a little 2yr old boy called Madeline with severe hydrocephalus - he had the largest head we had ever seen on such a tiny body. Of all the sick children we have met, he was the one we thought unlikely to survive - and yet Madeline is now 24 yrs old and we met him again living at St Andrews Hospice in Pitesti. We also spent amorning at St Margarets Childrens Centre in Bucharest . Without exception, everyone was impressed by the high standard of tender loving care given to the children by such devoted staff - so many happy smiling faces, even those confined to their beds/cots, and much lively entertainment from the more mobile children, Andrei (Gwenda Copsons’ sponsored child) being center stage!

We spent 3/4 days travelling in the mountains and high plateau of Transylvania, as far north as the ancient city of Cluj , en route we visited the beautiful city of Brasov, the wonderfully peaceful Sambata de Sus Monastery, the remains of the Roman city of Sarmisegetusa Ulpia in Dacia, and the Corvinilor Castle in Hunedoara. The weather was lovely 24 -30 degrees, except for the one day of rain when we returned to Bucharest from Transylvania via the Transfagarasean Road, (a high mountain route crossing the Fagaras Mountains, 90 kilometers long, passing between the highest peaks in Romania) The view would have been stunning in fine weather and even brief glimpses through the mist and cloud were very nerve racking.

We stayed in lovely hotels in Bucharest and Alba Julia, and a rustic Alpine

Trout Farmin a high valley amidst the mountains, where we were warned not to venture out after dark as there were bears in the surrounding forests! Everywhere we went we enjoyed the most wonderful Romanian friendly hospitality and delicious food.

The tour culminated in an emotional Thanksgiving Service in the Anglican Church in Bucharest, enhanced by talented musicians from the Conservatoire, when past supporters were remembered with gratitude. The family of Eddie Errington were there and ‘Eddie’s Van’ was parked outside our hotel. (Eddie, who sadly died in March this year, drove the first ever CID aid convoy to Romania with Dr John Walmsley.) Two volunteers made that same commemorative journey in ‘Eddie’s Van’, delivering 75 boxes of aid, including 21 from Keyworth, on the morning of our arrival.

Saturday evening saw the highlight of the visit with a Gala Dinner and entertainment in our hotel in the presence of our patron HRH Princess Maria of Romania, and His Excellency Andrew Noble the English Ambassador to Romania - both gave superb speeches. A mere 4 hours later a group of tired, bleary eyed supporters met at 3:45 am in the hotel reception for an early flight home to Birmingham.

Thank you all for the support you have given, and continue to give in so many different ways, to the work of Children in Distress. The successes of the charity could not and would not have been achieved without the support and interest of people like you. I offer my personal thanks and appreciation on behalf of Children in Distress and all the children and families in their care.”

Trish Witcomb



# NOBILITY AND GENTLENESS

## Being kind is being noble

Since May 2019, CID has received with gratitude and joy to carry out its activity under the High Patronage of Her Royal Highness Princess Maria of Romania, so the Royal Family of Romania has become a symbol of the gentleness and compassion for our children.

September 19th -21st, Her Royal Highness Princess Maria of Romania made us the honour to meet our supporters in the United Kingdom.

The emotion of the meetings between Her Royal Highness Princess Maria and our supporters, especially the children met at Riddlesdown Collegiate from Surrey and St. Lawrence Church of England Primary School in Kent (where pupils from primary and secondary school learn) has reconfirmed that the “bridges” between Romania and the

United Kingdom are solid and beneficial in order to continue to bring smile and joy to the children in our care.

The English school children who supported the “Love in a box” campaign, welcomed us with messages of love, solidarity, compassion and gentleness that goes beyond any possible borders.

We received the generosity of our hosts who hugged us, sang for us and showed us the love with which they support us in our activities.

A special moment of the visit was the anniversary event of the charity, 30 years since it was born, hosted by the Romanian Cultural Institute in London. The event took place in the presence of a large number of participants, representatives of civil society in the United Kingdom and members of the Romanian community. HRH Princess Maria



of Romania, Mrs. Valentina Zaharia, Executive Director of the Foundation, and Mrs. Magda Stroe, Director of ICR London had speeches. The event ended with an outstanding performance held by the Romanian-born soprano Nelly Miricioiu.

Her Royal Highness Princess Maria was available to attend also the Gala dinner organized on 05th of October in Bucharest. The speech of Her Royal Highness Princess Maria was one of profound

gratitude for all the efforts of our British sportsmen and volunteers in supporting and considerably improving the lives of children in our centres.

We have been honoured also by the presence of Her Majesty’s Ambassador to Bucharest Mr. Andrew Noble.

We are grateful for the time, attention and gentleness of Her Royal Highness Princess Maria to join us in the Thanksgiving tour and to show us that the CID Family is stronger than ever.







## Echoes of Her Royal Highness Visit

The Visit of Her Royal Highness Princess Maria of Romania inspired a beautiful initiative of some good hearted ladies who decided to organise a support and fundraising committee.

Their role is to help developing the fundraising strategy by diversification and widening of the supporter base, particularly in the south of England and London specifically.

They will develop projects, initiatives

and events to raise awareness, drive marketing and communications of the charity's work and increase the revenue base of the charity through.

We would like to thank you for this wonderful initiative to Anne Marie Martin, Nelly Miricioiu - Kirk, Hannah - Lisa Kirchin, Alina Fisher, Cristina Mitu, Diana Comsa, Irina Tuhutiu, Nicole Ion, Magda Stroe, Nicoleta Cherciu, Debbie Lamb, Vanessa Londono.



# MISSION ACCOMPLISHED

As part of the Charity's 30-year celebrations two of our supporters from the North East, (and one of our charity Trustees,) John Burns and Bryn Clode took toys and clothes to our centres. John Burns and Bryn Clode are planning to recreate one of the aid runs following a similar route to the founding days of the Charity. They were driving winter aid across to Romania.

The special drive out in memory of

Eddie Errington arrived in Romania while the supporters were there. John Burns and Bryn Clode took toys and clothes to our centres.

Emotions were much higher because Silvia, Eddie's widow and his son Simon were waiting at the destination.

Thank you Bryn and John for the effort of driving the van to Romania!





# THE POLAR BOYS ARE BACK!

If you haven't been to Norway, one thing I can highly recommend is that you take the ferry from Hirtshals at the top of Denmark to Larvik, in southern Norway, then drive to Bodo in the North. It is a stunning route and takes in mountains, fjords, coastal scenery, spectacular winding valleys and delightful remote villages. Whilst we didn't have much time to stop and explore, we certainly got a flavour of this amazing country as we drove through it.

The aim of our journey (Chester to Bodo) was to raise £10,000 for St Margaret's Hospice to fund urgent recent building repairs. My co-drivers and I joined, with 25 other crazy minded people, a

Car Banger Rally to the Arctic Circle. All cars had to be more than 20 years old. I bought for £400 an old banger - Vera the Volvo.

My companions and fellow drivers on the adventure were Andrew Clouting, a retired GP and Alistair Jones, a Solicitor, who were excellent company. The Doctor was well versed with car mechanics, and the Solicitor with road rules and maps. I said the prayers - much needed at times!

Well, we made it. Just. For the last 200 miles or so, the brakes were causing us some concern! The instruction went out to whosoever was driving, "Don't use the brakes unless you really

have to!"

So we kept well back from the vehicle in front, wiping our brows at times and taking a deep breath of relief at the end!

Reaching our goal of the Arctic Circle was achieved with much glee and satisfaction.

It's a Spartan place. There's a small well-built Norwegian type hut there with a few facilities and welcome hot drinks. It's the custom to find a stone of your choice and place it on one of the many cairns there. This I did with much thanksgiving having completed 2,500 miles since leaving Chester. It was off then to Bodo our final destination - a bright, modern sea faring place and ferry terminal. It was here I eventually came across a Norwegian garage own-

er. He looked just like a Viking - enormous, tall, tough, and broad with an enormous beard! I suggested £200 for Vera, but he suggested the lesser sum of £100. At least now we could catch the plane home and not have to drive the return journey! I imagined he wanted the car for spare parts, but his parting words made us smile,

"I collect English number plates."

Finally, I would like to thank most sincerely all who supported our Appeal for St Margaret's. The generosity of so many people has been overwhelming. Because of the support of everyone, when all the monies are finally in, we will have raised £12,000. Tusen takk!

Canon Chris Samuels  
(Vice-Chairman of the Trustees)





# Generosity is in the family



About John Burns we all know that for years now, together with other volunteers, he drives all over United Kingdom to pick up shoe boxes, load them and send them to Romania. Last year, together with his son he did a walk on the Camino raising funds for Children in Distress and this year he volunteered to drive out a van with winter stuff for the poor children in Romania. This special drive out in the memory of Eddie Errington was planned to recreate one of the first aid convoys, following a similar route to the founding days of the Charity.

Before he left the UK, John had a telephone call from Elijah, his grandson who lives in Spain.

Elijah is a 12 years old boy, and rang to tell John that he has saved 37 euro and 7 cents from his pocket money for the poor children in Romania. You just can

imagine how emotional John felt.

Elijah is a promising young tennis player, training at the Barcelona Tennis Academy, and studying at the British School of Barcelona.

When he gets his pocket money he put it in 3 jars, 1 third to spend, a third to save and a third to give away to others who need it more than he does. He learned about CID last year when his Dad and Granddad did their walk on the Camino, and supported them then.

When he emptied his give away jar he decided that he wanted his money to go to the children in Romania that he learned about last year and who had stuck in his mind.

Thank you very much, Elijah!

It is encouraging for us that we will have a new generation of supporters.

## Introducing Cilla Hurst

Cilla started volunteering in our Guisborough charity shop about 20 years ago. Doing an amazing 4 days a week, she quickly became a much-loved member of the team.

Even in the last few of years, she volunteered one morning a week and all day on a Saturday.

She always greeted customers with a good morning or hello and had become a firm favourite with all the regulars.

The children that come in are especially fond of her as she always had sweets in a basket by the till for them. At Christmas, the staff and volunteers have a late night opening and Father Christmas comes for a visit and Cilla is always at hand to

buy and makes up bags of sweets for everyone.

Many customers come in asking after her as they are used to her being there.

Cilla celebrated her 92 birthday in September and has taken the decision to step down as volunteer.

We will miss her very much, she is such a pleasure to work with and is part of the furniture and fittings.

She still pops in and offers to help if one of us needs to pop out.

There will always be oxo cubes in the cupboard in case she fancies a warm drink.

We want to wish Cilla all the very best and thank her for all her years of dedication



FOTO: Top: Thomas, Tracy and Jennifer Bottom :Glenn, Cilla and Seda



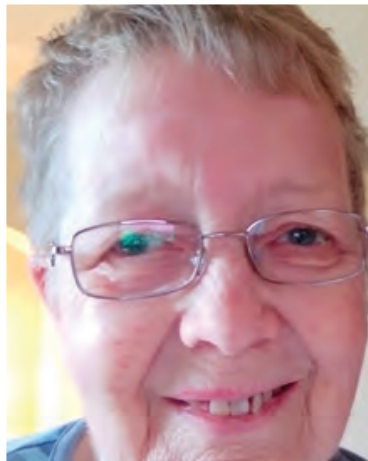
# Mrs. Else Shanks

Else has been donating to Children In Distress for over 20 years now and we always look forward to her phone call.

This year was no exception, with all her lovely knitting and bags and bags of clothes and other donations we simply couldn't do this without supporters like her.

Else was also excited as she has now officially had her first selfie.

Thank you again Else and keep up the good work.



# CID'S LITTLE HELPERS



## Bag packing at Tesco, because every little helps

On Saturday October 19th, CID'S little helpers banded together to go bag packing at their local Tesco. 7 young volunteers donated their time, during their October week holidays, to help raise some funds for the wonderful children we support in Romania. They even managed to rope Tina Connelly, the Glasgow operations manager, into helping us on the day. The children spent a good few hours, chatting to locals, packing up their shopping and raising awareness about Children in Distress and the wonderful

work we do with the children within our hospices. I have never been as proud as to watch all these children give up their own time on a Saturday morning, to support children who they have yet to meet. We are so grateful to everyone who came and supported us, Tesco at St Rollox Glasgow for having us and everyone who left us such wonderful comments on our social media pages. We cannot wait till our Christmas event, it's sure to be magical so keep your eyes posted for news on our Facebook page CID'S Little Helpers!!!

## Cindy, our team welcomes you!

With a lot of excitement, drive and initiative Cindy Robinson has joined our team as Funding Streams Development Manager.

Cindy brings a wealth of fundraising knowledge from her previous employment which includes fundraising for Barnardo's. She has experience in retail and the commercial environments as well as the Community Development sector. Cindy is specialised in fundraising techniques including corporate sponsorship and community events. She worked alongside with local businesses and organisations to secure regular donations and maintained a database of volunteers and assigned activities. Cindy, welcome to a great team!



From the left to the right: Cindy Robinson (Fundraiser), Tina Connelly (Operations Manager), Melanie Morgan (Shildon Charity shop Manageress) and Tracy England (Guisborough Charity shop Manageress)



## Llantwit Major Friends of Children in Distress Annual May Day Walk



**A** May Day sponsored walk for Children in Distress organised by Llantwit Major Friends of Children in Distress has been held every year since 1996, when the first walk took place over the newly built Second Severn Bridge. This first walk raised over £2000, and each walk subsequently has totalled £1000 or more.

The Walk always starts at 2.00p.m. come rain or shine, originally in St Illtud's Church, Llantwit Major, Vale of Glamorgan, where the route followed the 'Way of the Saints', a picturesque circular walk through meadows to the coast from which the Celtic saints would have sailed to foreign lands. By 4.00p.m. most walkers would be back in the church, where welcome refreshments were served.

For some years now, the Walk has started in the small village of St Brides Major, a few miles west of Llantwit Major, and followed an uphill and down dale path to another part of the Glamorgan Heritage Coast at Southern down, famous as a film location for Dr Who, Casualty and Keeping Faith. Once again, the afternoon tea in the church hall is an important part of the occasion!

Between 20 and 40 people do the Walk each year, often children and dogs as well. It is a happy time whatever the weather, a time to meet up with old friends and make new ones. Everyone is united in their desire to help Children in Distress, and those unable to walk are able to sponsor and provide refreshments.

Over the years the communities in the Vale of Glamorgan have helped Children in Distress in many different ways, for example sending a lorry with goods to Romania, and today Ewenny Priory Church and St Bridget's Church in the parish of the Glamorgan Heritage Coast sends stamps and knitted goods as well as participating in the annual walk.



## RUN, RIDE, DONATE



### Give an extra day of life to the children cared by CID

**G**ood deeds are done by those who like to help people, when we open our souls and choose to give to the less fortunate ones!

Sebastian Ghioca is the audacious firefighter, father of two children and friend of CID children and one of the charity's strongest supporters during various sporting events. Thus, for 24 hours (November 15-16) Sebastian kick started, along other dear friends and supporters, a marathon of life.

The athletes started running on treadmills, pedaled on magnetic bicycles and road bikes with a home trainer. Participation in the event was possible based on a donation which was made directly in the donation urn located in the sports hall.

A pivotal role in the organization of the event was played by the Baio Fitness Club Călărași owner, Mr. Balteș

Ionuț.

For 24 hours, he ensured access to the entire gym space and equipment and systematically supported the athletes with energy bars and drinks, clean towels and clothes.

With each donation, our children received an additional chance at physical recovery or the possibility of having an extra dignified day of life, just like any child deserves to live.

We would like to send our gratitude to Aurelian Stoica, Luca Manole, Marian Oprea Balteș Ionuț, Balteș Mădălina, Marius Manea, Constantin Petronel, Delia Botezatu, Sârbu Mărgărt, Năbârcea Mihai, Negulescu Daniela, Olaru Mihai, Adrian Bacain and Sebastian Laurențiu, for their efforts and generosity.



# THE ELVES' WORKSHOP

## is getting ready for the Christmas Fair



This year, our children alongside with volunteers from Carol Davila Medical University and Bucharest Social Assistance Faculty, become Santa's elves.

Every week, Andrei, Cristina, Rares, Stefan, Elena and Ioan, helped by volunteers, create Christmas cards for all their friends that have offered their support during this year.

Even though we are not great artists, we try our best so that every card is filled with our love and appreciation for all those who support us.

The little elves' workshop is closely followed by the big elves' work – the volunteers.

Ever since last year, volunteers take part in creating Christmas-designed hand-made Christmas decorations.

They will be sold at the Christmas Fair organized by Carol Davila Medical University of Bucharest.

Money raised through selling will be donated to St. Margaret Hospice, supporting the quality care of the children affected by serious neurological conditions.

We will carry on our work with the Christmas Bazaar held at Chez Marie Garden Restaurant.

On Christmas (but not only!), we would like to show everyone that it is still possible for kindness to be present in people's hearts, and that every gesture counts just as much!

Big and sincere thanks to each small and big elf, for their effort and their message of gracious service that spreads throughout the world!



# LIRIKA

## piano contest

## when art serves charity

After two years of collaboration Janina Badici Art School from Bucharest continued its charity work for the Children in Distress.

This year Copii in Dificultate was their partner for the first edition of Lirika piano contest.

More than 100 hundred children, who participate on the piano contest, had the opportunity to help the children from St. Margaret Hospice by buying a Christmas handmade gift.

The handmade products were made by volunteers from the Bucharest Faculty of Medicine and sold during the contest.

The surprise of the evening was David, student of Medicine University and CID volunteer, who decided to participate at the Lirika Piano Contest.

Even thou David quit playing piano

more than over a year ago he won the first place. With lots of emotion he performed on the stage wearing our t-shirt for volunteers and impressed everybody with his talent.

He was a good example for everybody in the audience and acted as an ambassador for the cause of the children with neurological conditions.

Thank you very much David and Janina for your determination to work along us for this wonderful children.





# A winter story



Once upon a time in a magical warehouse, in Potto, Santa's Elves were getting ready to pack all the wonderful shoeboxes that had been donated to Children in Distress.

Santa asked his head Elf, Roy Wheeler, who has been helping with shoebox collections for 25 years, to help and he did not fail in his Christmas mission.

Roy had lots of Elf friends offer help, Peter, George, Bill, John, Jenny, Paul, Della and Tracey.

Roy and the other Elves spent weeks driving around collecting these festive gifts from all over the UK. They visited many churches and schools, and met a lot of Children in Distress supporters along the way. When the Elves had collected all 9000 shoe boxes, it was time for them to load the van.

The Elves thought this would be massive challenge but Roy explained it was like playing a big game of Tetris.

Before long all the Elves were working together, laughing and playing as they loaded all the shoe boxes for delivery.

When they finished, they all let out a sigh of relief that they had made it time and their precious cargo was ready to be delivered in time for Christmas....

Our head Elf Roy would like to thank

everyone who helped with the shoe boxes this year.

So, if you donated a shoebox, money towards a shoebox, collected or delivered shoeboxes, donated items, donated funds for transportation or anything else, from Head Elf Roy and everyone else at Children in Distress we would like to say Thank You! Our heartfelt goes to Amey and Alison Hayes, for safe delivery

Without your support we wouldn't be able to do what we can for the children, and to us they are the most important people within Children in Distress.

So again, thank you all so much from Santa, all his Helper Elves, and everyone else at Children in Distress we would like to wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!!



# MODELS OF GENEROSITY



St Francis of Assisi Church, Ingleby Barwick



Thank you so much to everyone who supported our 'Love in a Box' shoebox appeal this year for Children in Distress

We had a fantastic service of celebration his afternoon to bless an amazing 243 boxes before they began their special journey to the poorest children and senior citizens of Romania.

It takes time, effort and money to put together a shoebox, but each simple gift can have a massive impact on those for whom Christmas offers little to celebrate; it simply stresses their loneliness, sharpens their pain and highlights their poverty. Your simple act of kindness

communicates that, whatever their challenges, someone cares for them.

Special thanks to those who co-ordinated donations at; Whinstone Primary School, Ingleby Manor School & Sixth Form, 1st Ingleby Barwick Beavers, Cubs & Scouts, 1st Ingleby Barwick Guides and Billingham's self-defence club Zi Shiyang Tang Soo Do. Also thank you to those who attended this month's Soup for the Soul event and raised £72 towards transport and delivery costs for our shoebox gifts.

Thank you !



# MODELS OF GENEROSITY

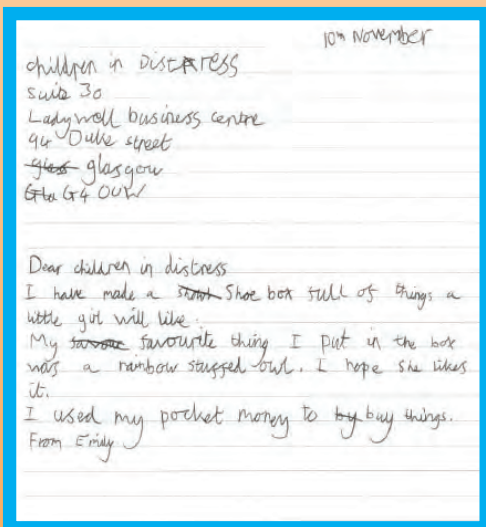


## Thank you, Emily!

**W**e always said that the 30-years history of the charity is built from small gestures that meant a lot to us and to those for whom it was meant. Each contribution, for us at Children in Distress, has been an inspiration and has kept us strong in front of all the challenges.

The same inspiration and emotion was brought to us by Emily's letter.

Here we present her letter with the thought that we can find Emily to say thank you for her generosity.



## Newton Wallacetown Church

**O**ur church was built in 1791 and was then known as Newton New Church, but in the 1960's it amalgamated with Newton-Old Church. Once again 10 years ago we joined with Wallacetown Church and we are now known as Newton Wallacetown Church.

We are classed as a very friendly congregation having a wide range of age groups from toddlers to 90 years old. We are a busy church with many groups using our suite of halls. Boys' Brigade, Girls' Brigade, Rainbows, Brownies and Guides meet in our halls each week.

Room 60 is held after school each day in part of our halls to encourage youngsters of secondary school age to come along and meet up with friends and chat to our Youth Worker. They have a café and a snooker table for their use. We also cater for the older people with a weekly Guild meeting in the winter months and a Friendship club for men and women all year round where we have speakers, quizzes and sometimes the men play dominoes, and the women have something more interesting for them. On a Thursday afternoon

between October and April we run a lunch club open to anyone who care to join us. This is run by a team of church members.

Once a week we hold a prayer meeting again for anyone who wishes to come, and bible study groups are held in members homes. We are very fortunate to have a Sunday School for children of all ages. So many churches have no young people attending, so we feel very fortunate to see them coming along. Most of our Sunday Services are led by our praise Band, made up of some church members. At the moment we do not have an elected minister but trust that God will soon find us the right person to lead our church in the future.

I have been involved in this church since I was a toddler and over the years

have been in various organisations. Church membership has declined recently over the country, but we have to work to change all that and pray that people will come to know Jesus.

For many years we have supported Children in Distress, firstly with Handknits and then latterly with Shoe Boxes and Handknits. We have a good team of helpers in our own and other churches.

Written by Irene Montgomerie

**Irene is another unsung hero of Children in Distress . For 30 years she is supporting Children in Distress .At 89, Irene still supports Children in Distress but she hopes a new generation supporters will follow her footsteps.**









**Merry Christmas!**