



Visit report 14: Tuesday June 8th – Saturday June 10th 2010

Report: by Agnes van Uchelen (director)

Day 1: arrival Sofia 9:30 pm

Day 2: visit to Stara Zagorra – 30 boys, 7-18 years old

Upon my arrival I was welcomed, as usual, by 15 adorable boys with Bulgarian songs. Their way of expressing their appreciation for the renovation of their department last summer.



New playroom August 2009

The second renovation is currently taking place at Stara Zagorra for 15 boys between 12-18 years old. (€ 42.500)



- four bedrooms
- large hallway
- new bathroom with showers, toilets and sinks
- * new diningroom with own kitchen
- office for the director
- new boiler and electrics
- new computerroom
- staircase (two stairs)

*The foundation has made an extra € 1.500 available for furnishing the kitchenette. The proceeds of the sponsor walk, organized for the fifth time by Agnes and Amanda, will be used for this purpose.

(The Apeldoorn four day walk: July 13,14,15 and 16th 2010)

The same successful renovation took place last year for boys aged 7-12 years old.





Temporary accommodation

On July 15th 2010 a group of 15 Dutch boys from Wijk & Aalburg www.werkgroep-bulgarije.nl will arrive for the second year in a row. They will be following the building contractor to decorate the walls and place laminate floors in the rooms. The laminate was already transported by truck from the Netherlands in February. They will also be entertaining the boys. The boys are really looking forward to their visit. They created friendships for life when they first visited last year.

The renovation hence has to be 90% completed by July 15th. Several of the boys have temporarily moved to the future computerroom, which was the first to be renovated, and when the bedrooms are ready, will be installed as computerroom.

Our new sheer curtains, a gift from a Dutch donor, are now hanging in the rooms renovated last year.



Upon my departure we agreed that by my next visit in October, upon completion of the renovation, we will organize a festive disco with Coca Cola and chips. Loud clapping from joy.

This renovation is made possible thanks to our sponsors:

- Marthe van Rijswijck Foundation € 10.000 www.mvrf.nl
- Workgroup Bulgaria from Wijk & Aalburg € 10.000 excl. materials for decorating walls and new laminate floors www.werkgroep-bulgarije.nl
- Louisa foundation € 5.000 www.louisastichting.nl
- Primary school "Het Fundament" in Genderen (amount not yet verified)
- "Dalton Lyceum" in Barendrecht Mavo II (sponsor walk June 21st 2010)
- IPA € 5.000 www.ipaglobal.com
- Many other donors



Day 3: visit to Pleven – 250 children aged 0-3 years old

After our renovation in 2009 of the baby department for children with a physical and mental disability, the Foundation was recently approached by Colour4Kids of the Dutch global concern BrandLoyalty.

Renovation children's department for 40-50 children in the age range of 2-3 years old by BrandLoyalty (BL) & Colour4Kids (C4K)

On June 1st 2010 the board of BL made a pledge to fund this renovation in the amount of € 50.000 In cooperation with BL,C4K, the NGO Tabitha Bulgaria in Sofia and our Foundation, one of the 10 children's departments will be renovated by the end of this year or early next year.

BrandCharity (BC) is a part of BL. They will collect the budgeted € 50.000 over the course of this year through a variety of activities amongst their staff in all of their global establishments.

€ 10.000 is reserved for decorating and murals, which will be taken care of by Colour4Kids towards the completion phase.

With this gesture through BC, BL wants to express their responsibility for the wellbeing of the less fortunate children in this world by reaching out towards them.

The proposal for this renovation has been greeted with enthusiasm by the staff.

The Children's Hospital in Pleven, the Foundation and the NGO are very grateful for this generous gesture by BL/BC and Colour4Kids.

Daycare Centre

This Daycare centre will be for children with restrictions from the Pleven region (300.000) to encourage the parents to keep their children with them instead of leaving them in a home, as is often the case at present. Research has proven that this initiative is well received by the parents. In this way the connection between the parents and the child stays intact. They can work during the day and take care of their children in the evenings and during the weekends.

The children receive the necessary medical care during the day.

The present department has a surface area of 200m² and will be divided in two.

The front part will be transformed into a daycare centre according to the latest government guidelines. There will be a separate entrance for the parents.

The other part of the renovation is destined for the children who won't return to their parents.

Both groups will continue to meet one another in the new Daycare centre.

For more detailed information visit the links on our website:

www.kindertehuizenbulgarije.nl under: projects: Pleven



Present dressing/bathroom



Playroom



There will also be a play library. This will consist of storing educational toys which are to be donated by an American foundation. The staff and Baba's will be educated in how to use these.



-4- Pleven

New Kitchen Pleven

To my great delight the kitchen and scullery were recently renovated. A true metamorphosis. If this had not happened then the health department would have ordered the kitchen to close its doors. Thanks to our foundation and other foreign donors, the renovation of the floor, electrics, suction system, boiler and new tiled walls took place the end of April.



Scullery



New kitchen Pleven

Physical Therapist Pleven

Since January 2008 the Foundation pays the salary for a physical therapist. There are three physical therapists in total, working with 250 children, of which a large percentage have physical limitations. Last year a total of 5000 treatments were performed. Several children have started walking due to these treatments (movies upon request).

(Baroque?) Music for Babies with double limitations

As an initiative inspired by one of our board members, the Foundation will soon start introducing background music, as a pilot project. John Smith, an English expert in this field, will be approached by Kate Blewett on behalf of Albena (NGO). Kate is the English journalist from the acclaimed 2008 documentary about the children's home in Mongolino.

This documentary brought much awareness to the harrowing conditions in Bulgarian children's homes. Europe, the Bulgarian government and the population were shaken awake. The tide is slowly turning. The children still need our help very much.

Day 3: visit to Doganovo 60 children aged 7-12 years old

We currently have an educational project running in Doganovo.

Today was the last day of the English class before the long summer holiday. There are two groups. One group for advanced and one for beginners.

The children are very motivated but learn slowly. The teacher, a gentleman of 25 years old, has a lot of patience with the children and treats them with a lot of love.

Once the children had overcome their shyness, we were able to communicate with them in limited English. Several of them also follow our computer lessons and English comes in handy for these lessons.

A few of the girls from this home are also following sewing classes in Rebarkovo. They will soon receive fabrics from the Netherlands so they can make their own clothes, bedcovers and curtains.

The sport activities, also funded by the Foundation, are very popular with the children and help them with their physical development.





I am already looking forward to my next visit in October. Then I will visit the children's homes in Vratza and Dren.

June 12th, 2010

www.kindertehuizenbulgarije.nl

