

December 2017  
Nollaig 2017

office@burrenchernobyl.ie  
Burren Chernobyl Project  
The Monastery  
Ennistymon Co Clare

+353 65 7071130

office@burrenchernobyl.ie

Charity No. 13002 Company Limited by Guarantee

# Burren Chernobyl Project Newsletter 2017

A very Happy Christmas to all  
Burren Chernobyl Project Volunteers  
Supporters and Helpers  
from all the children

In Cherven and Gorodishche Orphanages.



**'We look forward to seeing you all again in 2018!'**

**СНОВЫМ ГОДАМ. Nollaig Shona**

**Merry Christmas and  
A very Happy New Year!**

## Christmas 2017

As always it is hard to believe that we are at the end of another year. It is even more difficult to note that in 2018 Burren Chernobyl Project will be marking 25 Years of work in Belarus since the origin in 1993.

Hundreds of sponsor families, hundreds of helpers, hundreds of volunteers have helped hundreds of special-needs children as well as young and old adults. What began as an invitation to six children to spend six months has morphed into something much larger which has spread throughout Ireland and also throughout Belarus where the help and aid from Ireland aims to reach into many poor and needy families.

It has not been easy and some of us are old, bruised and marked by the years of effort. But in the words of the late *Paul Kalinithi*, 'In taking up another's cross, one must sometimes get crushed by the weight'.

For me, perhaps the greatest achievement is that the mass of shapeless bodies which we first encountered in packed and smelly rooms, have become real individuals with their identity restored. They are each a person again. It is no longer Group Three—but Masha and Olya, Dima and Kyrill!

And so we continue! We continue now to try to give them a life a little less sad, a little more alive; a life a little more their own, a life a little more valued; some small steps on the way out of the confines of the life into which they arrived.

Thank you all for being part of the story, for your continued support, your involvement and for valuing the children who reflect back your worth to you.

*Liam*

## The Burren Chernobyl Project

### Ireland

**Chairperson:** Liam O'Meara

**Treasurer:** Helen O'Meara

**Secretary:** Susanne Lightbourne

**Committee:** Rosaleen Byrne.

Breda O'Meara, Rose Mullins, Katie Mullins, Ned Hayden, Jim Willis, Ruth Byrne, Mary Cosgrove

**Office staff:** Ger McDonagh, Siobhán Hughes finished in the office so we had no one there during the year. Luckily for us two ladies volunteered and turned up every week to keep things going, as well as working from home. Thanks to Bernadette Mee and Antoinette Hehir for their great help. We could not have managed 2017 without them.

**Office address:** The Monastery, Ennistymon, Co Clare

**Auditors:** Russell Brennan Keane.

### Medical Aid Programme:

Sean Hegarty, Ronan Callanan, Dr Maryia in Cherven

**Freight co:** Schenker

**Loaders:** Thanks to the forty+ volunteers who turn up for the loading of each truck. Also thanks to those who help with the food on the day, special mention to Mrs Smith for the scones, cakes and eclairs!

**Boxes:** Supplied by Paul in Limerick

**Fund-raisers:** The committee and any other willing hands. (Any offers to help greatly appreciated)

Burren Chernobyl Project is registered with the Charities Regulatory Authority. CHY 13002

Thanks to all involved at any level. It takes many hands to keep it all going.

## Dobra Tut Charity Minsk

**Director:** Liam O'Meara

**Treasurer:** Lena Pashkevich

Lena keeps track of all money spent through the fund in Belarus. She does all the financial paperwork in relation to distribution of the truckloads to the various orphanages, social service centres and families. And of course reports to the officials of the Departments in Minsk

**Visa secretary:** Tamara Bukteyeva. It is Tamara who does all the paperwork in relation to getting visas for all our volunteers. This involves getting permission from the orphanage, approval from the local committee, then preparing the paperwork for the Minsk Committee before going to the department for granting of the visa. This paperwork is then taken to the Visa Office at the airport to be stamped and then a copy send back to the office in Ennistymon to give to the volunteers.

Tamara also does the airport pick-up each week and transfer of volunteers to and from Cherven and/or Gorodishche.

**Project Manager:** Yura Kryk. This is the man who has overseen all our building projects over the years. He has helped build Minsk Dom Zara. Renovated Kyl, Svir, Yazovki as well as the Day Centre in Cherven amongst other projects.

**Office:** 117 Per Angarskiy, Minsk

**Interpreter:** Irina Zhishko—Gorodishche

Where would we be without the wonderful Irina to look after us all, all the volunteers and all the children in Gorodishche!

**Interpreter:** Alona Martiyanova.

Alona is due back from maternity leave in February but has still looked after our volunteers to Cherven over the past years as well as keeping the Dobra Tut site updated with news, events and reports from each of the groups.

	<b>Truck Aid distributed to end Sept 2017</b>	<b>Belarus Money</b>	<b>Euro</b>
1	Stolbtsy psycho- neurological asylum, village Kul, 500 adults	6223.20	2828.72
2	Gorodishche orphanage for children with special needs	4476.00	2034.54
3	Dzerzhinsk Social Service centre	4190.68	1904.85
4	Pukhovichi Social Service centre	4170.32	1895.60
5	Brest Regional psychiatric hospital "Gorodische"	2032.00	923.64
6	Cherven orphanage for children and young adults	1950.90	886.77
7	Berestovista Social Service centre	4410.10	2004.59
8	Cherven psycho-neurological asylum, Yazovki - adult	4381.10	1991.40
9	Stolbtsy psycho- neurological asylum, village Kul	2350.41	1068.37
10	Rakov psycho- neurological asylum	903.00	410.46
11	Niesvzh social service centre	5824.08	2647.31
12	Svir psycho- neurological asylum	5826.24	2648.29
13	Cherikov social service centre	7134.33	3242.87
14	Gorodishche orphanage for children with special needs	1734.39	788.40
15	Starodorozhskiy psycho- neurological asylum	8492.74	3860.34
16	Family with a special needs child	448.46	203.85
17	Social service centre of Zavodskoi district, Minsk	8237.22	3744.19
18	Brest Regional psychiatric hospital "Gorodische"	2042.00	928.18
19	Cherven psycho- neurological asylum, village Yazovki	7972.47	3623.85
21	Stolbtsy psycho- neurological asylum, village Kul	1796.29	816.50
22	Stolbtsy psycho- neurological asylum, village Kul	134.10	60.95
23	Stolbtsy psycho- neurological asylum, village Kul	1417.18	644.17
24	Cherven orphanage for children and young adults special-needs	554,08	251.85
25	Korelichi social service centre	6285.14	2856.88
26	Logoisk asylum for elderly people and special needs people	7854.61	3570.28
27	Starodorozhskiy Social service centre	5801.91	2637.23
28	Rakov psycho- neurological asylum	6705.92	3148.15
29	Uzda social service centre	5581.73	2537.15
30	Stolbtsy psycho- neurological asylum, village Kul	2482.75	1128.52
31	Kopyl phycho-neurological asylum	6787.99	3085.45
32	Gorodishche orphanage for children with special needs	4545.12	2065.96
33	Borisov psycho neurological asylum, village Tarasiki	2478.22	1126.46
34	Primary organization of Zavodskoi district "BelAPDIIMI", Minsk	27.90	12.68
35	Cherven psycho-neurological asylum, Yazovki village	6770.94	3077.70
36	Gorodishche orphanage for children with special needs	6900.00	3136.36
	<b>Total value of goods distributed to end September 2017</b>		<b>68,485.42 euro</b>

## 2017 Volunteers with Burren Chernobyl Project

### Jan 22nd 2017

Edmund Ryan  
Martina Corry  
Aoife Murtagh  
Brigette McGrath  
Alyson Morrissey  
Katie Keane

'It was a wonderful trip.  
We had great fun with  
the children and older  
boys and girls..... Please  
God I will return again  
some time.' *Noreen*

### April

Niamh Fahey  
Catherine O'Shea  
Chloe Grace  
Donna Costigan  
Mary Delaney  
Sophie Delaney  
Thelma Murray  
Aoife Crowley  
Elizabeth Sexton  
Tom Conheady  
Eddie Conheady  
Eamonn Keane  
Fergus Slattery  
Francis Queally  
Martin McGuane  
William Ryan

Timmy Healy  
Marty Ryan  
Jim Willis  
Nicky Moloney

### May

Edward Hayden  
Paul Hendrick  
Kate Feehan  
Ailish Hinchion  
Claire Shinkwin

Laura Dwane  
Niamh Cleary  
Emily Sheahan  
Neasa Sheehy  
Gary McGowan  
Katie Hourigan  
Patrick Ryan  
Roisin O'Malley  
Nora Murphy  
Shauna O'Connor  
Nora Murphy  
Rose Mullins  
Maura Newell  
Kathleen Lally  
Marie Dolly  
Mgt Cunningham  
Shane Mullins  
Sarah Coppinger  
Honor Faherty  
Una Comer  
Patricia Murphy  
Thomas Lally  
Eilis Conroy  
Leonie Finn  
Allen Laffey

Hannah KIELTY  
Shane Conroy  
David Staunton  
Jordon Lally  
Brian Carthy  
Aoife Murphy  
Shane Lawless

*'After covering us head  
to toe in face paint, the  
children decided to let  
us paint their faces. It  
was such a great moment  
to see the looks on their  
faces.'* Elaine

### June

Aisling Molloy  
Aoife Molloy  
Julia Haverty  
Maire O'Conghaile

### July

Laura Williams  
Natasha Ryan  
Laura Kennedy  
Andelain Keane  
Orla Hennessy  
Joanne Hennessy  
Alice Donnelly  
John McManus  
Gillian Martin  
Shauna McCormack  
Pipe Julie  
Rosaleen Byrne  
Joanne O'Sullivan  
Rosie Devoy Pullin  
Selina Kelly



Don O'Sullivan  
Aileen Barrett  
Lisa Marrinan

Matthew Collins  
Mairead Fleming  
PJ Mealiff

Maria Carr Ann Kelly

**September**

**Oates Rita**

Curran, Jacinta

McGuigan, Patrick Joseph

McDonald, Desmond Joseph

**October**

Patricia McEnery-Noonan

Bernadette Mullen

Deirdre Anglim

Claire Moroney

Noreen Collins

McCarthy, Bridget

Dean Ladrigan

Sean Hegarty

**December 27th 2017**

Sean McManus

Alice Donnelly

Shauna McCormack

**Cristin O'Keeffe (127)**

**Many thanks to everyone  
who travelled to Belarus  
during 2017.**

**To do:**

**1. Please fill in your CHY  
form and return to us.**

*'There is nothing hard about  
going to Cherven, The hard  
part is saying goodbye.'*

*Dean*

Norma O'Mullane  
Nicola Crowley  
Sheila Browne  
Fiona Sexton  
Lorraine Rynne  
Claire Byrne  
Patricia Gallagher  
Lisa Gallagher  
Orla Gallagher  
Michael Croghan  
Tara Bennett  
Sophie Vagg

*'When are the Irish coming  
back?' Vova*

Shauna Deane  
Meghan Kilker  
Treacy Nallen  
Tracey Gallagher  
Eimear Gallagher  
Stephen Gibbons  
Eimear Kelly  
Jp Breen  
Michael Walsh

## **Volunteer Donations 2016**

Volunteers come to the orphanage regularly. They are engaged in the following activities:

- Caring for bed bound children (help with feeding, massage, walks, physiotherapy classes, relaxation, Gross simulator;
  - Yoghurts, dry cereals, milk and dairy-free mixtures "Bellakt" are constantly purchased to help organize additional nutrition;
  - Personal hygiene means (shampoos, razors, deodorants, soap, tooth paste) are purchased;
  - The festivals were organized with the awarding of prizes, discos, birthday parties for children of different ages with mild mental disabilities (gifts were purchased and brought from Ireland);
  - ♦ Sports events, bocce competitions, football were held jointly with the teachers and carers.
  - purchased seeds for the garden;
  - helped by improving playgrounds for groups No. 4 and 1.
  - ♦ purchased dining room and school furniture for group 4.
- Thanks to all Volunteers and their Sponsors, goods to the value of 77096 Belarusian Roubles = approx. 35,043 euro were spent in 2016 in the various orphanages.**

## Some headlines from 2017.

### Fund-raising included

- Churchgate collections in Clare brought in almost five thousand euro. Many thanks to each parish, to the Clergy and all the good people who continue to contribute generously to our work in Belarus.
- **Sponsored Walk in Ennistymon—not very successful due to a clash with other events, so maybe have to rethink for next year.**
- Sponsored swim from Lahinch Beach to Liscannor Bay by Pat Conway with 38 others on a day to rival Hurricane Ophelia! Most successful event raised over ten thousand euro. Many thanks and well done!
- **Yvonne Morrisson and Lahinch Golf Club continued to support us this year and made donations of almost six thousand euro. Many thanks!**
- All 127 Volunteers who travelled to Belarus over thirty five different weeks of the year each pay their own way and contribute to the ongoing costs in the orphanages. Many raise a large amount of money from family, friends and other donations and this is used for the children and adults who have some very basic needs. A final account of the total will be ready after the end of 2017 as we still have Volunteers planning a trip in December.
- **We were blessed to be included in the will of a local gentleman who kindly left a large donation to Burren Chernobyl. We look forward to doing something fitting and lasting on his behalf.**
- Ongoing thanks also to our friends in the IRFU for their support during the past number of years which also a great help to the growing requests for aid.
- A big thanks to all our regular friends and neighbours who always give of their generosity. I don't know how they keep being so generous! Many thank to you all! *Liam*

## Main Areas of Distribution in 2017.

- ◆ BCP continued to support Cherven and Gorodishche Children's orphanages as well as adult orphanages in Tarasiki, Kyl, Rakov, Kopyl, Svir, Lagoisk, Staraidoroga
- ◆ **Three lorry loads were sent to Belarus in 2017.**
- ◆ Goods were also distributed to needy families through Social Service Centres in several smaller towns.
- ◆ **35 different groups of Volunteers travelled to Belarus throughout the year to organise Summer Camp Type activities for children in Cherven and Gorodishche.**
- ◆ Volunteers funded holidays for some children in Minsk where they visited cinema, museums, circus and other attractions. Another group will spend the New Year in Dom Zara in Minsk to enjoy Christmas in the city.
- ◆ **Betty Crosbie and The Killarney Group have been very good in providing new wheelchairs as well as many other goods during the year.**
- ◆ Claire Drake's friends in England have also funded new wheelchairs for Gorodishche.
- ◆ **We were able to support Jacinta and Chernobyl Aid North to finish their house for supported living in Yazovki. They have now moved on to work in Kyl, home to over 500 adults.**
- ◆ Roche Aid continued its work in building a summer dacha for the children in Minsk to get out of the city during the hot summer. Under Yura's care they can now holiday in the fresh air at virtually no cost to themselves.
- ◆ **We continue to fund a doctor in Cherven and to support homebound individuals in the community with medical aid and other support.**
- ◆ Sean Hegarty has again travelled to do great work on making and adjusting wheelchairs for children in the orphanages and villages.
- ◆ **Verandas were also built in Cherven grounds.**
- ◆ **Headstones were erected in Cherven Children's Plot for eight little darlings!**







Closing up in Ennistymon .....  
 .....Opening up in Minsk!



←  
 New wheel-  
 chairs!  
 One for  
 Elena in  
 Minsk.  
 Thanks to  
 Sponsors.  
 →



The Director of Lagoisk Adult Institution is very happy to receive a donation of nappies from one of our trucks. Nappies were also given to Cherven , Gorodishche, Kyl, Tarasiki, Kopyl and other Internats as well as to families. Over two thousand special-needs children and adults have received goods from out three lorryloads shipped to Belarus during 2017. Many thanks to all who donate goods and help fill the load in Ennistymon. All greatly appreciated!



## Looking forward to 2018

The year ahead is already looking busy with many weeks already booked by Volunteers.

We welcome Aoife Sutton and TY group from Good Counsel Boys School, New Ross.

Also booked in are St Mary's Girls School, Arklow with their teacher Angela Flynn who delivered 23,000 nappies for our recent truck!

Belmullet, St. Brendan's, are also planning another trip back with Tisha Gallagher leading.

And the College of school and Design hope to travel in March with.....

Rose Mullins is also booked with her usual large group .so that March to June is full!

**So advise to all Volunteers is to get their dates pencilled in now as things seem to be busier and busier each year.**

**Please follow all the news of Volunteer Trips and the work undertaken on Burren Chernobyl website, on Facebook and also on the Dobra Tut site and links .**

**As BCP becomes busier I personally have less time to spend with the children being busy with paperwork, Garda Vetting, visa forms etc. However with 127 Volunteers going out on 2017 I know that all the children have had a good, happy, loving year.**

**To paraphrase. Paul Kalanithi\* again "when it comes to one of the moments in life when you must give an account of yourself, what you have been and done and meant to the world, never discount that you filled (someone's) days with a sated joy. In this time, right now, that is an enormous thing.'**

**Thanks to everyone. Merry Christmas.  
From all at Burren Chernobyl Project.**



**Tadhg loading a truck all by himself! July 2017!**

We welcome Michelle Gregory and Ramor Dagge to the Burren Chernobyl Office in Ennistymon. They are settling in to the routine and we are delighted and blessed to have them with us as we face into another year => our 25th on the go!

Thanks also to those who have served so well over the years.  
Liam

\* from WHEN BREATH BECOMES AIR by Paul Kalanithi, published by Vintage, 2016