

# PROJECTROMANIA



2012

## a Summer of HIGHS, Hills & Heat

The Transylvanian Trekathon with so many new cultural experiences; brick making, bread making, carpet weaving, 6am seeing sheep milked in the hills -

the team will never forget ...

The Streetspace Team from Chard

working in **BUIA** ...



The life changing 'mouse' for Marius Vlad

a remarkable man ...



The two year old, Elena,  
playing ball with



handicapped yet  
a team member ...

**BUT 1 team witnessed the awful FIRE in BOARTA.  
38°C, NO WATER, FIRE ENGINE 30 miles away  
& an old lady of 84 lost her home.**

The charity, with Sir Graham Watson & Operation Florian, is working to get a fire engine for Seica Mare to prevent other tragedies



Patron : Sir Graham Watson MEP

[www.projectromaniachard.org.uk](http://www.projectromaniachard.org.uk)

# STREETSPACE in BUIA

They  
They  
They

came  
saw  
renovated

NOW

a derelict old  
portacabin



IS

a beautifully painted and  
restored building soon to be  
a pharmacy



It  
was  
39°C

they were so tired

but even after a long night's journey

**their enthusiasm was - infectious**

**their plan - to convert a derelict portacabin into a pharmacy  
and they exceeded all expectations!**

Streetspace Chard is a youth work associated with 'Chard Churches Together'. In July 5 boys and 2 leaders, Tracey Hallett and Mark Porthouse, met Chard Churches Together's charity Project Romania team and Florin Benghea (Romanian manager) in the rural village of Buia, Comuna Seica Mare. Bertie, Ollie, Matt, Bradley and Will were keen to help a charity project abroad. Bradley said, "Romania was a good laugh, we made new friends, worked hard and helped people out for a good cause." They worked so hard despite heat & problems with sub-standard tools; they made friends with others on site; enjoyed jaunts to the small village shop (communicating in sign language to the shop keeper); got on well with Flori and Bogdan, 2 Romanian teenagers who worked



alongside the team each day. All the meals prepared by Corina, the lady opposite, were eagerly awaited and eaten, and 'seconds' requested much to her delight - hospitality is a great Romanian virtue.



The leaders did a great job and the whole trip was very successful in every way. **Everybody** cleaned or moved things & painted, some did carpentry (along with a little art work) and they all experienced the local subsistence lifestyle. They had a lot of help from local shops - the owner of the builder's yard in Seica Mare lent her daughter's painting set to use (free of charge) for Ollie to design and paint notice boards.



The 'Farmacia' building they created from a derelict portacabin will soon be up and running - a testimonial to their perseverance.

They did manage to experience other cultural aspects of Romania - visiting a mediaeval city (suffering the roads on the way); rising at 6am to go into the hills and see sheep being milked; and, on their final day, they went mountain biking - down this hill! <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MIXMCn8jOkw>



We were very proud of the team. They were a credit to their leaders and themselves. One intended outcome was to help them gain valuable work experience and access employment at home, and the Streetspace leaders were delighted when Will secured an apprenticeship.



Streetspace will be looking at further trips along the same lines, with other young people from Chard.

More photos at [www.projectromaniachard.org.uk](http://www.projectromaniachard.org.uk) 'Streetspace in Buia' Gallery. For more about Streetspace or to see their DVD of the trip email [admin@streetspace.org.uk](mailto:admin@streetspace.org.uk) or ring Richard Passmore (07830 197160)



# TRANSYLVANIAN TREKATHON

## Biertan to Viscri



In June the (definitely "A") team trekked the hills of rural Transylvania - an amazing 110 kms - and they recommend the trek to **all who love walking**. As a gentle walk or tough trek; for lovers of nature, history, ancient churches, or adventure, the experience is brilliant! Whether young or old, it will delight with constantly changing scenery, great food and

accommodation, and a warm welcome from local people who love to show off their Saxon heritage.

**Sergiu Paca**, recommended by Fundatia Adept, was an excellent guide, & knew the area well. Assessing the team he 'tailored' each daily trek, organised visits to see traditional craft or research splendidly fortified medieval churches, and had all the information for staying in restored Saxon houses.

**Some days** it was well over 35°C - but even 'hard' days were great. From the start, the multitude of wild flowers, in this unspoilt and beautiful country side, was a delight. Eagles soared overhead (one could hear their harsh cry - buzzards had a softer mewling sound); red back shrikes flew from tree to tree, and brightly coloured bee eaters were visible. It was great to hear golden orioles, see hoopoes and **find a BEAR print**. One old shepherd ad seen a bear with her 2 cubs a couple of days before... **They 'met' 3 large flocks of sheep** guarded by 6 or more dogs, and Sergiu was just the right person to have around. On hearing sheep bells he cut sticks from the hedge to hold ('do not wave your sticks'), bunched the group together and calmly chanted "na la oi, na" (go back to your sheep) over and over to the dogs - and they did!





The team saw bread baked in an 100 year old bread oven; local people making jam and preserves commercially using local produce; carpet weaving done on a massive loom; a family making bricks from mud. Plus they cycled into the woods to see the charcoal maker.

They travelled through fields where hay-tedding was done by hand & horses ploughed with wood ploughs, & once, in the middle of nowhere, Sergiu 'called a cab' on his mobile - for weary trekkers to ride into the next village on a horse and cart!



This trek was also about 'vital logistics' (rucksacks and luggage) and found that cases were transported for them as part of the deal.

**HATS OFF** to **Fundatia Adept**, who preserve traditional country life & save flora and fauna lost to "industrial progress; and the **Mihai Eminescu Trust**, who restore and maintain Saxon architecture and organise excellent cultural farmhouse accommodation. The team ate in barns; saw goats' cheese being made; watched cows ambling home at eventide, and found traditionally painted furniture and unusual 100 year old coats. Once they slept very well 'in a drawer' and 'on a shelf'.



**Day 5 was - the mountain bike trail!** ONLY 2 of the team rode the 7 kilometres over the hills on a narrow stony track, powering up to the ridge and whizzing down the almost vertical descent with hairpin bends. It was not a ride for the fainthearted! The other 2 'dropped in' at a buffalo farm and arranged to return and see the herd milked later. Day 6 & Viscri came just too soon.



So, why don't **YOU** pack your rucksack and go on the most unusual trail you'll do in a long time - contact Liz Rosser (address on the back), look at the film. Trips will soon be booked for next year. For more photos visit the Transylvanian Trekathon Gallery at [www.projectromaniachard.org.uk](http://www.projectromaniachard.org.uk)

## A tale of 2 little girls ... .. both handicapped

**Denisa (10)** has severe Spina Bifida

Many of you gave for an urgent operation on her very bent spine to help her breathe. To our dismay, in November 2012 the surgeon decided NOT to operate as the risks are high and he does not have sophisticated technology. This family is desperate. Florin Benghea has offered to send the scans and notes to the UK to see if there's any chance of help over here - although it would be difficult and costly. We'll keep you updated but if YOU know anyone with experience in this type of work please contact the secretary.



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### **Elena (age 2)** was born without a left leg

She has a tiny prosthesis which needs changing regularly as she grows. This has to be arranged & paid for by her parents. (No NHS in Romania!)

**BUT THIS YEAR** she was sponsored by a family

here. Her mum & dad are overjoyed to know she will be loved and helped through her childhood. (There is a short film available of this little girl playing and it's greatly encouraging)



### *Elena is one of MANY who need help*

**Alexandra** has cerebral palsy and her mum has to hitch hike 25 miles to Sibiu 3 times a week carrying her ... so Alexandra can have special exercises to try to get her to walk. She desperately needs a sponsor.



**IF YOU COULD BRING JOY** by sponsoring a child, please contact the secretary. £20.00 per month can make all the difference to a child in Comuna Seica Mare



# Marius Vlad

At times we are all tempted to think we have it tough - so meet

an amazing man of 44 - living with his elderly mother of 74.

*She carries him on her back from room to room or to his wheelchair.* He has Cerebral Palsy and can't do

anything for himself, but his brain is very active. He knows 3 languages and has learnt to use a computer.

Due to his disability he had to *type and move the mouse with his nose or lip .....* yet this man was

**ALWAYS cheerful and happy, a real inspiration.**

A big **THANK YOU** to Frenchay Hospital for advising on this problem in 2011 and suggesting a Mini Joystick

for use with his chin. Initially his PC was not 'man enough' for the new hardware, but in July

2012 a local villager updated the PC memory and installed Windows 7 for us, and

**Hallelujah** - the new 'mouse' worked! Florin purchased a *microphone stand* in Sibiu to hold it in place (Romanian ingenuity), enabling Marius to manoeuvre his mouse with his chin.

**He was overjoyed!**

For the first time he could *see* the mouse on the screen when he 'clicked'. New specialised software was also installed to help the 'double click' motion. He'd been using the new 'mouse' for just *2 days* when Bradley & Bertie from Streetspace visited him with leader, Mark Porthouse. *Marius was playing chess* with a guy in *Saudi Arabia* - level pegging & no handicap visible - able to interact normally. What a blessing his computer is - giving him a life outside those two rooms.



**OK**

For well over 10 years Sheila Clement has given her time and expertise to Project Romania as accountant and Treasurer. She's stepping down this Christmas and so a **BIG THANK YOU** for all her invaluable hard work. We're pleased to welcome Ian Tucker from St Mary's Church as he takes on this role in the New Year

### **BREAD4BUIA**

We're still looking for sponsors for this vital programme - giving school children in Buia and Stenea 2 loaves a week during term time. It costs just £8.00 a month and yet it means so much to the children in cold winter months

**T** **THE TREKATHON** raised over  
**h** £1500.00 for work on the  
**a** Rainbow Centre  
**n** **2 CLOTHING COLLECTIONS**  
**k** with 'Bag2thefuture' raised  
over £400.00  
**y** **TOPS COLLECTION TOTAL**  
**o** Nearly 7 tonne (5 million tops  
**u** per tonne - a LOT of tops  
**NOT in landfill**) + £350.00  
Please **WASH** your tops  
**ALL bags have to be sorted**  
**BY HAND** at home

**NEW**

in 2012 - several short unique DVD's - only £2.50  
"Culture in Traditional Transylvania"

'Bread Making in Buia' - 'Weaving in Malancrav'

'Sheep on Transylvanian Hills' - 'Brick Making at Viscri'

'Elena' - 'Marius' Mouse' - plus other titles coming

Watch this space on the website & order your DVD from

**The Secretary, 2 Belle Vue Terrace, Tatworth, Chard TA20 2RX**  
**prc483-info@yahoo.co.uk**



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106 Furnham Road Chard TA20 1BE 01460 67958