

On the move...



Two of the refugee children in a Moscow school

Joint action for refugee support in Russia, Belarus and Ukraine

by Claire Rimmer

In Soviet times, 'refugees' somehow belonged to other nations, to a reality outside the Soviet Union. Since the break-up of the Soviet Empire, however, the word 'refugee' has become part of the everyday language and experience of Russians and other peoples of the FSU. Initially ill-equipped to deal with the crisis of refugees, they are gradually developing structures to alleviate the worst problems.

The European Council on Refugees and Exiles (ECRE) is a pan-European network of 73 refugee-assisting non-governmental organisations from across Europe. It aims to promote the protection and integration of refugees in Europe and has been working in Eastern Europe – Russia, Belarus and Ukraine – since 1997.

These three countries have all experienced huge population movements. The dissolution of the Soviet Union left millions of people outside their homelands. Hundreds of thousands of people were uprooted by inter-ethnic conflict in the South Caucasus, whilst others whom Stalin had deported in the 1940s were

able to return to their original homelands. In Russia the ongoing conflict in Chechnya has forced thousands more people to flee their homes.

EU expansion traps refugees in Ukraine

Since 1991, Russia, Belarus and Ukraine have all acceded to the 1951 Geneva Convention and developed refugee laws and asylum systems. Meanwhile, the expansion of the EU has meant Ukraine, Russia and Belarus now border the widening Europe. In Ukraine in particular, this has led to an increase in migrants, including refugees, becoming 'trapped' in the country, trying to get into Europe.

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REFUGEES

With little or no assistance from the already overburdened state, these refugees have difficulty finding anywhere to live, or even buying basic food, school books and clothes, and rely on the limited assistance that UNHCR and NGOs are able to offer.

Intolerance in Russia

In Russia, the situation for refugees has been made worse by a worrying rise in racism and xenophobia. There are frequent reports of foreigners being beaten, even killed, by racist gangs. The Russian Ministry of the Interior claimed in February 2003 that approximately 20,000 skinheads are active in Russia. Often, the perpetrators of racist attacks escape prosecution and are dismissed as drunken football hooligans. In Krasnodar, the Governor himself announced a campaign against ethnic minorities and said he would make people want to leave the region of their own accord. The ongoing conflict in Chechnya has also had repercussions. The treatment of internally displaced ethnic Chechens in other parts of the Russian Federation, especially in Moscow, deteriorated sharply after the October 2002 hostage taking in the Nord-Ost theatre. All in all, it is a grim and frightening reality for foreigners, including refugees and asylum seekers.

Claire Rimmer, former Information Officer at The BEARR Trust, is Eastern Europe Projects Officer at ECRE

New publication: *Introduction to the non-profit sector in Russia*

Allavida, the overseas development NGO with which BEARR shares office accommodation at 55 Bondway, has recently published a solid and practical introduction to Russia's third sector, entitled *Introduction to the non-profit sector in Russia*. After an overview of the country's people, government and economy, the 87-page study provides an up-to-date account of the non-profit sector as it is today. It also includes details of its history and development, main

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Netherlands support for refugee rights

ECRE started a new project in January 2003, funded by the MATRA programme of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands. We are working closely with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), as well as the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). The project aims to develop the rule of law and a strong civil society in Russia, Belarus and Ukraine in relation to refugees, asylum-seekers and forced migrants, leading to more effective protection for these vulnerable groups. Key activities include legal training courses for NGOs in Russia, Belarus and Ukraine, bursaries to ECRE training courses and events in Europe, the translation of important legal texts into Russian, and legal research on the region. We are currently seeking funds to continue other activities with NGOs, for example, covering social issues such as integration, and providing organisational support, such as fundraising training and twinnings, as we have done in the past.

areas of activity, funding sources and the legal and fiscal environment in which it operates. The report goes on to consider the prime needs of the sector, the roles that foreign donors can play in helping to meet these needs, and the challenges facing the various parts of the local sector.

Special offer for BEARR Newsletter subscribers

Normally priced at £15 plus p&p, BEARR subscribers can buy *Introduction to the non-profit sector in Russia* for just £10 plus £2 p&p. You can order your copy of the report in the following ways (refer to this special offer when you order).
Email: publishing@allavida.org
Fax: +44 20 7735 7608 Tel: +44 20 7735 8006

'School for Tolerance'

Sarah Roberts reports on the work of an NGO in Ekaterinburg that aims to encourage the inclusion of disabled people into society by Sarah Roberts

People with disabilities who live in the Russian Federation are faced with a multitude of problems on a day-to-day basis, both because of the attitudes they face from the general public, and in terms of the opportunities available to them to play a normal role within society. People with mobility impairments find gaining access to public buildings virtually impossible, and even getting in and out of their own homes can be a problem. This obviously limits their ability to participate in many aspects of society that others take for granted. Coupled with this, there is a general lack of awareness amongst the population about the causes and nature of all types of disability. People with disabilities are often treated with hostility and are denied opportunities that would be considered fundamental human rights in many western societies.

It is with these problems in mind that the Dispo-Centre, an NGO based in Ekaterinburg working to provide sporting and recreational opportunities for disabled children, has launched its 'School for

Tolerance'. The aim of this project is to encourage young people in Ekaterinburg to be more aware of the problems that people with disabilities in their city face, and to consider ways of changing their own attitudes and environment in order to combat these problems. Those involved in the project feel that by changing the attitudes and ideas of today's young people, a more lasting impact can be made on society as a whole.

Project aims

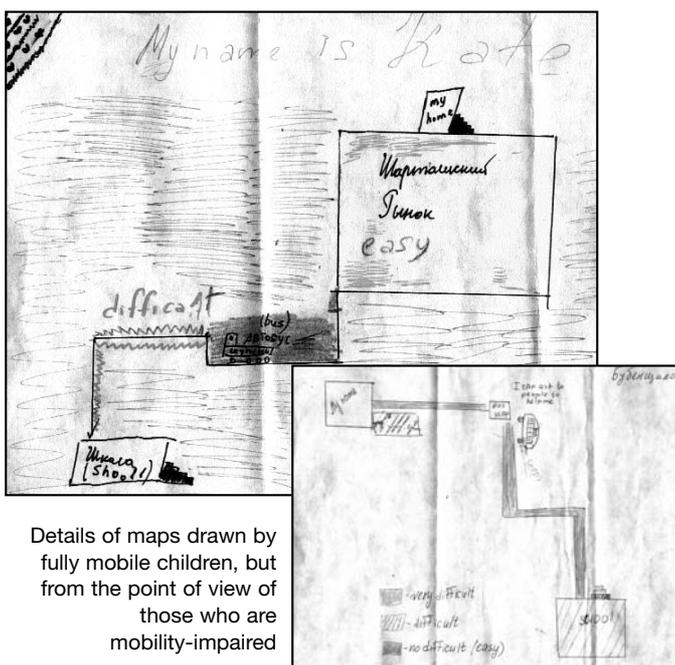
The specific objectives of the project are to:

- increase awareness and understanding about the causes and nature of different forms of disability.
- increase awareness about the problems faced by people with disabilities, both those caused by attitudes and prejudices and those resulting from the physical environment.
- demonstrate ways of including and accepting people with disabilities.
- demonstrate different attitudes and approaches towards people with disabilities, particularly in terms of the cultural context.
- increase interest and involvement in the work carried out by disability organisations, and encourage interaction between able-bodied young people and those with disabilities.

Project methods

To achieve its aims, the project runs seminars and other events in local schools. Participants take part in a variety of activities that highlight the issues that people with disabilities face in everyday life. Each activity is followed by a discussion and evaluation, clarifying the issues that have been raised, and giving special attention to ways of helping to ensure that people with disabilities are included in mainstream society.

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ST PETERSBURG ANNIVERSARY EVENT

‘School for Tolerance’ *continued*

Overcoming language barriers

The project is run by two British volunteers working with the Dispo-Centre, together with their partners in local schools. It is recognised, however, that having British volunteers is not ideal for the project’s long-term development. At present, the seminars are conducted in English and it was at first believed that schools would be encouraged to participate in the programme because of the opportunity for students to practise their language skills in the company of native English speakers. Indeed, this was the case, and demand was

high. However, both the schools and the project members recognised that Russian would be more appropriate, especially to explain more complex ideas and explore Russia-specific issues.

As a result, the project has produced a bilingual resource pack, using the material covered in the seminars and the experiences and ideas contributed by the participants and trainers. The hope is that this will facilitate the transition to a self-sustaining Russian-led initiative, that can draw on a broader base of participants. By producing the pack, it is hoped that users in

Russia and in the UK will be able to build on the idea of ‘School for Tolerance’ and continue the project in the future.

Although the pack has been produced with Russian users in mind, much of its content is also relevant to a UK audience and is drawing interest here. A development education centre in Sheffield, for instance, has added a copy to its resource library.

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St Petersburg’s 300th Anniversary

by Ann Lewis, BEARR Trustee

The Hermitage Rooms at Somerset House were packed on 23 June for a party to celebrate the 300th Anniversary of St Petersburg. This unique event resulted from a collaboration between The BEARR Trust, Fontanka publishers and



the Hermitage Rooms. Each partner had their own reason for celebrating: BEARR wanted to mark our new involvement with St Petersburg; Fontanka were looking

for a suitable occasion on which to launch their book *Petersburg Perspectives*, and the Hermitage Rooms wanted to highlight their anniversary exhibition of historic photographs of St Petersburg.

BEARR and Fontanka originally envisaged that this would be a small reception for 70-80 people in the Hermitage Rooms themselves. But as invitations went out to their combined guest lists, responses came flooding in and the whole event had to be rapidly recast! As a result, the main reception was moved to the magnificent Seamen’s Hall and overflowed onto the (fortunately) gloriously sunny terrace at Somerset House.

In his welcoming remarks, BEARR Chairman, Michael McCulloch, reminded guests about BEARR’s engagement with St Petersburg: the stand at the NGO Fair in April (reported in the June issue of this Newsletter), which is to form part of the ‘St Petersburg in Manchester’ exhibition in October; the Directory of UK NGOs working in St Petersburg (now available in Russian); and the project on care for the elderly, supported by the Linbury Trust.

Frank Althaus of Fontanka opened the launch of *Petersburg Perspectives* and introduced three of the contributors to the book. Charlotte Hobson, whose *Black*

No 'red tape': why volunteers in Russia are struggling

Esther Pallot originally arrived in Russia with VSO. After VSO brought its operations there to a close (see BEARR Newsletter No. 36), Esther began to run volunteer management training seminars. She also undertook research into the attitudes of public sector staff towards volunteers and, in March 2003, took part in a working seminar attended by both public and voluntary sector representatives. Here, Esther talks of her experiences at the seminar and its significance in the wider context of Russia's voluntary sector.

by Esther Pallot

Whilst most individuals and organisations struggle with 'red tape', ironically, it would seem, Russia's volunteers are struggling without it! This was one of the conclusions reached at a working seminar in which I participated recently.

The seminar, held at the Moscow Higher School of Economics on 6th March, was organised by a

working party made up of those members of the Ministry of Labour and Social Development and the Duma Committee who are responsible for issues particularly concerning volunteering in social services.

As part of their strategy for closing their programme in Russia, VSO was the main sponsor of the event, in collaboration with

continues over ...



BEARR's Chairman, Michael McCulloch, addresses guests at Somerset House.

Earth City was reviewed in BEARR Newsletter No. 37, read a graphic and amusing account of St Petersburg in the 19th century, taken from a diary which had been written by a woman visitor and translated by Charlotte's grandfather. Orlando Figes, author of the acclaimed *Natasha's Dance*, reminded his

audience of the need to look to Russia's future as part of Europe and not just to dwell on its past. And Yury Molodkovets the photographer from the Hermitage who provided the book's beautiful illustrations, spoke of the need to seek out beauty and eschew ugliness wherever possible.

The BEARR Trust greatly enjoyed working with Fontanka on this event, is most grateful for their support, and would like to thank Frank Althaus in particular for undertaking most of the practical arrangements.

And Fontanka? Frank Althaus comments: 'We were delighted to share the evening at Somerset House with The BEARR Trust. We were glad to support such a worthy cause, and felt that our association with BEARR greatly increased the profile of Fontanka and made sure the launch of our

book was part of a memorable evening (as well as enabling us to sell some extra books to Friends of BEARR!).'

Copies of *Petersburg Perspectives* may be obtained from Fontanka at the concessionary price of £27 + £2 p&p. For details, phone: 020 7689 5200 or email: info@fontanka.co.uk.



Yury Molodkovets, photographer for *Petersburg Perspectives*

VOLUNTEERING

No 'red tape' *continued*

photo courtesy of Esther Pallot



Working group discussion on the 'barriers' to recruiting and retaining volunteers

Galina Bodrenkova, President of the Russian Volunteer Development Centre. Jointly, they brought together diverse representatives working in health and social work from both the public and voluntary sectors. These included volunteers themselves, representatives from non-commercial and non-governmental agencies and municipal organisations from as far afield as Samara and the Urals. Also offering extensive volunteering experience and valuable insight were Penny Lawrence from London, overseas director for VSO, and Sergei Aleshenok, director of the former VSO programme in Russia.

The overall aim of the meeting was to identify possible 'barriers' affecting the recruitment and retention of volunteers, which are ultimately having an impact on the effectiveness of the services offered. The collective findings gathered at the seminar, were intended to be a representation from the 'shop floor' as it were, to assist government officials in their decision making regarding the law and other social reforms.

Considerable achievements ...

The seminar opened with introductions from all those participating: everyone was asked to detail the social area in which they worked, their clients, and which services they offered with the help of volunteers. Social areas covered by the various

organisations were wide ranging, as were their client groups. As was noted, the role played by volunteers in this sample of organisations was indeed impressive and convincing. The contribution they made to the many services offered was undeniably a very important one.

... but volunteers still insufficiently integrated

Participants then separated into smaller working groups for the more difficult task of identifying obstacles that hindered the involvement of volunteers in their organisations. Difficulties were revealed at all levels within organisations, such as inexperience in the management of volunteers (including lack of communication between management and staff, which results in poor attitudes towards volunteers by paid colleagues) and also lack of preparation and training, resulting in recruitment failure and a loss of volunteers.

Legal definition needed ...

Many difficulties were also revealed as having an impact on prospective volunteers before they even reached an organisation. First and foremost is the very unclear legal position of a volunteer in an organisation. Currently there is no legal recognition of a 'volunteer' in Russia; therefore anyone working in such a capacity is not eligible for employer liability nor covered by an organisation's medical insurance. Furthermore, as there is no clear definition of a volunteer, there is also no recognition of a volunteer's service. Successful initiatives in the UK, such as employee volunteering, New Deal work experience for the unemployed through volunteering, or the various accreditation schemes for young people, are at this point a far cry from the situation in Russia, where there is little motivation or inspiration for anybody to volunteer.

... and greater co-ordination

The final part of the seminar was dedicated to a 'brainstorming' of ideas, looking for ways to overcoming such obstacles. Where participants had previously been working in groups of people with similar interests or backgrounds, on this occasion, the groups were mixed. Interestingly, there was

ANNUAL CONFERENCE

remarkable similarity between the different groups' suggestions. Virtually all agreed on the necessity of a more coherent infrastructure in the voluntary sector as a whole, such as the development of more volunteer centres and greater coordination between them. Furthermore, a better organised voluntary sector would be in a position to advise organisations in other sectors of society that involve volunteers, such as in the public sector. Indeed, such a lateral way of thinking is crucial, if society is to benefit from volunteering. Finally, however, and perhaps most importantly, was the necessity for 'red tape'. For, without the necessary jurisdiction, a clear definition of volunteering and a proper code of practice, the future of volunteering in Russia looks very uncertain.

On a more positive note, the seminar itself was seen as an encouraging initiative by a working party doing its best to meet the needs of its own client group. Time will tell.



Sergei Aleshenok summarises volunteers' opinions at the seminar

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For more information please see www.volunteer.ru

Annual Conference 2003

**Following up and following on:
Sustainability, dissemination and learning
from others in Russia, the FSU and the UK**

The BEARR Trust Annual Conference 2003, in collaboration with DFID-funded Health & Social Care Partnership Scheme, will explore three related topics which are at the top of many NGOs' and funders' priorities:

- sustainability,
- dissemination and
- learning from others.

The questions which our presenters and participants will address are:

- How can we set up projects that last beyond our own involvement?

- How can we share our experience of working abroad with other British or European organisations?
- How can we find and use the experience of other British or European organisations to inform our own project development?

**Friday 28 November
The Charity Centre,
24 Stephenson Way,
London NW1 2DP**

Book early to ensure a place!
Friends £30, all others £35.

Please make cheques payable to The BEARR Trust and return the enclosed booking form no later than Friday 14th November to:
The BEARR Trust, 55 Bondway, London SW8 1SJ.
Enquiries: 020 7840 0304.

The BEARR Trust (originally British Emergency Action in Russia and the Republics) was formed in November 1991. The Trust Deed was executed on 27 April 1992 and the Trust became a registered charity on 18 May 1992.

Objectives

The Trust's overall aim is to help Russia and the former Soviet Republics become a democratic society. To this end, BEARR:

- works with UK organisations active in the Russian voluntary sector;
- provides information, advice and training to Russian and UK NGOs;
- helps UK and Russian NGOs share know-how and experience; and
- runs projects with partners to strengthen the Russian voluntary sector.

Activities January – December 2002

In Russia

Improving Service Delivery for Moscow's Elderly

A training event for Russian social service providers took place in Moscow in March. An awareness-raising photo exhibition was organised in Moscow in June to coincide with the monitoring and evaluation visit by British partners. The final project report was submitted to the Community Fund in July and approved in August 2002.

Developing Volunteering in Samara

A study visit to the UK took place in April. A final report was submitted to the funder, Partnerships in the Non-Profit Sector (PNPS), and approved.

Developing a Network for Child Protection in Russia

BEARR won a new grant from Health and Social Care Partnerships (HSCP) for an 18-month project to disseminate the OZON Distance Learning Pack on child abuse in Moscow, Togliatti and Chelyabinsk. Activities so far have included a planning meeting in April, a Policy Group meeting in July and a series of awareness-raising seminars in October and November.

Developing an Adult Mental Healthcare Community Centre in Pervouralsk

BEARR won a new grant from the Community Fund to set up a community centre over two years in Pervouralsk (Sverdlovsk Oblast). A centre was refurbished and opened to the public in July 2002. It continues to function, and BEARR is running regular training sessions for its staff.

Work-based Community Mental Healthcare in Pervouralsk

With a new grant from HSCP for a two-year project starting in April 2002, BEARR has trained commercial managers, public sector managers, psychologists and social workers in Pervouralsk in issues of organisational development and mental health in the work place.

Sverdlovsk Oblast Social Partnership Project

BEARR is part of a consortium led by IMC Consulting, which won a DFID contract to develop social partnerships between NGOs and local authorities in the Sverdlovsk Oblast over 3.5 years.

Adult Mental Health Reform in Ekaterinburg and the Sverdlovsk Oblast

A consortium led by the British Institute of Psychiatry, including BEARR, won a DFID contract for a four-year project in and around Ekaterinburg. BEARR staff visited Ekaterinburg, Pervouralsk and Nizhnii Tagil in March 2002 for a mapping exercise.

The BEARR Trust Report and Financial Statements for the year ending 31st December 2002 are available on application.
Enquiries: 020 7840 0304.

In the UK

The Annual BEARR Conference

The theme for the 2002 Conference was 'The Promise and Perils of Partnership: Russia, the former Soviet Union and the UK'. The keynote speech was given by Marina Gordeyeva, Head of the Department for Children, Women and Families in Russia's Ministry of Labour and Social Development. Over 100 delegates attended and were joined by BEARR's Russian partners, Alexander Tarasov from Ekaterinburg's Social Policy Department and Tatiana Kukovyakina of Dobraya Volya (NGO).

The BEARR Newsletter

Feedback from subscribers to the Newsletter showed that it continued to be essential reading for NGOs and others interested in Russia. Articles, reviews and news items covered a wide range of topics related to Russia and other countries in the former Soviet Union.

The Information Service

The Trust continued to provide a valuable service, free of charge, to professional enquirers and the public alike. Enquiries ranged from simple factual information on Russia and the FSU to advice on potential partners for health and social sector projects in those countries.

BEARR Staffing

BEARR's Director, Myra Green, retired in November 2002. Nicola Ramsden served as Acting Honorary Director until the appointment of a new Director. (Daryl Hardman was appointed in April 2003)

Plans for 2003

The BEARR Trust will continue to run the following projects in 2003:

- Developing a Network for Child Protection in Russia
- Developing an Adult Mental Healthcare Community Centre in Pervouralsk
- Work-based Community Mental Healthcare in Pervouralsk
- Adult Mental Health Reform in Sverdlovsk

Fundraising Activities

Monty Matthews, a BEARR volunteer, ran the London Marathon on behalf of BEARR, raising £800. Many thanks to Monty.

The BEARR summer party was held in July at Bad Bobs in Covent Garden, music provided free by jazz quartet Bodkin Lane. 200 tickets were sold, enabling BEARR to raise its profile among this younger audience.

In October the Konevets vocal quartet from St Petersburg gave two concerts, one in St Mary's Cathedral, Glasgow, one in St Etheldreda's, London. Proceeds went (Glasgow) to The BEARR Trust, and (London) to The BEARR Trust and Friends of Russian Children.

Other Activities

Professor Geoffrey Hosking, one of BEARR's patrons, gave a lecture in Ekaterinburg in May entitled 'Russia and the Heritage of the Soviet Union', hosted by the British Consul and sponsored by IMC.

In October The BEARR Trust held a conference in Manchester to mark the upcoming 300th anniversary of its twin city, entitled 'Creating Effective and Sustainable Social Partnerships in St Petersburg'. The 40 delegates found it a most useful and informative networking forum. The Linbury Trust supported the event and BA donated a free flight for our Russian speaker, Rosa Khatskelevich from St Petersburg.

In conjunction with the Manchester conference, The BEARR Trust compiled and published a Directory of NGOs in St Petersburg.

In November Professor Hosking gave a lecture kindly hosted by EBRD entitled 'Can Russia survive as a nation-state?'

The BEARR Trust submitted proposals for the following projects in Russia:

- Opening School Doors to Deaf Children. Project in Nizhnii Novgorod, helping to integrate deaf and disabled children into mainstream schools and institutes.
- Social Partnerships in Samara's Small Cities and Rural Areas. Project to run seminars developing partnerships between NGOs and the local authorities in the oblast.

ROSSICA

International Review of Russian Culture

ROSSICA is published by Academia Rossica, a UK-registered charity whose mission is to promote a wider understanding of Russia and its culture in the West and to further Russian-British cultural relations. Founded in 2000, Academia Rossica already occupies a prominent position in Anglo-Russian relations, with a high degree of recognition from both governments. Respected by museums and galleries, universities and cultural institutions, it is winning a rapidly expanding public audience.

Both attractive and authoritative, no other publication in its field matches ROSSICA's commitment to the highest standards of quality both in production and in content. It has up-to-the-minute coverage of current cultural events, yet also treats its themes in depth, so that even its back issues retain their value as a growing library on Russian culture. Written by leading international experts, ROSSICA tackles the eternal dilemma of how to translate one culture into the language of another, of how to avoid or overcome the distortions of assimilation.

As an institutional publication, ROSSICA plays an important role in promoting the cultural projects of Academia Rossica, such as the annual 'Russian Nights' festival, and projects undertaken by similar organisations. Academia Rossica works closely with leading Russian museums including the Hermitage, the Tretyakov Gallery, the Kremlin and others, publicising their collections and exhibitions outside Russia and providing practical support.



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Tel: 020 8340 9591 / 020 7937 5001
Email: mail@academia-rossica.org
Web: www.academia-rossica.org

Annual subscriptions: (including e-newsletter and special offers on events)
UK (London): £45
UK (non-London): £35
Overseas: £50 (worldwide).

Social Innovations in the Urals: reporting from Perm

The first editions of a new publication, *Sotsialny Innovatsii* (Social Innovations) appeared in Perm, the million-strong city west of the Urals, in December 2002 and February 2003. It is the newsletter of a non-profit-making organisation, the Regional Centre for International Projects, which has strong links with the Oxfordshire Council for Voluntary Action (OCVA).



Tatiana Grigorieva in Perm

photo courtesy of Philip Clayton

Twinning and beyond

Perm city, the Perm region and their universities, have had innovative links since Perm became an open city in 1988. For some years they have been officially twinned with the city of Oxford and with Oxfordshire. Although many of the joint activities are now the more traditional 'twinning' activities involving cultural and youth activities, the link has always gone far, far beyond these.

Tatiana Grigorieva, Head of the Department of International Links of Perm City Council, wrote of the link in an article for *Social Innovations*, of which edited excerpts are given here.

Joint projects

The first contact between the two universities of our cities turned out to be a durable friendship, which has not faded in 14 years. The important thing is that this twinning involves not just links between two town halls or trips by bureaucrats. It includes interesting projects by voluntary organisations, courses for teachers and lecturers, youth exchanges, environmental camps, and just the friendly relations of ordinary people who can say: 'This is my English friend.'

Our Oxford friends helped us to open an information centre for disabled people in Perm, the first such in Russia. (OCVA have been partners of the Perm Society of Disabled People since 1991). The Perm hospices used the organisational working methods of Sobell House Hospice and receive methodological support from it. In one city district a children's playground was built, supported by money collected in Oxford. Each year Perm State University sends teachers on a course at Oxford University, and teachers from Oxfordshire have become familiar guests in Perm. Perm State Teacher Training University is carrying out a further large project on 'Education and Health' as part of the TEMPUS-TACIS programme.

This represents just a small sample of the work that has been shared. Over the years there have been, among the many links, projects between the police of both areas, doctors and other health workers, and social workers. The universities have carried out research projects in each other's areas and elected members have shared their experience and learned from each other.

Dachas & self-sufficiency

On a recent visit, two Oxford women went to learn more about Russian dachas and talk about their experience of English allotments. Their report appeared in Perm News this April. They give an astonishing figure: since the end of Communism, some claim that 80% of the food produced in Russia has been grown by amateurs. 'Our hosts', they

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HEALTHCARE

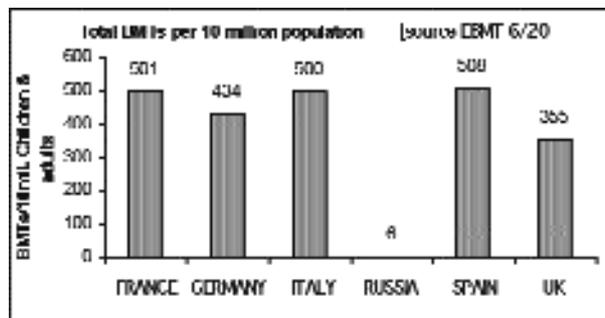
Paediatric bone marrow transplantation in Russia

In Russia each year there are 5,000 new cases of leukaemia and solid tumours in children under 18 years old. Ten years ago, only 7-10% of Russian children with these diseases were alive five years after being diagnosed, while the comparable figure for Europe was 70%. Since then, 75 medical centres have opened and the recovery rate is now comparable to European levels.

One area in which Russia still lags behind is in bone marrow transplantation (BMT). European data for 1998 records 82 BMTs in Russia. The total rate was 6 per 10 million population, compared with the median EBMT (European Bone Marrow Transplant Group) rate of 222 per 10 million (range 6 - 791 per 10 million) for the 30 reporting countries that undertook BMTs.

The shortfall represents a large number of patients needing various forms of transplant; in the field of unrelated donor transplantation (UDBMT), for example, up to 350 children a year need this treatment.

The problem is that the cost of bone marrow transplantation is large – at least \$14 million p.a. for the 350 children who need UDBMTs – and even this figure excludes the cost of using volunteer donors from the international register. To put this figure into context, the federal budget for the year 2000 for the treatment of all paediatric cancer (leukaemia and solid tumours) in Russia was only \$3m for children under 14 years (or c.\$1000 per patient), although there is some additional funding from local government and charities.



In the West, patients are commonly transplanted using a sibling donor. In Russia, where many families have only one child, the need for unrelated donor BMT is larger and there is an urgent need for a Russian bone marrow register of volunteer donors. This is also costly: establishing a register of 50,000 donors would cost about \$4 million.

There is evidence that Russia has recently started to address these problems. A new bone marrow transplant department opened in the St Petersburg Medical University (SPbMU) in 2000 and, in September 2002, Mikhail S. Gorbachev announced \$2m funding to extend this department and establish a new Institute of Children's Haematology and Transplantation.



Raisa Gorbacheva

The R.M. Gorbacheva Centre of Children's Haematology and Transplantation, named in memory of Raisa Gorbacheva, will open in 2004. It will have 12 sterile rooms and associated facilities enabling it to perform about 100 BMTs per year.

The new Raisa Gorbacheva Institute will be funded from federal as well as local budgets, but it needs considerable additional help to enable it to perform transplants to the highest international standards. It has to buy expensive foreign supportive care drugs, be able to access international bone marrow donor registries and also fund the expansion of the Russian donor registry. Federal and other Russian funding for the new centre amounts to

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\$5–6m, but an additional \$3m p.a. is needed from sponsors for this vital Russian BMT centre.

The new Institute has an International Guardian Board including eminent specialists from the USA and Europe.

The Raisa Gorbacheva Fund for Children is the Charity Committee of the Guardian Board, The R.M. Gorbacheva Institute of Children's Hematology and Transplantation, St Petersburg, Russia.

The Guardian Board also includes several charities which will support its work. But because the funding requirement is large it needs to enlist more help, and a Charity Appeal Committee, named The Raisa Gorbacheva Fund for Children has been formed for this purpose.

Social Innovations in the Urals (cont. from p11)

wrote, 'had beehives for honey, medicine and to protect the house from burglars. They used the stream running alongside the dacha to water the garden but also as a cooler for the jars of pickles they made, to tide them over the winter months. They had a huge compost heap, which was steaming hot and attracted various frogs, toads and snakes. We were alarmed at the thought of the snakes, but since they came, the house has apparently been completely free of mice.'

'Not only were we welcomed into their home and dacha, but we were taken to a number of other dacha sites, where we met people growing their food, enjoying the countryside and the community feeling. They were also using their land to research food growing techniques and alternative fruit and vegetable species...'

– CONTACTS –

Further information on Perm, in English, is available from the following web sites:

Perm municipal administration site:

www.gorodperm.ru

Perm State University site:

www.psu.ru

There are also Russian language sites on the regional administration, business and sport, leisure and culture as well as local news.

This article appears here courtesy of Tatiana Grigorieva, of Oxford's *Perm News*, and Deborah Manley, formerly Editor of the BEARR Newsletter and a major figure in BEARR's early years as a founder Trustee.



Following on and moving up – staff changes at BEARR



At the end of September we will regrettably be saying goodbye to our Projects Manager, Noah Birksted-Breen. In the two eventful years Noah has spent at BEARR he has accomplished an enormous amount. Apart from cheerfully coping with changes in office location and personnel, he has successfully managed a variety of projects, including our work-based community healthcare project in

Pervouralsk. He has also brought BEARR into Nizhny Novgorod, obtaining funds for a project to assist deaf children gain easier access to school.

Noah will be moving on from BEARR to London's prestigious Central School for Speech and Drama where, incidentally, Myra Green, BEARR's former Director, trained as a teacher of drama before joining VSO. Noah has

won a scholarship to take a one-year MA course in Advanced Theatre Practice. We wish him every success.

On Noah's departure, Rachel Watson, who joined us in 2002, will be taking up her appointment as our Information and Projects Officer. Congratulations, Rachel. We look forward to working with you in your new role.

– Michael Holman

From revolution to social action?

The Centre for Social Action 1992-2003

by Jennie Fleming

It was September 1992. We were to start our first day's training in Russia but no one turned up all morning, because, we were told, 'there was a problem with the metro'. In fact, it was the day Yeltsin had dissolved parliament and the White House was occupied. That evening we went down and talked with the demonstrators – Orthodox priests, young communists, fascist groups, individuals from no group at all – everyone united in their opposition to the dissolution of parliament. If ever we need reminding that the former Soviet Union was a collection of countries in transition we have only to think back to this time.

Diversity of experience

The Centre for Social Action has been active in the former Soviet Union for 11 years - in Belarus, Ukraine, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan and Russia. We have worked with many different organisations and professionals on a wide variety of projects including a children's 'hospice at home', youth work, social work development of NGO's, disabled people, restorative justice projects, work developing fostering schemes and child centred practice. We have co-operated with social work education and run 'training the trainers' courses to ensure a multiplier impact.

Local people know best

Our involvement has always been based on the principles of partnership and an acknowledgement that people are experts in their own lives. They know best what is needed in their own country. We have always aimed to maximise our contribution to their reformation and minimised the exploitative risks involved in international and cross-cultural work. What is needed is Russian solutions to Russian problems, or Georgian solutions to Georgian problems.

Over time, our role has developed and changed as has the position of the organisations we work with. Initially we were involved in the delivery of knowledge and expertise, albeit in a participatory way. Now we often find ourselves working with Russian, Georgian or Ukrainians as equal colleagues or co-trainers. We also have in country

organisational partnerships. Our work was with a loose assortment of organisations with little or no connection between them. They attended events to learn anything that might help them deliver their own service better. During one of the first events in 1992, we met women from the suburbs of Moscow who were delivering meals to isolated elderly people. The group were themselves extremely isolated; they had no connections or even knowledge of other volunteer organisations locally, and no funding. Now, in 2003, colleagues are working with an equally small organisation chopping wood and delivering it to old people's homes. However, they are connected into a network of local NGOs and are part of an international funding programme. The learning is shared much more widely and many people are now interested to learn how similar projects can best be developed and delivered.

Two-way learning

Finally, it is not possible to reflect on the Centre's 11 years of work in the FSU without highlighting the effect the experience has had on our own working practice. Our activity in these international and intercultural settings has profoundly influenced all our work, particularly our intercultural involvement here in the UK, but also other international collaborations we have, for example with the US.

The way ahead

There are now economic opportunities, but not equal access to these. So much still remains to be done, especially to develop the legislation, policy, practice and attitudes that are required to put in place the safeguards needed in post-communist societies.

— CONTACT —

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FUNDING CLOSING DATES

ALLAVIDA

Allavida is currently running grants programmes in two of its three focal regions: South East Europe and East Africa. The youthEXchange.SEE programme was launched in November 2002, and covers Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Kosovo, Macedonia, Montenegro, Romania and Serbia. The fund's objective is to promote regional partnership-building and the transfer of skills and knowledge between grass-roots youth NGOs which have not previously had access to cross-border opportunities. Allavida is also about to pilot a small grants scheme in Kenya.

For further information, please contact info@allavida.org or see their website: www.allavida.org

THE COMMUNITY FUND, INTERNATIONAL GRANTS PROGRAMME

A new International Grants Programme was launched in July 2002 for UK-based organisations working with partners abroad. The programme has new funding priorities and application forms: see www.community-fund.org.uk for more information. Because this programme is continuous, there are no closing dates for applications. Electronic application forms (EAF) can be downloaded from their website: www.community-fund.org.uk, or by calling 0845 791 9191. CD-roms are also available. International enquiry line: 020 7747 5294.

DIANA, PRINCESS OF WALES MEMORIAL FUND INTERNATIONAL GRANTS PROGRAMME

No grants are currently available. Enquiries on: 020 7902 5530.

DFID HEALTH AND SOCIAL PARTNERSHIPS SCHEME (HSCP)

DFID has extended the HSCP Scheme until October 2004. This phase will concentrate on emphasising the achievements of project outputs, lesson learning, sharing experiences and managing dissemination. The Scheme Management Team will continue to provide management support, monitoring and quality

assurance to the projects. To increase impact on service delivery and the projects' sustainability, a dissemination programme will aim to facilitate the exchange of good practice materials and relevant expertise as well as to support and encourage the involvement of governmental bodies.

TACIS INSTITUTION BUILDING PARTNERSHIP PROGRAMME: SUPPORT TO CIVIL SOCIETY AND LOCAL INITIATIVES

This programme is a follow-up of the previous Tacis Lien and City Twinning Programmes. Applications should reflect partnerships between non-governmental organisations / not-for-profit professional organisations / local and regional authorities of the same type. A call for proposals is launched once a year by the European Commission and will be announced on the EuropeAid website in December 2003 (Deadline: April 2004). Proposals can be submitted by eligible organisations from the EU, Tacis or Phare countries.

Enquiries: europeaid-ibpp@cec.eu.int.

Website:

http://europa.eu.int/comm/europeaid/index_en.htm

THE SMALL ENVIRONMENTAL PROJECTS SCHEME (SEPS)

Managed by the British Council on behalf of DFID, SEPS aims to improve the sustainability of Russian environmental policy and practice by strengthening the role of NGOs and local government departments. Grants are available for Russian-British partnerships addressing environmental management and planning, waste management and environmental monitoring and pollution control. For more information, visit www.britishcouncil.ru/work/woseps.htm or contact 0161 957 7828. SEPS is part of DEFRA's Environment for Europe Fund (020 7944 6225).

WESTMINSTER FOUNDATION FOR DEMOCRACY

The next round of grants is to be announced in November/December 2003.

Enquiries: 020 7930 0408 – ask to be put through to the 'Europe team'.

August 2003

24th–29th: Gail Hart and BEARR's consultant Bill Seary contribute to seminars in the Samara Oblast as part of the DISPS-funded 'Development of strategic partnership between non-governmental and governmental organisations' run by BEARR's partner, Povolzhe.

September 2003

17th–21st: Training seminar on mental health in the community in Pervouralsk led by Tatiana Emelyanova and Eva Vikentieva from Tver State University as part of BEARR's project 'Developing a Mental Healthcare Centre in Pervouralsk', funded by the Community Fund.

October 2003

6th–12th: St Petersburg Week in Manchester, featuring BEARR's display of NGOs working in StP, sponsored by the British Consulate in St Petersburg.

13th–15th: 3-day seminar on multi-agency care for the elderly, at Caritas, St Petersburg, funded by the Linbury Trust and co-ordinated jointly by BEARR and ASI Moscow.

13th–18th: Beverly McDowell & Billie Tribe, consultants on BEARR's HSCP project 'Opening School Doors to Deaf Children' and Rachel Watson, BEARR's Information/ Projects Officer, go to Nizhny Novgorod for the first needs analysis visit.

16th: The Konevets Vocal Quartet from St Petersburg perform in Topsham, Devon, in aid of BEARR.

November 2003

26th: Evaluation of OZON project in London with Tamara Safonova, Director of OZON Centre (Moscow), Tatiana Zhuraleva, Director of NGO 'The Protection of Children from Abuse' (Moscow), Dena Domminey and Elizabeth Hyde.

28th: 'Following up and Following on': The BEARR Trust Annual Conference in partnership with HSCP at The Charity Centre, London.

December 2003

Thursday 18th: Final seminar in Samara on the DISPS-funded 'Development of strategic partnership between non-governmental and governmental organisations in Samara Oblast'.

About The BEARR Trust

Patrons: The Duchess of Abercorn, Vladimir Ashkenazy, Elena Bashkurova Barenboim, Lady Fall, Myra Green OBE, Professor Geoffrey Hosking, Lady Hurd, HE Sir Roderick Lyne KBE CMG, Dr Jonathan Miller CBE, Anthony Oppenheimer, Rair Simonyan, Sir Andrew Wood GCMG.

The BEARR Trust is a British registered charity. It was formed in 1991 to act as a bridge between the welfare and health sectors of Britain and the former Soviet Union (FSU). It has four main aims:

- to collaborate with British organisations working with the voluntary, social welfare and health sectors in the FSU, particularly in order to provide information and advice;
- to be a clearing house for information about British activities in the FSU and, where appropriate, to make this information public;
- to bring British and FSU organisations together for the transfer of information, skills and material aid;
- to initiate projects that will strengthen the FSU's voluntary, social welfare and health sectors.

Trustees: Michael McCulloch (Chairman), John Church, Lady Maria Fairweather, Professor Michael Holman, Marcia Levy, Ann Lewis CMG, Nicola Ramsden

Staff: Director: Daryl Hardman

Project Manager: Noah Birksted-Breen, Information Officer: Rachel Watson, Finance Officer: John Kidd

Volunteers: Neville Collins, David Gower, Galina Keene, Tamar Lordkipanidze, Natalya Miroevskaya, Fiona Paterson, Natasha Sturgeon

Editorial Board: Noah Birksted-Breen, Leila Carlyle, Michael Holman, Rachel Watson

Registered charity no: 1011086

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Become a Friend of BEARR and receive the Newsletter on a regular basis as well as details of our events throughout the year.

- I wish to become a Friend of The BEARR Trust. Minimum gift £30 per year.
- I wish to renew my Friends subscription and enclose a cheque for £30.
- I wish to make a donation and enclose a cheque for £.....(pay to The BEARR Trust).
- I wish to make a regular donation by banker's order.

Name

Organisation:.....

Address.....

Tel Fax.....

Email

Contact details may be made available to other voluntary organisations working in the former Soviet Union, unless you tick this box to indicate that this information is confidential.

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